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SMDP Survey
The Daily Press creates a survey for the community.
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Letter to the Editor
Residents pull kids out of local school.
Page 5

L.A. County prepares to vaccinate teachers next week

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

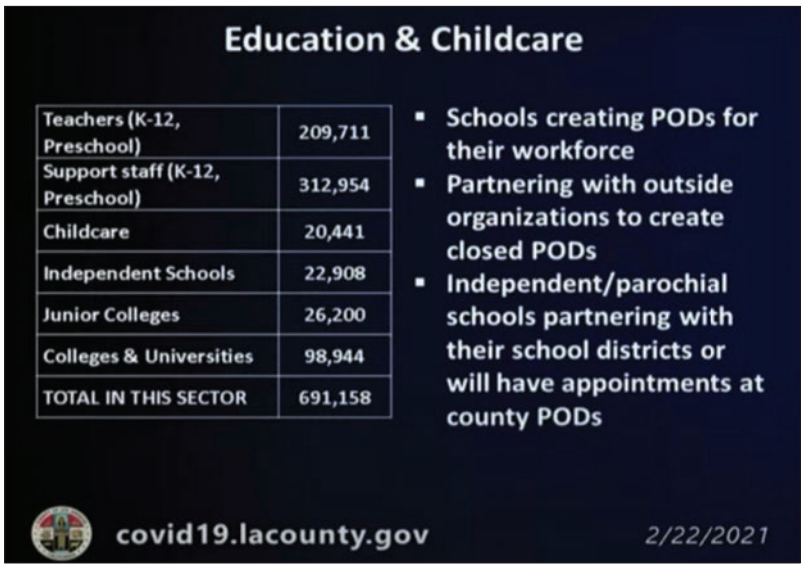
L.A. County is preparing to expand vaccine eligibility on March 1 to approximately 1.3 million workers in education, emergency services, and food and agriculture sectors.

Health Department officials said they will release a more specific Phase 1b vaccination plan on Thursday, once they know what next week's vaccine allotment will be.

This new phase of vaccination will be essential for reopening schools in L.A. County.

SMMUSD reached an agreement with the teacher's union last week to offer limited in-person services in transitional kindergarten through grade 5 once vaccines have been available for 15 days.

"We estimate that about 691,000 people will be eligible for vaccines in the education and childcare sector," said Public Health Director, Barbara Ferrer. "Many school districts already have their partnerships and capacity to create their own pods to vaccinate their workforce."



Screenshot

VIRUS: Officials will release a specific Phase 1b vaccination plan on Thursday.

Contingent on supply being available, teachers at Santa-Monica Malibu schools will be offered vaccines at the Providence Saint John's Medical Center.

"As we move forward vaccinating our school staff and beginning to reopen our elementary schools, I'm committed to ensuring our schools have the necessary tools they need to succeed," said LA Board of

SEE **TEACHERS** PAGE 11

City hopes public-private partnerships will address economic shortfalls

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

In the wake of reduced funding and tourism, Santa Monica City Council is looking to use public-private partnerships to bring in millions of dollars in additional revenue.

With revenues expected to be $11.6 million lower than initial budget projections, Council decided to begin the implementation of a digital wayfinding program that could generate an estimated $2 million from advertising revenue a year.

In the fall of 2019, Council directed staff to identify new ways of reaching financial sustainability. But that was long before COVID -19 took hold on tourism and Santa Monica's local economy.

"So, now the need is even greater," Chief Communications Officer Debbie Lee said during a recent Council meeting where she detailed how alternative revenue streams from public-private partnerships can help accelerate and enhance city services and strengthen Santa Monica's financial resilience in the wake of massive economic and behavioral disruption — all without increasing

SEE **CITY** PAGE 11



Courtesy Photo

LA: A digital wayfinding point in L.A.

Stars in Santa Monica







Brennon Dixson

PIER: Local residents tried to sneak a peak of "Curb Your Enthusiasm" star Larry David at the Santa Monica Pier on Tuesday, but security was ready to ensure the area was free of distractions.

California inspectors find 'deficiencies' at virus test lab

DON THOMPSON
Associated Press

Inspectors found "significant deficiencies" at California's new coronavirus testing laboratory, problems that state officials on Monday partly blamed on the rapid ramp-up they required from the lab's private operator under terms of a $1.4 billion contract.

A fraction of 1% of the more than 1.5 million tests processed at the Valencia Branch Laboratory had problems, the state said in a preliminary report, but Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said "one incorrect test result is one too many."

The $25 million lab that opened in October north of Los Angeles was unable to test about 250 samples (0.017%) due to lab errors, the state said. It issued corrected reports for about 60 (0.0039%) samples.

"California takes these findings seriously" and continues working with the contractor "to ensure Californians have the accurate, timely, high-quality test results," Ghaly said in a statement.

Massachusetts-based diagnostics company PerkinElmer, which operates the lab as part of the agreement signed with the state last fall, said it believes "the deficiencies ... have long since been resolved."

The California Department of Public Health, which regulates laboratories, said the findings came from its initial routine inspection in early December. The company said it appeared some of the information it provided since then had not been included in that inspection report.

But the department said earlier this month that it also is investigating whistleblower allegations of incompetence and mismanagement, including reports of workers sleeping on the job.

Records obtained by CBS13 TV in Sacramento alleged problems including swapped samples, inconclusive tests caused by contamination, and inaccurate results sent to patients. The health department acknowledged then that at least "38 samples were reported incorrectly" because of mix-ups in samples, but said patients were promptly notified.

The station said documents showed some employees handling patient specimens were unlicensed and inadequately trained. State officials said then that it had identified "a handful of individuals" who were retrained or moved to assignments that fit their credentials.

The reports have "unfortunately caused confusion about laboratory practices ... and sown concern about the reliability of testing," the company said in a statement. "That concern is misplaced."

The company learned about the findings from the inspection last week and has until next Monday to formally say how it has or will corrected them. Ghaly said the company and state released the initial summary "in the interest of transparency" rather than wait until the full report is final in mid-March.

The state pushed for the rapid opening and ramp-up of the laboratory at a time when it was often difficult to get tests, which were sometimes delayed until the results were relatively useless because they came too late.

"The deficiencies identified by Laboratory Field Services, although they are taken very seriously, do reflect that we established the laboratory on an accelerated timeframe, and we knew that there might be growing pains that would require work and process improvements," Ghaly said.

State officials still are counting on rapid testing results to help restore some normalcy amid quickly falling virus cases statewide. The lab gets samples from more than 1,500 collection sites to aid schools, churches, clinics, workplaces, and community-based organizations.

It has 600 employees and the capacity for 100,000 tests per day, the company said. The state initially expected the lab to reach its full capacity of 150,000 tests a day by March.

However, testing volume is down statewide as California's worst coronavirus surge eases, state health department spokeswoman Kate Folmar said. The collection sites are expected to feed the Valencia lab 502,000 specimens each week, or about 72,000 tests per day.

"We uphold the highest quality and safety standards across all of our operations, and we have already addressed the issues that emerged in the early days since the Valencia testing site was established, despite just receiving the formal report from the December inspection," Prahlad Singh, the company's president and chief executive officer, said in a statement.

The lab is seeking speedy accreditation through the independent College of American Pathologists, the company said, "so that Californians have no doubt about the quality of the services at the laboratory."

This story was written by the Associated Press

BRIEFS

Manhunt underway in Southern California after officer shot

A manhunt was underway Monday in San Diego County for a 27-year-old man suspected of shooting a police officer responding to a domestic violence call at a home in the city of Escondido, north of San Diego.

The Escondido officer was in stable condition at a local hospital hours after being shot at about 3 a.m., according to a press release from the police department.

The suspect fled the home with a high-powered rifle. Multiple law enforcement agencies were searching for the suspect identified as Anastasio Rosas Jr. He was last seen wearing a black long sleeve shirt and shorts.

Authorities closed several area streets and a section of Interstate 15.

THIS STORY WAS WRITTEN BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

CRIME WATCH BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Crime Watch is culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department. These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

ON FEBRUARY 4, AT APPROXIMATELY 8:15 P.M.

On February 4, at approximately 8:15 p.m.
Officers responded to 1865 Lincoln Blvd (7-11) regarding a Person with a Weapon. The comments of the call stated a female was in the store threatening employees with a knife. Upon arrival, officers detained Alona Kelsey and a male in front of the store. Witnesses stated that the female and male entered the store together. Kelsey began taking items off the shelves and placing them in a black bag. Her male companion grabbed cookies and proceeded to the check out line where he paid for his items. A store employee confronted Kelsey regarding the items she placed in her bag and grabbed the bag in an attempt to pull it from the suspect. Store employees stated Kelsey then attempted to pull a collapsible knife from her pocket upon which time they call 9-1-1. Officers located two knives on her person at the time of arrest. Kelsey was booked for the following violations: 211 P.C. Attempt Robbery; 11375 (b) (2) H&S Possession of Sedatives and Benzodiazepine and 166 (a) (4) P.C. Violation of a Court Order

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 212 CALLS ON FEBRUARY 21

Trespassing 100blk Wilshire Blvd 12:45 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1600blk Lincoln Blvd 1:59 a.m.
Trespassing 500blk Wilshire Blvd 2:20 a.m.
Trespassing 1300blk 4th St 3:04 a.m.
Trespassing 1100blk Pico Blvd 4:41 a.m.
Encampment 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 6:07 a.m.
Burglary Report 1100blk Pico Blvd 6:11 a.m.
Encampment 1900blk The Beach 6:32 a.m.
Encampment 2000blk Ocean Front Walk 6:38 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 2200blk Virginia Ave 6:38 a.m.
Trespassing 1700blk Main St 7:07 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 19th St / San Vicente Blvd 7:07 a.m.
Burglary Report 1000blk 4th St 7:13 a.m.
Critical Missing Person 2100blk Delaware Ave 7:39 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 700blk Palisades Beach Rd 7:44 a.m.
Burglary Report 1100blk 11th St 9:12 a.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 1100blk 9th St 9:25 a.m.
Encampment 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 9:37 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 2300blk Wilshire Blvd 9:58 a.m.
Encampment 1800blk Ocean Front Walk 10:08 a.m.
Auto Burglary Report 2000blk 21st St 10:27 a.m.
Burglary Report 1000blk Ocean Ave 10:44 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 1200blk Grant St 11:17 a.m.
Auto Burglary Now 14th St / California Ave 11:18 a.m.
Trespassing 1400blk 17th St 11:38 a.m.
Burglary Report 1200blk 14th St 11:39 a.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries City Prop Involved 2900blk 31st St 11:44 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 2200blk Wilshire Blvd 12:15 p.m.
Battery Report 1600blk Appian Way 12:28 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 3100blk Colorado Ave 12:40 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Now 800blk Pico Blvd 12:46 p.m.
Trespassing 900blk 4th St 1:37 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Just Occurred 1300blk 14th St 1:37 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 2600blk 5th St 1:43 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1800blk 17th St 2:04 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred Main St / Bay St 2:12 p.m.
Person With A Gun Main St / Colorado Ave 2:14 p.m.
Trespassing 600blk Pier Ave 3:09 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 400blk 23rd St 3:26 p.m.
Assault Just Occurred 16th St / Santa Monica Blvd 3:27 p.m.
Trespassing 1000blk Ocean Park Blvd 3:58 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred Ocean Ave / California Ave 4:18 p.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon Just Occurred 200blk Santa Monica Pier 4:45 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Just Occurred Lincoln Blvd / Pico Blvd 5:05 p.m.
Trespassing 2000blk 14th St 5:06 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1200blk 2nd St 5:25 p.m.
Trespassing 700blk Broadway 5:35 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Just Occurred 200blk Broadway 7:31 p.m.
Trespassing 1300blk 4th St 8:51 p.m.
Violation Of Restraining Order Just Occurred 1500blk 10th St 9:18 p.m.
Trespassing 1500blk Euclid St 9:38 p.m.
Trespassing 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 10:41 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred 100blk Broadway 11:11 p.m.
Encampment 1600blk Ocean Ave 11:18 p.m.

SEND YOUR NEWS TO THE EDITOR
Santa Monica Daily Press
editor@smdp.com

Letter to the Editor

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Editor:

Whether you like Rush Limbaugh or not is no concern of mine.

In the 80's, AM radio was on the rapid decline. Few shows were left like the comedic team of Hudson and Landry (later Hudson and Judson.), the wit and wisdom of Paul Harvey and the great voice of Gary Owens.

Mr. Limbaugh began his political commentary show in Sacramento sending the ratings through the roof so much that other AM station began syndicating it all over the country revitalizing the AM industry.

He paved the way for shock jocks as Dennis Erectus, Howard Stern, Bob Imus and many more.

Whitney Bain, Santa Monica

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SMDP survey looks for thoughts on reopening efforts

The Santa Monica Daily Press has created a poll to gauge how parents, teachers and stakeholders of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District feel the local district should handle its reopening efforts.

The school district has sent out polls to parents in previous months, but some of the poll questions were criticized.

The SMDP poll was created, because "we have had lots of parents, stakeholders and residents reach out to us and ask for a neutral poll that would take the real pulse of the community," Publisher Ross Furukawa said.

The poll also identifies the relationship the person taking it has with the district, so by tomorrow we should have a "pretty good idea where the different stakeholders sit on a number of issues".

To complete the survey, visit. www.smdp.com/poll.

SMDP

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 23 CALLS ON FEBRUARY 21

E.M.S. Main St / Hill St 1:40 a.m.
E.M.S. 1500Blk 9Th St 2:11 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 100Blk Wilshire Blvd 7:50 a.m.
E.M.S. 500Blk Olympic Blvd W 10:24 a.m.
E.M.S. 800Blk Lincoln Blvd 10:48 a.m.
Public Assist 2000Blk 21St St 11:13 a.m.
E.M.S. 2200Blk Colorado Ave 12:34 p.m.
E.M.S. 1800Blk 9Th St 12:51 p.m.
E.M.S. 800Blk Ocean Ave 2:04 p.m.
E.M.S. 800Blk 2Nd St 2:12 p.m.
E.M.S. 1500Blk Ocean Ave 2:41 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 500Blk San Vicente Blvd 3:22 p.m.
Alert 3 - Crash 3300Blk Donald Douglas Loop N 3:26 p.m.
E.M.S. 1400Blk 7Th St 5:05 p.m.
Traffic Collision with Injury 4Th St / Pico Blvd 5:09 p.m.
E.M.S. 700Blk Pico Blvd 5:44 p.m.
E.M.S. 1200Blk 16Th St 6:18 p.m.
Public Assist 900Blk 21St St 8:26 p.m.
E.M.S. 2500Blk 4Th St 10:16 p.m.
E.M.S. 2200Blk 29Th St 11:09 p.m.
Miscellaneous Outside Fire 1400Blk Ocean Ave 11:31 p.m.



City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Santa Monica invites sealed proposals for

RFP: #285 TURNKEY DEMAND RESPONSE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

• Submission Deadline is April 2, 2021 at 5:00 PM Pacific Time.

Proposals must include forms furnished by the City of Santa Monica. Request for Proposals may be obtained on the CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL. The website for this Request for Proposals and related documents is: Planet Bids or http://vendors.planetbids.com/SantaMonica/bidsearch4.cfm. There is no charge for the RFP package.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL VIA TELECONFERENCE

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 Issued by Governor Gavin Newsom

SUBJECT: Proposed Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance Establishing Temporary Land Use Restrictions Prohibiting Non-Residential Development Citywide with Some Exceptions and Prohibiting Single-Unit Dwellings in Commercial Zones in order to Retain Potential Housing Sites Pending the Completion of the Housing Element Update.

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to introduce and adopt an Emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance establishing temporary land-use restrictions prohibiting non-residential development citywide with some exceptions and prohibiting single-unit dwellings in commercial zones, in order to retain potential housing sites pending the completion of the Housing Element update.

DATE/TIME: TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021, AT 6:30 P.M.

LOCATION: In an effort to reduce the risk of spreading Coronavirus (COVID-19), members of the City Council and City Staff will participate via teleconference. The meeting will be broadcast on CityTV Channel 16 and streamed on the City's website as normal but participants may also join the teleconference via https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/bhgtxxge or by dialing in at 1-415-466-7000 (PIN: 1787691#)

HOW TO COMMENT

The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Written public comment can be submitted via email to councilmtgitems@smgov.net. Written public comment submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You can pre-register to speak no later than one hour before the start of the meeting at santamonica.gov/public-comment. You will need to provide: (1) your name as it will appear on the BlueJeans system (2) the agenda item(s) on which you wish to comment, and (3) how many minutes you want to speak on an item. Sign-in to the meeting as an Attendee, before the item on which you wish to speak is called. When the time comes for public comment on the agenda item(s) for which you have pre-registered, you will be called on and temporarily promoted to be a Presenter to provide oral public comment via video and/or audio.

If you have not pre-registered but decide you want to speak on a particular agenda item, please call (310) 458-8423 once the caller queue for the agenda item opens. Please note that the caller queue for each agenda item will not open until just before the item is called and will close after the first five public comments (from pre-registrants and/or other callers) are heard.

Please see March 9, 2021 City Council Agenda for more detailed instructions.

Address your comments to: City Clerk
Re: Emergency IZO - Temporary Land Use Restrictions

MORE INFORMATION

If you want more information about this project or wish to review the project file, please contact Jing Yeo by e-mail at jing.yeo@smgov.net. The Zoning Ordinance is available on the City's web site at www.smgov.net. For disability-related accommodations, please contact (310) 458-8341 or (310) 458-8696 TTY at least 72 hours in advance. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ESPAÑOL

Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar aplicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-8341.



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What's the Point?

David Pisarra
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

What is the truth?

The alert came across my phone, "Dylan Farrow on Allen v. Farrow response: "The truth is something that cannot be changed." I posted it to my Facebook account with this: "Been to Family Court lately?" Which sparked a discussion about the allegations. My position is that I have do not have information either way to know what is, or is not true in regards to them. I don't think anyone outside of Mr. Allen, Ms. Farrow and Dylan have enough actual information to truly know what happened. The rest of us are merely picking sides based on who we want to support and then we justify our beliefs with pieces of the story that fit our stated support.

I say this based on more than 20 years in Family Court where Truth is, shall we say, flexible? For example, a couple that has been together 20+ years, raised a family and both like to yell at each other. In fact, it's their primary communication style. Absent any physical violence is it abusive? Maybe. Can we tell who is the 'primary aggressor' in any single interaction? hard to suss out. But if one party goes to court and claims it's now abusive, it's now abuse. But is it really? The truth is flexible in family court. It's based on perceptions. The perception of the Petitioner is colored by their desires and emotions. The perception of the Respondent is colored by their need to justify their actions and life choices. The judge and the lawyers all have their perceptions, which are based on their experiences and biases.

What are the drivers of our biases? Our family of origin is one, the geographic area that we grew up in, or have experienced, also color our lenses. Plus basic biology impacts how we see the world, the traumatic events of our childhood or not, will dictate what we respond to and how. And then there's the media, social media, and our lived experiences.

The "media" is blamed a lot these days as untrustworthy, corrupt, owned by the corporate "overlords" who are supposedly out to control us. I don't buy that, well not too much. It depends on the outlet. When I want to know objective facts, I have to check with multiple sources and then I learn that some outlets are far more consistently reliable than others. Yes all news can be slanted, all 'facts' can be subtly shaded to lean in a direction, but that is why the consumer must do their due diligence. This is why reading skills are so important, why English needs to be taught with greater diligence in our schools, so that people can learn that an adverb or an adjective will impact what is written, and that they are not facts, but shades.

For example in my elderly couple above, I wrote that they 'yelled' at each other, but if I put "angrily" in front of that, it has a different meaning than "jokingly". The shades of language are what will paint a different picture. Humans are complex in our language and in our interactions

I believe in the vast bulk of our news agencies. Journalists try to tell the truth as best they can. It's just not always clear what the truth is. History has a way of clearing the fog from our collective lenses, but that unfortunately takes time, reflection and often, the disclosure of important facts that was being held back for a variety of reasons, usually to protect someone's hidden interests, a secret affair, an off the books business, or even a second family. Frequently it is the diligent work of the journalists, working tirelessly over years, searching in dark basements, musty libraries, and lately, through mountains of computer data to find the trail that leads to a 'truth' that someone wanted to hide.

Sometimes that trail will go cold and the 'truth' will never be truly told. That happens a lot in family court, one person's truth is another's lie. The best example of how two people can see the same thing and be totally sure they are right, and the other side is wrong is with the sketch of two people looking at a number on the ground, one sees a "6" and one a "9". Who is telling the truth about what is really there? Both? Neither?

Will we ever truly know what happened with Dylan Farrow and Woody Allen? I doubt it, the best we can do is look to what the alleged facts are, and from our perspective, try to suss out who we want to support.

Is the truth unchangeable? Not so much…

David Pisarra is a Los Angeles Divorce and Child Custody Lawyer specializing in Father's and Men's Rights with the Santa Monica firm of Pisarra & Grist. He welcomes your questions and comments. He can be reached at dpisarra@pisarra.com or 310/664-9969. You can follow him on Twitter @davidpisarra



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WINNER

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters to the Editor can be submitted to letters@smdp.com. Receipt of a letter does not guarantee publication and all content is published at the discretion of the paper. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content. All submissions must include the author's name, address and phone number for the purposes of verification.

Letter to the Editor

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

My wife and I withdrew our daughters (two first graders) from Franklin Elementary, effective today. Below is the email we sent to the board members and Dr. Drati on Friday explaining the reasons for our decision. We are excited that our daughters will be able to attend in-person school, full days, 5 days a week, but also sad to be leaving the public school system. Unfortunately, SMMUSD has failed us at this time, and so we feel we were left with little choice:

Dear Board Members and Dr. Drati,

I am writing to advise you that my wife Lauren and I are withdrawing our daughters from enrollment at Franklin Elementary, effective Monday, February 22 through the end of this academic school year. I will email Ms. McGregory separately to provide her with their information and any additional necessary information to effectuate their withdrawal.

We have made every possible effort to make Franklin Elementary work for our family. However, it is apparent at this point that it is against our children's interest for them to continue at Franklin Elementary for the remainder of this academic year. The specific reasons for our decision, in as concise of a manner as possible, are as follows:

1. Our children are suffering. As you know, over the past few months I have been strongly advocating for our elementary schools, particularly TK-2, to reopen as soon and as fully as possible, while complying with the CDPH and LACDPH requirements. It has been extremely frustrating to read the extensive science supporting safe reopening of schools, while simultaneously watching my children suffer. They used to love school. Now they hate it. They used to be happy, active, outgoing children excited about life. Now we deal with temper tantrums, unwillingness to get out of bed to attend school, and other emotional and psychological issues that I will not detail out of respect for their privacy. I cannot overstate how much they are suffering, and the sorrow and frustration that it brings me.

2. Communication failures. I appreciate the more recent efforts to provide information to the parents on a semi-regular basis, but the communication before that, particularly during the summer and fall of 2020, was absolutely abysmal, and it created the optic that nothing was being done to prepare our schools for reopening. Notably, we still have not been provided with any sort of visualization of what our classrooms look like, and what specific safety precautions have been put in place. Based on the comments last night, it seems as though teachers have likewise not been provided this information and, as a result, have a serious distrust of this process.

3. Failure to obtain the TK-2 waiver. I remain appalled that our district and schools were not prepared to timely submit a waiver to reopen TK-2 while in the purple tier, particularly in light of other schools doing so. Regardless of when, whether, and how the waiver would have been utilized, the district should have been in a position to timely apply for and obtain the waiver.

4. Approval of the DL+ reopening plan. This decision was made against the overwhelming scientific consensus at the time (including the CDC), as well as the desires of the parents (particularly the parents of the elementary-aged students). It also reflected a willingness to bend to demands of the teachers' union while sacrificing our kids' mental health and academic success. I explicitly predicted at the December 17 meeting that we would all regret the decision to approve DL+. I leave you to consider whether that prediction was accurate.

5. Abandonment of the "coalition of the willing". I remain in the dark as to how, when, by whom, and why the decision was made to abandon the concept of the "coalition of the willing". There are parents who are willing to send their children back to school, and there are teachers who are willing to return to teach. After DL+ was approved, efforts should have been made to identify parents and teachers who were willing to return to in-person instruction as soon as permissible under the CDPH and LACDPH guidelines for in-person instruction. That effort was not made, and now there are children and teachers who are unnecessarily being forced to stay home, while our schools are empty. I understand that the waiver process was eliminated after the coalition of the willing concept was expressed, but that elimination should have made it easier rather than more difficult to implement the coalition of the willing. Indeed, the express intention of the state in eliminating the waiver process was to make it easier, not harder, for the children to return to school.

6. Voluntarily keeping our schools closed despite meeting the case rate threshold for reopening. As of Tuesday, February 16, our schools were closed not because of the pandemic, but because of an agreement that our childrens' interests should be cast aside in order to once again appease unreasonable demands of the teachers' union. More egregiously, I don't believe this was a decision that was within the board's discretion - I am unaware of any authority that permits the board to voluntarily close the schools in the middle of the school year, during a time when there are no legal obstacles to being open, without any input from the taxpayers. According to the SMMUSD Board Bylaws, "The Board of Education believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interests of every student in the district." I don't believe that primary responsibility has been satisfied during this process.

7. Lack of a plan. To this day, almost a full year after the pandemic began and during a time when our schools are permitted to reopen in some capacity, there is still no concrete plan in place for reopening. How it is possible to go 11 months without finalizing a reopening plan is beyond my comprehension.

As Mr. Tahvildaran-Jesswein aptly said during the board meeting last night "the kids come first". The interests of my children have not been put first - instead, the board has sacrificed their interests in order to appease nonscientific, unreasonable demands of the teachers' union. I can no longer sit idly by as the emotional, social, and academic well being of my children is sacrificed in order to appease those fear-based demands. I have come to learn over the past few months that you are all kind, hard working people. But, to be perfectly frank, you have not done enough to advocate for the interests of our children.

I make this decision with a very, very heavy heart. I am a proud product of the Los Angeles County public school system, and I attended UC Berkeley - an excellent public

SEE **LETTER** PAGE 6

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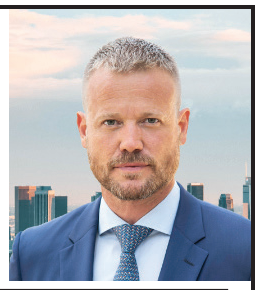
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3 children hurt when car drives into daycare north of LA

JAKE BLEIBERG
Associated Press

The seam that split in a pipe under Nora Espinoza's sink during the frigid cold that gripped Texas was narrower than the edge of a dime.

Her kitchen appeared mostly undamaged, but the plumber that cut into Espinoza's wall found water had been pouring in underneath the floor. She expects the repairs to cost $15,000.

Espinoza, a 56-year-old Dallas resident, is among those still getting a sense of the wreckage left by the icy blast that hit Texas and much of the Deep South last week, knocking out power to millions and contributing to nearly 80 deaths. Soaked drywall and carpet is being pulled back to give a fuller view of the destruction, and the political peril for elected leaders and energy officials who were unable to keep the heat on in places unaccustomed to freezing cold.

Snow and ice melted across Texas over the weekend, but plumbers are still racing from home to home to patch uncounted stretches of burst pipe. Many residents are unsure when they'll be able to make permanent repairs, what they'll have to pay out of pocket or even when they'll be able to go home.

Roberto Valerio, a plumber in North Texas, said the broken pipes and other problems caused by the storm had led to "big chaos."

"We can't find what we need easily," he said. "There's a great shortage of supplies."

In the Houston area, officials on Monday announced they have set up a relief fund to help cover the cost of repairs and temporary housing for vulnerable families. Gov. Greg Abbott has indicated his fiercely independent state needs help. His office encouraged out-of-state plumbers to come fix Texas pipes.

For Espinoza, who said her home dropped to 38 degrees Fahrenheit (3.33 degrees Celsius) before the power was restored and the pipe burst Friday, it's far too little, far too late

"Your job is to protect us. That's why we voted you in," Espinoza said of Abbott as she fought tears while waiting for a plumber. "My pipes would have never burst, never, if I had power."

A rushing sound could be heard in Espinoza's kitchen Saturday night, when Valerio turned the water back on. He made temporary repairs, but it'll be weeks before he can come back to do more work and determine whether the floor needs to be replaced.

Espinoza fears the spread of mold may do more damage in that time and is unsure what her insurance will cover. But she is nonetheless grateful: She can take hot showers and her small dogs have emerged from the pile of blankets where they spent last week's days of frigid cold.

"I do consider myself to be very lucky," she said Monday.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has delivered more than 1 million meals to Texas, the Defense Department has delivered more than 4 million liters of water and it continues to deliver water in bulk to multiple locations in the state, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday. The federal government also delivered dozens of emergency generators and more than 120,000 blankets to Texans over the weekend. President Joe Biden hopes to visit Texas as early as this week, Psaki said.

Tens of thousands of people in Mississippi and Louisiana also still lacked water or had very low water pressure Monday, even with weather warming up days after a winter storm.

Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo said about $2.25 million has so far been raised to help pay for repairs and housing for Houston-area families who lack insurance or who don't qualify for federal assistance. That includes a $1 million donation from the foundation of CenterPoint Energy, the utility that provides electricity for the Houston area, she said.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner asked area residents with the means to donate to the fund.

"Many families through no fault of their own have homes that are uninhabitable because their pipes froze during the arctic blast," said Turner.

Associated Press journalists Nomaan Merchant and Juan A. Lozano in Houston and Aamer Madhani in Washington contributed to this report.

LETTER

FROM PAGE 5

university. For almost my entire life, my mother has been a teacher at public colleges in LA County, and spent decades teaching at Santa Monica Community College, as well as leading their teachers' union and advocating for the teachers' rights. I have always believed that paying our teachers more and funding public schools as much as possible is the solution to many of our society's problems - racial inequity, uneducated political decision-making, drug abuse, poverty, and more. It goes against every principle belief that I hold concerning the education system to pay for my children to attend private school. But at this point, I have no choice. I simply cannot justify subjecting my children to anything less than the maximum amount of in-person instruction possible, and it is clear that the SMMUSD is not interested in providing that opportunity at this time. There is nothing more valuable in my life than my childrens' well-being, and so I am left with little option but to contribute to the private school system. I do this knowing that I am contributing to inequity and disenfranchisement of our less privileged populations. But I must put my children first.

I hope that my children will be able to re-enroll at Franklin Elementary for the Fall of 2021. I trust that steps will be taken in the interim period to prepare our schools for the maximum amount of in-person instruction possible.

I wish you all the best during this very difficult time. And don't worry, I'll still be at the board meetings, continuing to push for the maximum amount of in-person learning possible.

Amir Torkamani, Santa Monica

California OKs $600 stimulus payments for 5.7 million people

ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

California lawmakers on Monday cleared the way for 5.7 million people to get at least $600 in one-time payments, part of a state-sized coronavirus relief package aimed at helping lower-income people weather what they hope is the last legs of the pandemic.

The state Legislature passed the bill by a wide margin on Monday, moving faster than their counterparts in Congress who are also considering another round of stimulus checks for the nation.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said he will sign it into law on Tuesday. People who are eligible for the money should get it at between 45 days and 60 days after receiving their state tax refunds, according to the Franchise Tax Board.

One of those people is Judy Jackson, a 75-year-old former teacher and cancer survivor who lives off of about $1,000 a month from other government programs. Jackson said she would use part the money to pay off a freezer she bought so she could have food delivered to her home and avoid going out to shop for groceries during the pandemic.

"Most months I'm worried at the end of the month whether the money is going to run out before the month does," said Jackson, who said she is at higher risk for COVID-19 because of her age and a number of underlying health conditions. "This will make it possible to have a little extra and maybe buy an ice cream occasionally."

The stimulus payments are part of a broader aid package the state Legislature approved Monday worth $7.6 billion. It includes more than $2 billion in grants for small businesses, waives about $25.6 million worth of business fees for struggling restaurants and hair salons and provides $30 million in aid for food banks and another $5 million for diaper banks.

The stimulus checks target fewer people than the federal stimulus payments last year. About $2.3 billion will go to those who claim and receive the California earned income tax credit. In general, that's people who earn $30,000 a year or less.

Another $470 million will go to people who earn a maximum of $75,000 per year after deductions and use an individual taxpayer identification number to file their income taxes. These are mostly people who don't have Social Security numbers, including immigrants.t

Some people fit both of those categories. In those cases, they will get $1,200, not $600. The Democratic-controlled state Legislature did this because most people who file their taxes this way are immigrants who were not eligible for federal stimulus checks Congress approved last year.

About $993 million will go to people who get help from state programs targeting low-income families, the elderly, the blind and the disabled.

California has the money to do this in part because the state — the nation's most populous with nearly 40 million residents — has lots of wealthy people who have been less impacted by the pandemic and continue to pay taxes.

California lost 1.5 million jobs last year, mostly lower-wage earners in the hospitality and restaurant industry. Meanwhile, employment among people who earn $60,000 a year or more went up last year as people transitioned to working from home.

The result is California has an estimated $15 billion one-time surplus to spend this year, a number that could grow even higher later this year once more people file their tax returns.

"We need to acknowledge that this pandemic has not hit us all equally," said state Assemblyman Joaquin Arambula, a Democrat from Fresno.

California has some of the most stringent coronavirus business rules in the country, banning indoor dining in much of the state and ordering retailers to limit the number of people allowed inside their stores.

Last year, Newsom used his emergency authority to set aside $500 million for grants of up to $25,000 for small businesses impacted by the pandemic. But in the first round of funding, the state received more than 334,000 applications totaling more than $4.4 billion in grants.

On Monday, the Legislature added another $2 billion to that program. Businesses that have between $1,000 and $2.5 million in revenue are eligible, and they must be open or at least have a plan to reopen when they are allowed.

Assemblyman Mike Gipson, a Democrat from Carson, said small business owners in his district have been "praying for an answer."

"This is the answer to their prayers," he said.

But some Republicans, while voting for the bill, criticized Newsom for "the hurt and harm" he caused businesses by ordering statewide shutdowns during the height of the pandemic.

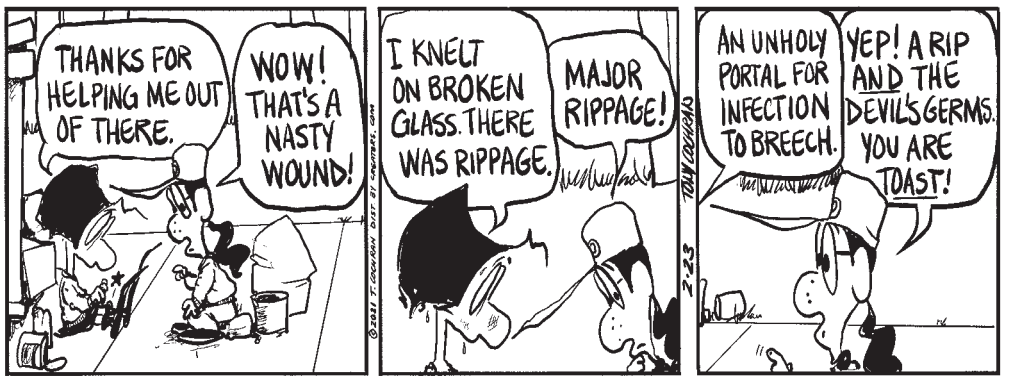
"This bill didn't have to be as big as it is today," said Assemblyman James Gallagher, a Republican from Yuba City. "This governor arbitrarily and unilaterally decided to shut down most of the small business in this state. As a result, many businesses have already gone out of business and that should be a problem for every one of us."

This story was written by the Associated Press



Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



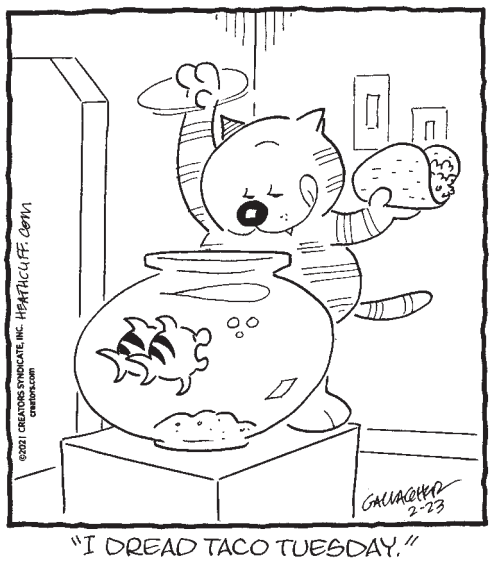
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"I DREAD TACO TUESDAY."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 55.6°

TUESDAY - **POOR** - SURF: 0.5-1ft Shin to knee high
Steep new NW swell trends up through the day, along with a little S pulse. Late afternoon offers the best potential.

WEDNESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ Waist to stomach high
Steep NW swell mix up from Tuesday, small S pulse. AM winds look light, but mind the deep early AM high tide.

WEATHER

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 72.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 52.
Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 67.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2021/02/23	Tue	12:08 AM	2.49	L
2021/02/23	Tue	06:15 AM	5.20	H
2021/02/23	Tue	1:39 PM	-0.59	L
2021/02/23	Tue	8:16 PM	3.59	H
2021/02/24	Wed	12:50 AM	2.15	L
2021/02/24	Wed	06:57 AM	5.62	H
2021/02/24	Wed	2:08 PM	-0.91	L
2021/02/24	Wed	8:36 PM	3.82	H
2021/02/25	Thu	01:28 AM	1.77	L
2021/02/25	Thu	07:35 AM	5.95	H
2021/02/25	Thu	2:38 PM	-1.11	L
2021/02/25	Thu	8:59 PM	4.07	H
2021/02/26	Fri	02:06 AM	1.39	L
2021/02/26	Fri	08:13 AM	6.13	H
2021/02/26	Fri	3:08 PM	-1.17	L
2021/02/26	Fri	9:25 PM	4.33	H
2021/02/27	Sat	02:46 AM	1.03	L
2021/02/27	Sat	08:52 AM	6.09	H
2021/02/27	Sat	3:39 PM	-1.04	L
2021/02/27	Sat	9:54 PM	4.60	H
2021/02/28	Sun	03:30 AM	0.74	L

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERball
Draw Date: 2/20
4 8 22 32 58
Power#: 4
Jackpot: 90 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 2/19
27 32 47 50 53
Mega#: 4
Jackpot: 22 M

SuperLotto PLUS
Draw Date: 2/20
2 5 8 21 45
Mega#: 11
Jackpot: 23 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 2/21
3 6 19 26 36

Daily 3
Draw Date: 2/21
EVENING: 2 0 1
Draw Date: 2/21
MIDDAY: 3 8 1

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 2/21
1st: 02 - Lucky Star
2nd: 05 - California Classic
3rd: 11 - Money Bags
Race Time: 1:47.09

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (FEBRUARY 23)

The superficial goals get met, but they are not the ones that are important to you anymore. You go deeper and ask, "What else?" The question starts a process of creativity and outreach. You'll move through feelings and relationships, receptive to the great gifts coming your way. You resonate with vitality. Aries and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 24, 22, 1 and 15.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're attracted to people and things for a reason, though sometimes not a good one, or at least not good enough to warrant further action. True wisdom is knowing what's worth pursuing.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You will work up a lot of energy and put it into the thing you desire. Is it industriousness, manifestation or magic? Whatever you call it, it's a recipe that's bringing you what you want.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't forget about the power of anticipation. The more a person waits for something, the more he or she wants it. Attention is an investment. A very effective way to hold attention is in the style of a dangling carrot.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You could give them what they want straight away. Then they will expect that every time. This kind of stability builds trust. Sometimes trust is what's needed; other times, surprise is the key element.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). No one is born knowing how to handle this world and get along with people. All of the behaviors have to be learned. Your open mind and forgiving heart will keep you perpetually learning.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). There are those who think that only a fool responds to problems without critical thought. What you know is that sometimes, relying on your unthinking response is the wisest move you can make.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There's such a thing as too much structure. Uptight scenes could use a playful, disruptive force. Your childlike impulses may surprise them at first but will prove to be a force for good.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your social instincts are on point. You know when to get serious and when to lighten the mood, take a risk and go for the laugh. Deep connections can be (and often are) made out of a string of lighthearted moments.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Whatever you are going through, you know that others are in the same boat. And still, others are in a sinking ship, envying your boat or seeing it as their rescue.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You are part of the brew, the magic element that makes it sing, in fact. So, the successes of the group are also your successes, and you will do well to celebrate with all the pride of ownership.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your patience will be tested, if not your temper, but you've much more self-control than the forces that bear. People see how well you handle yourself, and you'll rise in the esteem of a key player.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You've a talent for sharing just the right and necessary thing. You'll teach someone a skill or value that maybe doesn't seem like a big deal to you, though it has life-changing potential.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

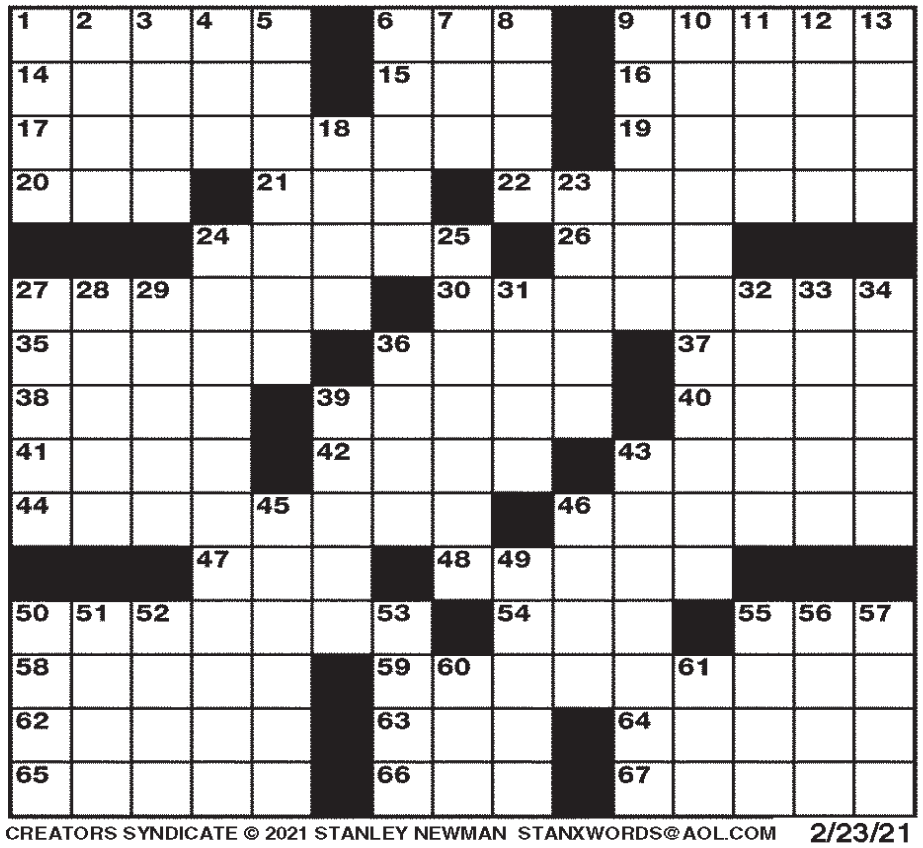
2	5	6	7	9	8	3	4	1
8	1	7	3	5	4	6	2	9
9	4	3	1	2	6	8	5	7
7	6	2	9	4	5	1	8	3
3	9	5	2	8	1	4	7	6
4	8	1	6	3	7	5	9	2
5	7	9	8	1	3	2	6	4
6	3	4	5	7	2	9	1	8
1	2	8	4	6	9	7	3	5

Newsday Crossword

PAIR OF KINGS by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Flat French hat
6 Crunchy sandwich letters
9 What planes fly through
14 San Antonio site to "remember"
15 Sunbeam
16 Molar or incisor
17 Site of the Wright Brothers' flight
19 "Ain't so!" reply
20 Twisty letter
21 "That's amazing!"
22 Fascinate
24 Pottery ovens
26 Eisenhower nickname
27 Soundness of mind
30 Horseback jaunt for a kid
35 Piece of fabric
36 Bit of plumbing
37 Linen fiber
38 Campus mil. org.
39 Becomes dim
40 Italy's capital, in Italy
41 "This doesn't look good"
42 Matured
43 Entangle, as yarn
44 Renovation
46 "That's the truth!"
47 Sergeant, for one: Abbr.
48 Sirloin or T-bone
50 Orchestra conductor
54 Possessed
55 Body art, for short
58 Easy __ (simple)
59 Know how something is changing
62 Tour of duty
63 Male sheep
64 Sound part of a broadcast
65 Woolen footwear
66 "My lips __ sealed"
67 Enjoys a novel

DOWN
1 Cook in the oven
2 Yale students
3 Lab maze runners
4 CPR expert
5 Think casually about
6 Muscular strength
7 Attorney's field
8 Little kid
9 Awkward, as a situation
10 Hot dog for a rabbi
11 Tiny bit
12 Elite British boarding school
13 Took a photo of
18 Sacred
23 Halves of a golf course
24 Place for dirty dishes
25 Web-spinning crawlers
27 Disorderly crowd, in London
28 Luau greeting
29 Unacceptable
31 Newspaper's think piece
32 Start of a valentine phrase
33 Titled British women
34 Praise highly
36 Calendar sheet
39 Kind deed
43 Highway gunk
45 Groups of eight
46 Messy pile
49 Central idea
50 Where Boston is: Abbr.
51 On the subject of
52 Grand-scale tale
53 Gumbo veggie
55 "Look, I did it!"
56 Corrosive chemical
57 Ring decisions, briefly
60 Something to whisper into
61 Wish undone



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2021 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 2/23/21

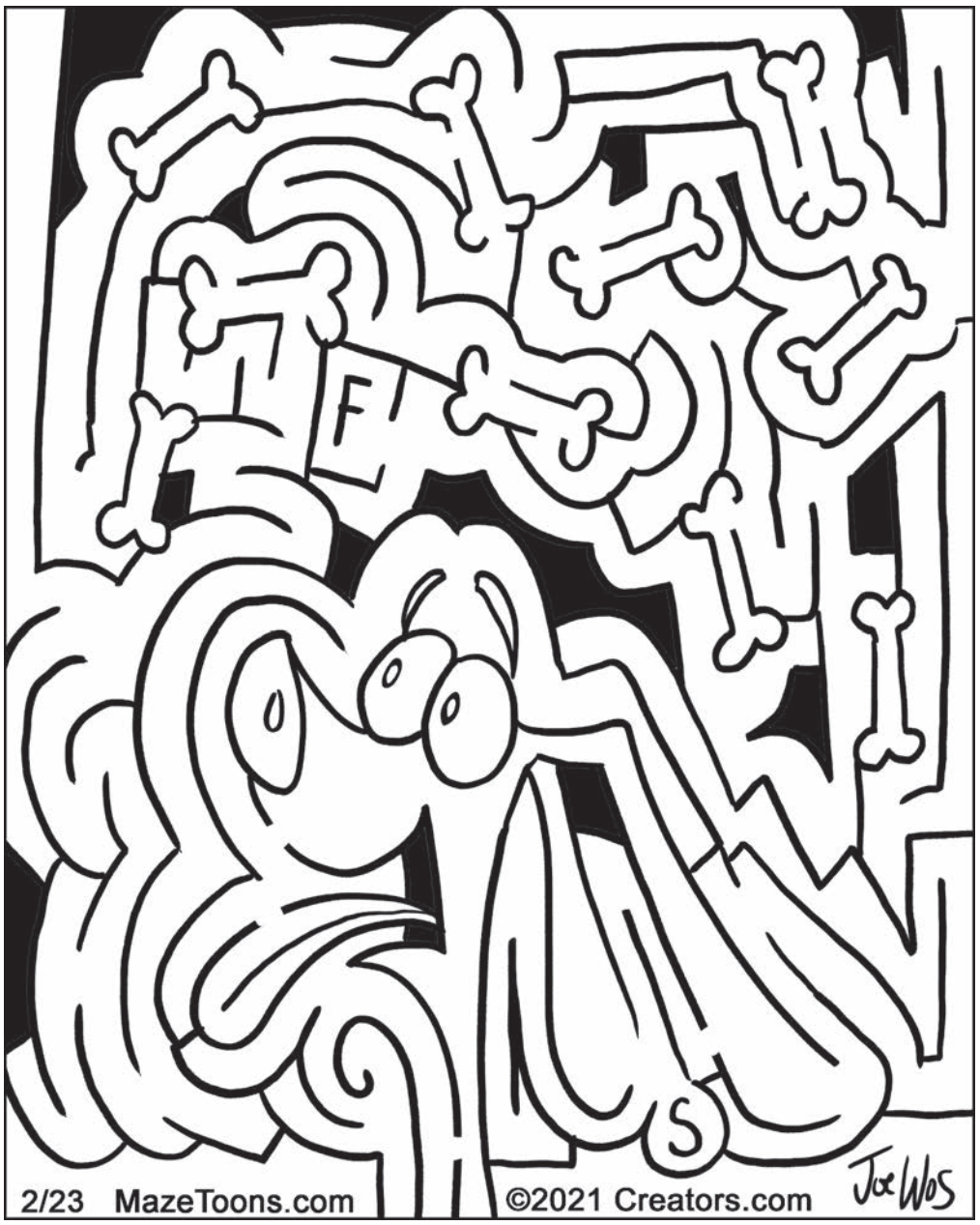
Binary Puzzle

Each cell should contain a zero or a one. No more than two similar numbers below or next to each other are allowed. Each row and each column is unique and contains as many zeros as ones.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1

				0							0
0											1
0				1	1						1
							1			0	
			1	1				1			0
									1	1	
		1				1				1	
									1		1
				1		1	1		1	1	
	1					1		0			1



"The City of Bell spectacle is what happens to communities without their own old-fashioned, diligent news coverage." - Terry Francke, Journalist

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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 24 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 5039

Cooking up a storm

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

Apron	Dice	Lean	Score
Beef	Dust	Lukewarm	Sear
Blend	Eggs	Offal	Shred
Board	Entree	Oven	Sift
Boil	Fatty	Pans	Skim
Burnt	Fold	Peel	Snags
Cakes	Fork	Pies	Steak
Care	Gratin	Planked	Stir
Chicken	Grill	Poach	T-bone
Cook	Heat	Rabbit	Technique
Cube	Herbs	Salad	Toss
Cure	Knead	Satay	Veal
Cuts	Lamb	Scallop	Whip

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
An enjoyable workout

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TEACHERS

FROM PAGE 1

Supervisors Chair, Hilda Solis.

Solis is putting forward a motion at the BOS meeting on Tuesday to distribute millions of N95 masks to schools across the County. Solis also highlighted an urgent need to support the Biden administration's 'American Rescue Plan', which would provide billions in federal funding to help reopen schools.

The County received the green light to reopen elementary schools last week after cases dropped below the threshold of 25 cases per 100,000 residents. Cases are currently hovering just below 20 per 100,000.

Secondary schools may reopen once case rates reach 7 per 100,000 residents.

"This is a goal we can all get behind," said Ferrer.

Across L.A. County case, hospitalization and death rates continue to trend downwards.

The seven day number of average cases is now 1,600 a day, representing a 90 percent decrease from the peak of over 15,000 recorded on Jan. 8.

On Monday health officials reported that 1,770,505 people have received at least one vaccine dose, representing 17.6 percent of L.A. County. As of Saturday, 18.6 percent of Santa Monica residents had received one dose.

Vaccinating the 1.3 million new workers eligible in Phase 1b is a daunting challenge.

"We are continuing to experience a scarcity of supply and variability in the amount of vaccine we receive from week to week," said Ferrer.

The County is working with employers to establish direct appointments, clinics, and vaccination pods for Phase 1b employees so they can bypass the online appointment system.

According to Ferrer this system is one of the reasons why vaccination rates have been disproportionately low in low-income communities and communities of color. Many of these residents do not have the time or computer capacity to constantly look for online appointments slots nor the resources to travel far distances to vaccination sites.

In addition to creating vaccination pods for eligible workers, the County is also increasing the number of community organizations and local pharmacies offering vaccines with an emphasis on opening sites in hardest hit communities.

Ferrer expressed hope that the vaccination rates will increase once the FDA approves the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The FDA will meet to discuss this vaccine on Friday.

"Johnson & Johnson has the advantage of being a one dose vaccine," said Ferrer. "We'll be using Johnson & Johnson at all of our sites all across the County because it's a very effective vaccine."

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CITY

FROM PAGE 1

taxes or fees.

Cities like Denver, London and Berkeley already utilize digital wayfinding points and kiosks similar to the ones that could soon find their way into the Third Street Promenade and downtown areas, according to DTSM Inc., Kathleen Rawson.

"This is something that we have been pushing for forever and I feel the city has it mapped out pretty well already, frankly, because we have these directories in Downtown," Rawson said in an interview after the Council meeting. "These aren't your typical digital billboards, and there's no expense to the city so it's nothing but a plus in my mind."

Lee said the kiosks are beneficial for a multitude of reasons since they'll provide the ability to rotate advertisements for multiple brands and allow advertisers and local businesses a chance to more effectively engage customers in the area. They can also include pedestrian wayfinding capabilities that will detail directions to nearby public transit stops, share any pertinent emergency public health notifications, and provide local businesses with great marketing opportunities, because they're pedestrian sized directories

"So, you'd go up to it and push a logo, and you'd be able to see if that restaurant or bakery has a special going on. It'll show you, the consumer, that you can get dessert or an appetizer at a discount," Rawson explained. "And that allows local businesses to sell out the five extra cakes they made near the end of the day all while bringing in new customers with deals like free dessert; It's just very immediate."

Councilmember Kevin Mckeown asked his fellow councilmembers to be cautious about turning the Promenade into Times Square.

"I've been on this Council 22 years, and over that time I have consistently argued against the corporatization of our public spaces," McKeown said before Council's approval. "I have deep concerns about putting advertising everywhere we look and what that does to our identity… I like the idea of Wayfinding kiosks, but they can't just become digital billboards — they have to have a preponderance of useful information to justify allowing some intermittent advertising to be there as well."

Staff assured McKeown and the rest of City Council that the project would be completed in a two-phase approach so the City could focus on the best and most strategic placement of kiosks in high traffic major commercial corridors.

The first phase is expected to include approximately 25 boards in areas near Santa Monica Boulevard and the downtown area. The second phase is likely to include an additional 25 boards in similar locations but will expand to the commercial segments of Montana Avenue and Main Street.

"Once a vendor is selected through an RFP process, staff would conduct a very thorough review of each kiosk location, factoring in any other stationary structures such as streetlights and EV charging stations and bring back a detailed comprehensive list to Council for approval," Lee said. A decision on whether to proceed with the second phase would occur approximately 12 months after the first-phase deployment to allow the network to mature and to address any community concerns or unanticipated impacts.

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2021





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