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Santa Monica Daily Press

THURSDAY
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Crime Watch
Trespassing theft.
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Camp Out At Harvelle's.
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Citizen Involvement Award



Courtesy photo

THANKS: Two men are being recognized for their lifesaving efforts. On January 29 at about 3 p.m. City of Santa Monica Community Recreation employees Jose Barron and Anthony Diaz, were at the Memorial Park gym (1401 Olympic Blvd) when they witnessed an off-duty Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) employee fall to the ground and go into cardiac arrest. Without any hesitation, Jose Barron and Anthony Diaz went to the employee's aid. Bravely, they worked together, taking direction from the 9-1-1 dispatcher, as they initiated Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Upon the Santa Monica Fire Department's arrival, the employee was unconscious, however was breathing and had a pulse. He was immediately transported to the Santa Monica Emergency Hospital for further treatment. The employee fully recovered and was able to go home to his family one week later.

Cassia chef in running for California's best



Courtesy photo

CHEF: Bryant Ng has been nominated by the James Beard Foundation.

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Cassia chef Bryant Ng is a semifinalist for the Best Chef in California award from the James Beard Foundation.

The James Beard Foundation's Restaurant and Chef Award was established in 1991 and is one of

SEE **CASSIA** PAGE 7

Council says Pier enforcement will stay robust through summer

More than $3 million has been set aside for code enforcement, policing and other oversight to combat illegal street vending on the historic structure

EMILY SAWICKI
SMDP Staff Writer

The City of Santa Monica has proven it's willing to invest big bucks toward keeping its premiere tourist destination — the Pier — attractive for visitors and locals alike.

To that end, the City is prepared to pour about $3 million over the next year-and-a-half into a multi-agency collaboration focusing on law enforcement, code enforcement, health and safety, and fire prevention at the iconic destination.

On Tuesday, City Council approved a plan that would bulk up enforcement at the Pier more or less in line with a program that began eight weeks ago at the beginning of 2022: the formation of a Pier Task Force. Currently, the Task Force

SEE **PIER** PAGE 11

LA spending up to $837,000 to house a single homeless person

MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

A $1.2 billion program intended to quickly build housing for Los Angeles' sprawling homeless population is moving too slowly while costs are spiking, with one project under development expected to hit as much as $837,000 for each housing unit, a city audit disclosed Wednesday.

About 1,200 units have been completed since voters approved the spending in 2016, which was then a centerpiece in a strategy intended to get thousands of people off the streets. But the tally of units built so far is "wholly inadequate" in the context of the homeless crisis, said the audit issued by city Controller Ron Galperin.

In recent years, homeless encampments have spread into virtually every neighborhood, while the population has climbed

SEE **HOMELESS** PAGE 4

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

DENVER

Ex-UCLA lecturer accused of making threats pleads not guilty

A former lecturer at the University of California, Los Angeles, pleaded not guilty in Denver on Wednesday to allegations that he sent emails and posted videos threatening violence against the school.

One of Matthew Harris' lawyers, Ed Robinson, entered the plea during a brief hearing in federal court a day after a grand jury indicted Harris for the alleged threats, as well as weapons violations. Harris, who was arrested in Colorado, sat at a table with his two lawyers wearing a surgical mask and jail uniform but was not asked to speak.

Harris' lawyers did not argue against prosecutors' request that he continue to be held behind bars.

Harris, 31, is accused of sending emails with an 800-page document and links to videos to people at UCLA. On Feb. 1, UCLA canceled classroom instruction as a precaution and Harris was arrested in Boulder, Colorado, where he had been living in an apartment across the street from the University of Colorado.

The indictment alleges Harris also lied about never having been committed to a mental institution to try to buy a handgun and possess ammunition. According to court documents, Harris' mother told authorities he was diagnosed with schizophrenia last year and she had him involuntarily committed to a psychiatric institution after he allegedly threatened her in April.

Both of Harris' new private attorneys, Robinson and Nancy Kardon, said they could not comment on the allegations so early in the case.

Harris had lectured in UCLA's philosophy department until being put on "investigatory leave" last March after allegedly sending pornographic and violent content to his students.

Harris previously studied at Duke and Cornell universities. A trail of red flags about his behavior toward women followed him throughout his academic journey to UCLA. In online class reviews, interviews and emails obtained by The Associated Press, current and former students at all three universities alleged negligence by the schools for letting Harris slide, despite his concerning conduct.

COLLEEN SLEVIN, ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES

Storm brings rain, wind, snow and freeze to California

Ice and snow showers made travel dicey on many of California's mountain highways Wednesday as a very cold and windy storm moved through.

Many parts of the state experienced overnight freezing temperatures and a widespread hard freeze was predicted for early Thursday.

Chains were required on major Sierra Nevada routes and icy conditions disrupted travel over Interstate 5 in Tejon Pass between Los Angeles and the San Joaquin Valley and on State Route 58 in the Tehachapi Mountains east of Bakersfield.

Massive traffic jams backed up on I-5 as big rigs and cars were prevented from going over the high-elevation summit and were turned around.

More than a foot of new snow was reported by the Big Bear Mountain Resort in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles. Mammoth Mountain in the Eastern Sierra reported up to 6 inches of snow from the storm.

Showers and snowfall were expected to wind down through the day as the cold low pressure system centered over Nevada moves east and weakens on Thursday, the National Weather Service said.

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US vaccination drive is bottoming out as omicron subsides

JAY REEVES AND MIKE STOBBE
Associated Press

A handwritten log kept by nurses tells the story of the losing battle to get more people vaccinated against COVID-19 in this corner of Alabama: Just 14 people showed up at the Marion County Health Department for their initial shot during the first six weeks of the year.

That was true even as hospitals in and around the county of roughly 30,000 people filled with virus patients and the death toll climbed. On many days, no one got a first shot at all, while a Mexican restaurant up the street, Los Amigos, was full of unmasked diners at lunchtime.

The vaccination drive in the U.S. is grinding to a halt, and demand has all but collapsed in places like this deeply conservative manufacturing town where many weren't interested in the shots to begin with.

The average number of Americans getting their first shot is down to about 90,000 a day, the lowest point since the first few days of the U.S. vaccination campaign, in December 2020. And hopes of any substantial improvement in the immediate future have largely evaporated.

About 76% of the U.S. population has received at least one shot. Less than 65% of all Americans are fully vaccinated.

Vaccination incentive programs that gave away cash, sports tickets, beer and other prizes have largely gone away. Government and employer vaccine mandates have faced court challenges and may have gone as far as they ever will.

And with COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths subsiding across the U.S., people who are against getting vaccinated don't see much reason to change their minds.

"People are just over it. They're tired of it," said Judy Smith, administrator for a 12-county public health district in northwestern Alabama.

The bottoming-out of demand for the first round of vaccinations is especially evident in conservative areas around the country.

On most days in Idaho, the number of people statewide getting their first shot rarely surpasses 500.

In Wyoming, a total of about 280 people statewide got their first shot in the past week, and the waiting area at the Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department stood empty Tuesday morning. The head of the department fondly recalled just a few months ago, when the lobby was bustling on Friday afternoons after school with children getting their doses. But they aren't showing up anymore either.

"People heard more stories about, well, the omicron's not that bad," Executive Director Kathy Emmons said. "I think a lot of people just kind of rolled the dice and decided, 'Well, if it's not that bad, I'm just going to kind of wait it out and see what happens.'"

Marion County, along the Mississippi line, is part of a band of Alabama counties where most people aren't fully vaccinated more than a year after shots were rolled out. Just to the east, Winston County has the state's lowest share of fully vaccinated residents, at 26%, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About 42% are fully immunized in Marion County.

The digital sign outside First National Bank flashes Bible verses along with the temperature, and many Marion County residents work in small plants that make mobile homes and components for prefab housing. Most area jobs are blue-collar, and TVs are typically turned to Fox News. A conservative, working-class ethic runs deep.

The area went heavily for President Donald Trump in the 2020 election. And yet resistance to the vaccine is so strong that two counties over, in Cullman, some booed Trump when he encouraged vaccinations during a rally that drew thousands last summer.

COVID-19 has killed almost 18,000 people in Alabama, giving the state the nation's fourth-highest rate of deaths relative to population. Marion County's rate exceeds the state average at 1.78%, with more than 140 deaths, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

Health officials expected to have a hard time persuading Black people to get government-sponsored vaccines in Alabama, home of the infamous Tuskegee syphilis study and a place where distrust of Washington runs deep. They started work on public education campaigns weeks early in mostly Black areas, which now have some of the state's highest vaccination rates, at 60% or more.

But they didn't expect the stiff resistance among rural whites that has kept vaccination numbers stubbornly low in places like Marion County, which is 94% white. While rural transportation difficulties, confusion over vaccine costs — they're free — and a lack of health care access have also been factors, the partisan divide in America killed the vaccine drive for some before it really got started, officials said.

"Rural white men who identify as conservative are just not interested in this. That caught us off guard," said Dr. Scott Harris, head of the Alabama Department of Public Health. "By the first or second month of the vaccine campaign, it became clear that those folks just weren't going to come in."

Richard Kitchens is among that group. The owner of a clothing and sports shoe shop on the square in Hamilton, Kitchens said he isn't interested in the vaccine after getting COVID-19 in 2020 before vaccines were available and having relatives who contracted the illness, developed only minor symptoms and recovered.

Short of a proven guarantee against illness — which no vaccine provides — he doesn't see the point.

"I guess if I knew I could go out and get a shot and wouldn't get it or spread it, I would go get it, and they say it helps," Kitchens said. "But I think that will be determined sometime down the road maybe."

Doris Peterson is fully vaccinated, but she said she didn't get a booster on the advice of her two adult daughters, neither of whom is vaccinated. Peterson said she is used to being one of the few people around still wearing a mask in public.

"Most of the time I am it," she said.

Kelly Moore, a former Tennessee health

SEE **VACCINE** PAGE 5

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 286 CALLS ON FEBRUARY 22

Shots Fired 500Blk Colorado Ave 12:34 a.m.
Family Disturbance 1100Blk 12th St 1:53 a.m.
Loud Music Ocean Way / Bay St 2:26 a.m.
Prowler 200Blk 21st St 3:54 a.m.
Encampment 2400Blk 2nd St 5:27 a.m.
Fraud 1200Blk Santa Monica Blvd 6:39 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto In Progress 7th St / Pico Blvd 7:02 a.m.
Burglary 1100Blk 4th St 7:31 a.m.
Indecent Exposure 1300Blk 5th St 7:36 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto 1100Blk 26th St 7:53 a.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 14th St / Olympic Blvd 8:04 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1800Blk Centinela Ave 8:07 a.m.
Petty Theft 100Blk Broadway 8:09 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1200Blk 5th St 8:10 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 1500Blk Pacific Coast Hwy 8:18 a.m.
Burglary 100Blk Hollister Ave 8:20 a.m.
Burglary 1300Blk Harvard St 8:42 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1400Blk 4th St 8:43 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 900Blk Yale St 9:07 a.m.
Vandalism 3100Blk Neilson Way 9:08 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 500Blk 12th St 9:14 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 500Blk 12th St 9:15 a.m.
Stalking 500Blk Colorado Ave 9:25 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 300Blk Santa Monica Pier 9:54 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1400Blk 11th St 9:55 a.m.
Petty Theft 3100Blk Highland Ave 10:01 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 700Blk Ozone St 10:11 a.m.
Battery 1500Blk Olympic Blvd 10:18 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1000Blk 12th St 10:19 a.m.
Public Intoxication 1600Blk Cloverfield Blvd 10:23 a.m.
Indecent Exposure 300Blk Santa Monica Pier 10:31 a.m.
Burglary 200Blk Palisades Ave 10:52 a.m.
Traffic Control Request - Level 1 400Blk 15th St 10:58 a.m.
Petty Theft 300Blk Olympic Dr 11:23 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1900Blk Washington Ave 11:24 a.m.
Fraud 1200Blk 6th St 11:41 a.m.
Animal Related Incident Stanford St / Nebraska Ave 11:43 a.m.
Loud Music 2100Blk Colorado Ave 12:01 p.m.
Expired Registration 500Blk Euclid St 12:03 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 4th St / Pico Blvd 12:16 p.m.
Petty Theft 1300Blk Wilshire Blvd 12:17 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Neilson Way / Hill St 12:23 p.m.
Death Investigation 2300Blk Pico Blvd 12:34 p.m.
Lewd Activity 800Blk 12th St 12:36 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 1100Blk 6th St 12:43 p.m.
Expired Registration 1300Blk Alta Ave 12:46 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 20th St / Santa Monica Blvd 12:46 p.m.
Petty Theft 1900Blk 10th St 12:49 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto 300Blk Santa Monica Pier 12:50 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 2700Blk Neilson Way 12:53 p.m.
Strongarm Robbery 9th St / Colorado Ave 1:00 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 2600Blk Ocean Park Blvd 1:05 p.m.
Identity Theft 1400Blk 10th St 1:08 p.m.
Burglary 100Blk Hollister Ave 1:11 p.m.
Petty Theft 1300Blk Wilshire Blvd 1:11 p.m.
Strongarm Robbery 4th St / Broadway 1:13 p.m.
Person With A Gun 300Blk Santa Monica Pier 1:25 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 11th St / Santa Monica Blvd 1:26 p.m.
Burglary 1300Blk Stanford St 1:26 p.m.
Person Down Euclid St / Wilshire Blvd 1:53 p.m.
Theft Suspect 200Blk Broadway 1:56 p.m.
Petty Theft 200Blk Broadway 1:57 p.m.
Petty Theft 200Blk Broadway 1:59 p.m.
Fight 2200Blk Colorado Ave 2:00 p.m.
Indecent Exposure 2400Blk Pico Blvd 2:04 p.m.
Stolen Vehicle Recovered 1300Blk 2nd St 2:06 p.m.
Petty Theft 200Blk Broadway 2:20 p.m.
Petty Theft 200Blk Broadway 2:20 p.m.
Fraud 700Blk Kensington rd 3:00 p.m.
Fire Request Police 1300Blk Palisades Beach rd 3:26 p.m.
Petty Theft 2200Blk 3rd St 3:29 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries 4th St / Olympic Blvd E 3:36 p.m.
Assault 1300Blk 4th St 3:39 p.m.
Theft Suspect In Custody 200Blk Broadway 3:55 p.m.
Grand Theft 200Blk 4th St 3:57 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto 300Blk Civic Center Dr 4:03 p.m.
Auto Burglary 2000Blk Oak St 4:10 p.m.
Burglary 3100Blk 4th St 4:11 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 200Blk Santa Monica Blvd 4:15 p.m.
Vandalism 1500Blk 2nd St 4:36 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 21st St / Idaho Ave 5:00 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 1200Blk Ocean Ave 5:02 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2400Blk Ocean Front Walk 5:08 p.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 2200Blk Main St 5:19 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 20th St / Santa Monica Blvd 5:23 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 00Blk Ocean Park Blvd 5:33 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd W 5:43 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 1000Blk 20th St 5:53 p.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 1500Blk 7th St 6:03 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 800Blk 5th St 6:07 p.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 2500Blk Wilshire Blvd 6:15 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 2600Blk Santa Monica Blvd 6:44 p.m.
Vandalism 1500Blk 2nd St 6:46 p.m.
Indecent Exposure 800Blk Wilshire Blvd 6:50 p.m.
Person Down 1400Blk Olympic Blvd 7:10 p.m.
Fight 1500Blk 2nd St 7:20 p.m.
Family Disturbance 1900Blk 11th St 8:22 p.m.
Burglary Investigation/Walk Through 1000Blk Georgina Ave 9:01 p.m.
Auto Burglary 1500Blk 12th St 9:23 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 100Blk Hart Ave 9:41 p.m.
Assault 1300Blk 3rd Street Prom 10:05 p.m.
Oversize Vehicle Violation 500Blk Georgina Ave 10:27 p.m.
Defrauding Innkeeper 1500Blk Wilshire Blvd 10:46 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1400Blk Broadway 11:45 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 34 CALLS ON FEBRUARY 22

Miscellaneous Outside Fire 3000Blk Interstate 10 7:55 p.m.
EMS 400Blk Expo Line 1:29 a.m.
EMS 1800Blk Ocean Ave 2:46 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1300Blk Ocean Ave 3:40 a.m.
EMS 18th St / Oak St 6:18 a.m.
EMS 1400Blk Euclid St 9:12 a.m.
EMS 2900Blk Pico Blvd 9:14 a.m.
EMS 1400Blk 3rd Street Prom 9:44 a.m.
EMS 1300Blk Berkeley St 9:55 a.m.
EMS 1400Blk 17th St 10:28 a.m.
Broken Gas Main 400Blk 15th St 10:54 a.m.
Wires Down 2300Blk 3rd St 11:00 a.m.
Wires Down 2000Blk 6th St 11:12 a.m.
EMS 1300Blk 15th St 11:15 a.m.
EMS 1500Blk Ocean Ave 11:16 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1200Blk 11th St 11:28 a.m.
EMS 2300Blk Pico Blvd 12:04 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury Neilson Way / Hill St 12:23 p.m.
EMS 500Blk 15th St 12:31 p.m.
EMS Euclid St / Wilshire Blvd 1:50 p.m.
EMS 3rd Street Prom / Santa Monica Blvd 2:59 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury 1200Blk Ocean Ave 5:00 p.m.
Wires Down 1300Blk Ashland Ave 5:04 p.m.
EMS 500Blk Olympic Blvd W 5:37 p.m.
Structure Fire 800Blk Maple St 5:57 p.m.
EMS 400Blk Expo Line 6:37 p.m.
EMS 1400Blk Olympic Blvd 7:10 p.m.
Arcing Wires 2500Blk 5th St 7:13 p.m.
EMS 1500Blk Ocean Ave 7:26 p.m.
EMS 700Blk Broadway 7:26 p.m.
EMS 1000Blk 3rd St 7:27 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1000Blk Euclid St 8:51 p.m.
EMS 400Blk San Vicente Blvd 9:31 p.m.
EMS 2200Blk Lincoln Blvd 11:59 p.m.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Chief Communications Officer Debbie Lee Leaves Santa Monica in March

The City of Santa Monica's Chief Communications Officer Debbie Lee has announced that she will leave her post after nearly eight years leading citywide communications. Since 2014, Lee set out a vision to create a strategic communications program encompassing public information, marketing and community outreach, CityTV video production, and emergency communications.

"Serving the Santa Monica community has been the most fulfilling, yet hardest work I've experienced in my career. The communications team and platforms that we've built serve an important function to inform and engage," said Debbie Lee. "My hope is that local governments will continue to invest in systems that encourage meaningful dialogue, include all voices, and reach the most historically marginalized communities. It has been my honor to serve this community, and I leave the City of Santa Monica with a full heart and a tremendous amount of pride for what we've accomplished."

Lee's vision for strategic communications supported the City through many important milestones, including establishing the City's citywide communications program and team, a historic settlement with the Federal Aviation Administration to authorize the City to close Santa Monica Airport, development of the City's new website, and integrating campaign strategies for the City's top priority work areas, such as homelessness, lifelong learning and mobility.

She was instrumental in ensuring the Santa Monica community was well-informed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery. In the last two years, despite a significant reduction in communications staffing after the organizational restructuring, Lee established the We Are Santa Monica Fund and Advisory Board, raising more than $1.3 million to support vulnerable residents and businesses, and launched new efforts around public-private partnerships.

"Debbie has given many years of service and talent to the City and Santa Monica community," said City Manager David White. "I am personally grateful she was here as I started my tenure and know that she leaves behind a lasting legacy and a strong communications program."

Lee's last day is March 4. As of March 5, Public Information Officer Constance Farrell will serve as Acting Chief Communications Officer and Public Information Coordinator Miranda Iglesias will become Interim Public Information Officer, serving as the City's main point of contact for members of the media.

SUBMITTED BY CONSTANCE FARRELL, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER



HOMELESS

FROM PAGE 1

to an estimated 41,000 people. Many are drug addicted or mentally ill, and violence is commonplace.

The program "is still unable to meet the demands of the homelessness crisis," Galperin said in a letter accompanying the 31-page report. The pace of development is sluggish, he said, while the cost of each unit continues to rise — in some cases to "staggering heights."

Most of the units are studios or one-bedroom apartments. The audit found 14% of the units build exceeded $700,000 each, and one project in pre-development is estimated to cost almost $837,000 per unit.

The audit noted that higher prices for construction materials during the pandemic, including lumber, along with labor shortages could be contributing to rising costs.

In a tweet, Democratic Mayor Eric Garcetti appeared to dispute any suggestion that the program – formally known by its title on the 2016 ballot, Proposition HHH – was off track.

The program "is producing more units than promised, at a lower cost than expected," Garcetti wrote. "There are already 1,200 units online providing critical housing and services. And HHH will deliver over 10,300 units of supportive and affordable housing by 2026."

John Maceri, chief executive of the People Concern, one of L.A.'s largest nonprofits serving the homeless, agreed with the overall finding that the city needs to build housing faster and cheaper. But he warned the program, while a step in the right direction, represents only a small fraction of the money needed to complete projects.

The solution, he said, is innovative financing, slashing red tape that slows projects and incentives for developers to aggregate funding to speed up construction. "Housing has not kept pace with the urgency of the unsheltered homelessness crisis," Maceri said.

The audit arrives at a time when homelessness is a dominant issue in the city's mayoral election, with a large field of candidates promising to do more on an issue that has placed Los Angeles in an unwelcome national spotlight. Sagging tents, rusting RVs and makeshift structures used by homeless people have become familiar sights from Hollywood to Venice Beach and even in the shadow of City Hall.

Garcetti, who was nominated last year by President Joe Biden to become ambassador to India, is in the final year of his second term. He is barred by term limits from running for re-election.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, facing re-election this year, has budgeted record sums to combat homelessness that pervades all of the state's major cities and many smaller communities as well. The state is providing roughly $12 billion on homelessness programs over two years.

The scope of the expanding problem can be seen in the city budget: When Garcetti took office in 2013, the city was spending about $10 million treating homelessness. The budget he signed last year included about $1 billion.

Still, government's inability to clear encampments from streets, parks and sidewalks has left voters angry and frustrated. In 2019, then-President Donald Trump threatened to intercede, though he never acted on the threat. San Francisco's progressive mayor, London Breed, last month declared a state of emergency in the city's Tenderloin district after becoming fed up with the homelessness and open drug-peddling there.

In LA, the audit said the HHH project includes 8,091 housing units — most with connected services for mental health and substance abuse treatment — spread across 125 projects. About 4,200 are in construction. Other funds outside the HHH program are being used for another 2,369 units.

The audit signaled that a fresh approach – and billions more in spending — would be needed in the future.

"While future plans have not been finalized, building tens of thousands of additional units using the same model will likely cost billions of dollars and will take far too long to match the urgency of the ongoing homeless emergency," the audit concluded. It urged the city to "find ways to scale up faster and cheaper projects."

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Los Angeles

LA County to Modify Health Officer Order to Make Masking Indoors Optional for Fully Vaccinated Individuals

As the county continues to experience reduced COVID-19 spread, it is appropriate to consider fewer required safety measures, noting that vulnerable individuals should continue to layer in all protections possible. Given decreased risk, Public Health is modifying the Health Officer Order to allow establishments, businesses, and venues verifying vaccination status to offer optional masking for fully vaccinated individuals. The modified Health Officer Order will be posted today and will go into effect at 12:01am on Friday, February 25.

The vaccines remain highly effective at slowing COVID-19 spread and preventing severe illness. For the week ending February 12, county residents who were unvaccinated were more than two and half times more likely to be infected when compared to individuals who were fully vaccinated. When comparing unvaccinated individuals with those vaccinated and fully boosted, unvaccinated people were nearly four times more likely to be infected.

The vaccine also continues to provide very strong protection against hospitalization and death. For the week ending February 12, unvaccinated people were five times more likely to be hospitalized compared to fully vaccinated residents. Fully vaccinated and boosted individuals were more than 13 times less likely to end up hospitalized compared to unvaccinated people. And the likelihood of dying was also significantly higher - 13 times higher - for unvaccinated residents compared to residents who were fully vaccinated.

Given lower hospital admissions and the effectiveness of the vaccines in reducing severe illness, changes have been made in the Health Officer Order that allow establishments, businesses, or venues two options for removing masking requirements for fully vaccinated individuals.

Option 1: Starting this Friday, establishments, businesses, or venues that want to allow fully vaccinated customers and workers to unmask while indoors must:

Verify that 100% of customers (5 and older) and workers prior to, or upon, entry to indoor spaces:

Provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19, or

Provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 viral test result. Tests for customers must be taken within two days of entry if a PCR test, or one day if an antigen test. Employees will be allowed to submit a negative test result every three days.

Those who are not fully vaccinated or do not show proof of vaccination, are required to provide a negative test, and continue wearing a well-fitting mask while indoors (as required by the state), except when actively eating or drinking.

Option 2: Starting this Friday, establishments, businesses, or venues that want to allow their fully vaccinated customers to unmask indoors while all onsite workers remain masked, must:

Verify that 100% of customers (5 and older) prior to, or upon, entry to indoor spaces

Provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19, or

Provide proof of a recent negative COVID-19 viral test result. Tests for customers must have been taken within two days of entry if a PCR test or one day if an antigen test.

Adhere to the following regarding customers and masking:

Fully vaccinated customers may be unmasked in the indoor setting.

Customers that are not fully vaccinated must continue to wear a well-fitting mask while indoors (as required by the state), except when actively eating or drinking.

Any individual showing proof of full vaccination prior to entering can still choose to wear a mask indoors.

"Our hearts remain with those families experiencing the sorrow of losing those they love to COVID-19." said Dr. Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director of Public Health. "While there are powerful tools that impede virus transmission, none are perfect which is why we often need to use a variety of safety measures to reduce transmission. When transmission is very high, we need to create the most complete shield we can so that's why it's important that we layer in all the protections at hand. As transmission drops and there is less virus circulating, some tools may afford significant protections against the very worst risks associated with COVID. Because vaccines are one of these tools, with lower rates of hospital admissions and COVID hospitalizations, it is appropriate in settings verifying vaccination or negative test status, that we transition to strongly recommending masking instead of requiring masking."

Yesterday, Public Health confirmed 36 additional deaths and 1,934 new cases of COVID-19. Of the 36 new deaths reported today, five people were between the ages of 30-49, four were between the ages of 50-64, 12 were between the ages of 65-79, and 13 were aged 80 years or older. Of the 36 newly reported deaths, 33 had underlying health conditions. Information on the two deaths reported by the City of Long Beach is available at www.LongBeach.gov. To date, the total number of deaths in L.A. County is 30,447.

Public Health has reported a total of 2,787,359 positive cases of COVID-19 across all areas of L.A. County. Today's positivity rate is 2.3%.

There are 1,204 people with COVID-19 currently hospitalized. Testing results are available for more than 11,375,100 individuals, with 22% of people testing positive.

SUBMITTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH

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LET US KNOW YOUR OPINION

Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com

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Citing drought, US won't give water to California farmers

ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

With California entering the third year of severe drought, federal officials said Wednesday they won't deliver any water to farmers in the state's major agricultural region — a decision that will force many to plant fewer crops in the fertile soil that yields the bulk of the nation's fruits, nuts and vegetables.

"It's devastating to the agricultural economy and to those people that rely on it," said Ernest Conant, regional director for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. "But unfortunately we can't make it rain."

The federal government operates the Central Valley Project in California, a complex system of dams, reservoirs and canals. It's one of two major water systems the state relies on for agriculture, drinking water, and the environment. The other system is run by the state government.

Water agencies contract with the federal government for certain amounts of water each year. In February, the federal government announces how much of those contracts can be fulfilled based on how much water is available. The government then updates the allocations throughout the year based on conditions.

Farmers started last year with a 5% allocation from the federal government but ended at 0% as the drought intensified. This year, the federal government is starting farmers at 0% while water for other purposes, including drinking and industrial uses, is at 25%.

"Last year was a very bad year. This year could turn out to be worse," Conant said.

Westlands Water District, the nation's largest agricultural water district covering 1,000 square miles in Fresno and Kings counties, said drought conditions last year caused farmers to fallow 200,000 acres while leaving "thousands of acres of food unharvested." The district said it is the fourth time this decade that farmers south of the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta have gotten no water from the federal government.

The water system operated by the state government is also struggling. In December, state officials also announced a 0% allocation. They upgraded that to 15% allocation in January after strong December storms.

"Anyone who's looked out the window in the past two months knows that California has not seen any significant rain and snow during what are supposed to be our wettest months of the year," said Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources. "While December saw record storms, this type of climate whiplash makes it challenging to forecast conditions ahead."

State law requires both systems to have enough water available to maintain water quality throughout the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta, a sensitive environmental region home to endangered species of fish.

Despite that, endangered species of fish — including salmon — have been dying by the thousands because there hasn't been enough cold water for them to survive.

In a news release, the Westlands Water District said it was disappointed with the allocation but understood the drought and environmental laws "prevent Reclamation from making water available under the District's contract."

Regina Chichizola, executive director for Save California Salmon, said environmental water releases are important because they keep ocean saltwater from creeping too far into freshwater rivers.

"Fish and people need that water," she said.

Most of the water for both systems comes from rain and snow in the Sierra Nevada mountains. That water flows into the state's rivers, which then fill a series of major reservoirs throughout the state. Typically, the reservoirs get depleted during the dry summer months before being replenished by winter storms.

But California is now entering the third year of a severe drought, with rain and snowfall far below historical averages. January and February are usually the wettest months of the year in California. But the northern Sierra mountains, which are important for filling some of the state's biggest reservoirs, have had just 1.7 inches of rain over those two months. That's the lowest ever recorded, breaking a record set in 2013, said Kristin White, Central Valley operations manager for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

The Central Valley Project's reservoirs have decreased by 26.5% compared with last year. And through the end of September, federal officials predict the reservoirs will get 1.2 million acre feet less of water than they had planned. One acre-foot of water is typically enough to supply two average households for one year.

VACCINE

FROM PAGE 2

official who now heads a CDC-funded vaccination advocacy organization named Immunize.org, recalled seeing data from a recent survey that hit her like a punch to the gut.

The results were presented at a CDC meeting of vaccine experts earlier this month. The January survey of about 1,000 adults asked unvaccinated participants what, if anything, would change their mind and persuade them to get a shot. Half said "nothing."

"It was quite demoralizing to see those results, frankly," Moore said.

With the pandemic still a mortal threat, public health workers haven't given up on getting more people vaccinated, even if it feels like an uphill slog.

Jordan Ledbetter, a nurse who works at the Marion County Health Department, was thrilled when two people came in for first-time shots on the same day recently.

"That was exciting," she said. "There are days when I haven't given any vaccines."

Associated Press Writer Mead Gruver contributed to this report from Cheyenne, Wyoming.

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Noteworthy

Charles Andrews
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Camp Out At Harvelle's!

R.I.P. SCOTT FERGUSON

One of the great joys, for me, of our unique little city is getting to know the folks who choose to live here. Such a cast of characters, especially in the field of music. Scott Ferguson, a 35-year resident of Santa Monica, very well known in the music community, sadly passed away last weekend, at age 69.

He was a guitarist, singer, songwriter, producer (Robben Ford's Grammy-nominated album "Talk to Your Daughter"), stage manager for the Pier concert series, a member of SMMUSD's Visual and Performing Arts Council, and instrumental for years in keeping the famous, invaluable 60-year-old Topanga Banjo & Fiddle Contest Folk Festival going, through fire and pandemic.

For a year in 2019 he co-hosted and performed on "The Wildwood Flower Radio Hour" every Sunday night on KXLU, with local rock and roll degenerate turned model citizen Mike Bone. Mike's wife Lori Nafshun booked the superb local talent. They called Scott "the Professor," for his vast knowledge of music, especially bluegrass and Americana.

I have known his son Niall, an accomplished cellist, Samohi grad and a great guy, for many years, and offer love and condolences to him, Scott's wife Emiko, and the whole family. He will be missed, by many.



Photo courtesy TBFCFF

60 AND STILL PICKIN'

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:

SOUTHSIDE SLIM – Either my word is gold or the folks at Harvelle's have ears and a sharp business sense, because I highly recommended they book him a lot more than once, and here he is. Yeah... I think it's the latter. And I believe they booked him once pre-COVID. Slim absolutely tore it up there recently, with his jaw-dropping guitar work and killer band pushing a mix of soulful blues both slow and frantic, jazz, funk, Latin, soul and R&B, and a guest vocalist who filled the dance floor. Drive, walk or skateboard to Fourth Street to our own venerable 90-year-old blues bar, and bring a sleeping bag: You won't want to leave until they throw you out at 2 a.m. Thursday. Sat 9:30 p.m., Harvelle's. Santa Monica, $10.

formerDAMN WELL PLEASE ORGAN TRIO, Mardi Gras!! – I first caught Darius Holbert at his home, the late, lamented Liquid Kitty in West LA. I looked at their schedule and saw all these people commenting that they were so excited to be there for his show, some coming from out of state! So I went, I saw and heard, I became a believer. He did well enough as an award-winning composer of music for film, TV and new media, appeared on The Tonight Show, The Ellen Show and France's Canal +, recorded/toured with/produced Wu-Tang Clan, Dave Brubeck, Britney Spears, Sophie B. Hawkins, House of Pain, Diane Warren, Everlast, President Bill Clinton, The Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and Bobby Brown – that he retired from playing clubs and bars. But when Damian and Jason from the Kitty moved over to Harvelle's as co-owners, he followed them. So... he now does only one live show a year, anywhere, and it's for Mardi Gras, at Harvelle's. Sometimes his "trio" consists of four or five players, sometimes there are a couple dozen on the stage. He plays killer keyboards, sings, herds cats, uh, directs the whole thing from behind the keys, keeps the energy level sky high until the last drunk is kicked out of the joint (because it's probably one of his players). It sounds chaotic but Darius knows what he's doing every moment, and it is a rockin' N'Awlins-style show. Harvelle's will hang Mardi Gras beads around your neck, provide festive masks to go over your COVID masks, and offer King cake, NOLA beers, the famous mysterious Shark Attack cocktail, and BBQ out the back door. So many reasons to be here that night, all of them delicious. Fat Tuesday 9:30 p.m., Harvelle's, SM, $7.

RECOMMENDED:

TONIGHT! - HAMILTON — Still with us, but only three more weeks. Tonight - Thurs, Fri, Sat, Tues, Wed, next Thurs 8 p.m., Sun 1 p.m., 6:30 p.m., also Sat 2 p.m., Pantages Theater, Hollywood, $49-3000+, depending on date/time.

HERBIE HANCOCK – What can I say, really? Unquestionably one of the pre-eminent jazz pianists and composers of our time, we're fortunate to have him in residence here with the LA Philharmonic as their Creative Chair for Jazz. Walt Disney Concert Hall, Sun 7:30 p.m., Walt Disney Concert Hall, LA, $102-145.

TOLEDO DIAMOND — Have you gone to catch his unique show yet, every Sunday night at Harvelle's, here in SM? I've been recommending him for... decades. Trust me. You've never seen anything like Toledo. Sun 9:30 p.m., Harvelle's, Santa Monica, $12.

HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS – I know, I'm a well-known hardcore hoops fan but the

SEE **NOTEWORTHY** PAGE 7

NOTEWORTHY

FROM PAGE 6

Globetrotters transcend even sport, they are entertainers, and wizards who use a basket and a ball to create magic, and lots of laughs. My Pop took me to see them when I was about eight, and I still remember it. Everyone should see the Harlem Globetrotters at least once in their life. Sun 1 p.m., Crypto.com Arena, :A, $29-289.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: THE ENGLISH BEAT, The Bourbon Room, 3/4, 5; ARTURO SANDOVAL, Catalina Jazz Club, 3/4, 5; SARAH SILVERMAN & Friends,Largo at the Coronet, 3/5; RICK SHEA, JULIE CHRISTENSEN, 3/6; McCabe's, JANIS IAN, McCabe's, 3/11, 12; SOUNDS OF LA with SALAR NADER, Getty Center, 3/12, 13; LA OPERA presents BACH'S ST. MATTHEW PASSION, 3/12. 17. 20.23. 26. 27; MIDORI, Walt Disney Concert Hall, 3/13; HILLARY HAHN, Walt Disney Concert Hall, 3/18, 19, 20; DAVID HIDALGO, RICK HOLMSTROM BAND, McCabe's, 3/20; LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III, McCabe's, 3/21. 22; LA PHIL plays MAHLER 7th, Walt Disney Concert Hall, 3/24. 26, 27; LA PHIL with ZUBIN MEHTA, MOZART'S GREAT MASS, Walt Disney Concert Hall, 3/31, 4/1, 2, 3.

Charles Andrews has listened to a lot of music of all kinds, including more than 3,000 live shows. He has lived in Santa Monica for 36 years and wouldn't live anywhere else in the world. Really. Send love and/or rebuke to him at therealmrmusic@gmail.com

CASSIA

FROM PAGE 1

five separate recognition programs of the Awards. The awards are returning after a two year hiatus and winners will be announced in June.

"We're pleased to have an opportunity to celebrate a man who would never shine a spotlight on himself, and extend our sincere congratulations to all this year's semifinalists," said the restaurant in a social media post. "We are proud to be in the company of such incredible peers, who bring so much to both our plates and to our communities. And a special thanks to our dedicated Front & Back of House Staff, as well as our Leadership Team, who all work together to make Cassia such a deeply special place."

According to the Foundation, they suspended their traditional Awards presentation in 2020 and 2021, including the Restaurant and Chef Awards, Media Awards (Book, Broadcast Media and Journalism Awards), and Restaurant Design Awards, in order to take time for self-reflection.

"In the last year, the Foundation conducted an audit of the policies and procedures of the Awards," said the organization in a statement. "The objectives: to continue the work to remove any systemic bias; increase the diversity of the voting body; ensure that communities far and wide know about the Awards and how eligible candidates may apply; increase transparency in how the Awards function; and align the Awards more outwardly with the Foundation's mission and values."

Cassia, located at 1314 7th Street, is a Southeast Asian restaurant that previously won a Michelin Plate award and is part of the Rustic Canyon group.

The restaurant melds Bryant's Chinese-Singaporean heritage and his wife and partner Kim's Vietnamese roots with the culinary influences and energy of a French brasserie.

Before cooking professionally, Bryant studied biology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), graduating in 2000 with a degree in molecular, cellular and developmental biology. After co-founding CityLab UCLA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating high school students in biology and medicine through hands-on research, and working as a marketing consultant in the biotech industry, he was drawn by his tangible memories of the restaurant business, inspiring him to make a career change.

He graduated with honors from the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu in Paris in 2002, and later supplemented his classical European technique with training in Singapore and Bangkok. After graduation, he worked the garde manger station at Roland Passot's La Folie in San Francisco, followed by jobs at Nancy Silverton and Mark Peel's Campanile in Los Angeles and with world-renowned Chef Daniel Boulud at Restaurant Daniel in New York City.

In 2011, the couple opened The Spice Table in Little Tokyo to much acclaim but the restaurant was forced to close when the Metro Transit Authority taking over the land. He partnered with Josh and Zoe Loeb to open Cassia in 2015.

He was a semifinalist in 2017 for Best Chef-California and Cassia was a semifinalist for Best New Restaurant in 2016.

For more information, visit https://www.cassiala.com.

editor@smdp.com

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 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 AT 11:47 P.M.

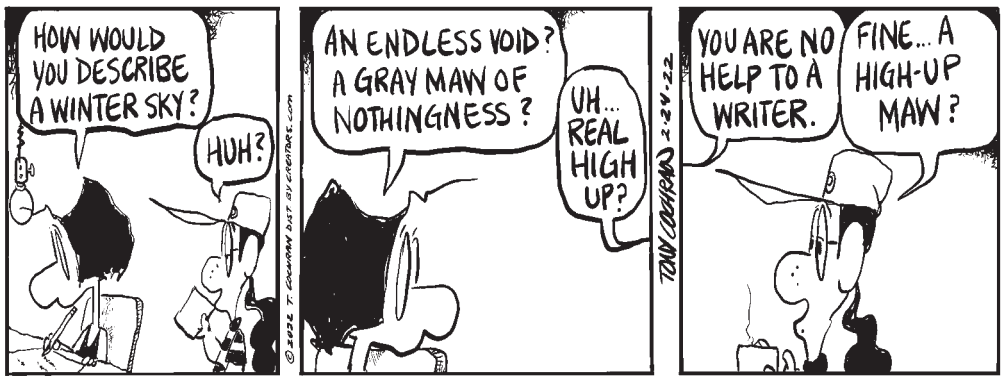
SMPD Officers responded to the 800 block of 2nd St. regarding a suspicious subject seen in the area near the parking garage at the location. Upon arrival, Officers contacted an individual matching the description of the subject hiding inside the garage. The subject was in possession of several items which he stated he found in the garage after following a vehicle inside. The subject also stated he was aware that he was on private property and should not be there. The reporting party confirmed they were desirous of prosecution and Felix Luis Graciani was arrested for Trespassing.





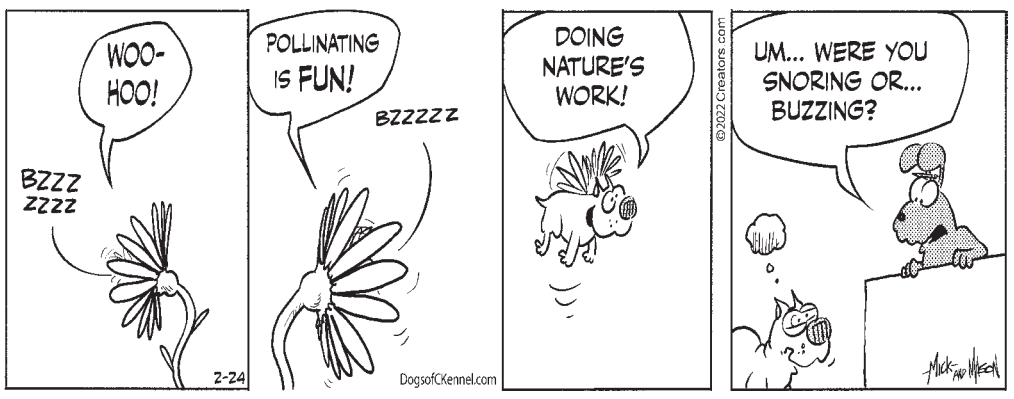
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"HE'S IN A GRAFFITI RUT."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 57.2°

THURSDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist high
SSW swell helps keep some small surf running as fading NW energy blends in. Wind is offshore and conditions clean enough to enjoy the tide drop through the morning on the small wave gear.

FRIDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 1-2ft Knee to thigh high
Modest new WNW pulse comes up as SSW swell starts to taper off. Small surf but conditions look worthy of a trip on the bigger boards.

WEATHER

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 59. North northeast wind 5 to 10 mph.
Thursday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 43. West northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.
Friday: Sunny, with a high near 63. North northeast wind 5 to 10 mph

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2022/02/24	Thu	02:44 AM	4.95	H
2022/02/24	Thu	10:58 AM	0.11	L
2022/02/24	Thu	6:22 PM	2.80	H
2022/02/24	Thu	9:01 PM	2.67	L
2022/02/25	Fri	04:07 AM	5.19	H
2022/02/25	Fri	12:05 PM	-0.53	L
2022/02/25	Fri	7:10 PM	3.24	H
2022/02/25	Fri	10:57 PM	2.60	L
2022/02/26	Sat	05:20 AM	5.56	H
2022/02/26	Sat	12:56 PM	-1.05	L
2022/02/26	Sat	7:41 PM	3.63	H
2022/02/27	Sun	12:09 AM	2.23	L
2022/02/27	Sun	06:21 AM	5.95	H
2022/02/27	Sun	1:38 PM	-1.39	L
2022/02/27	Sun	8:11 PM	3.97	H
2022/02/28	Mon	01:04 AM	1.76	L
2022/02/28	Mon	07:12 AM	6.23	H
2022/02/28	Mon	2:17 PM	-1.52	L
2022/02/28	Mon	8:40 PM	4.27	H
2022/03/01	Tue	01:51 AM	1.30	L
2022/03/01	Tue	07:58 AM	6.31	H

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERball
Draw Date: 2/21
2 36 37 45 69
Power#: 3
Jackpot: 45 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 2/22
6 17 22 57 62
Mega#: 3
Jackpot: 87 M

SuperLotto PLUS
Draw Date: 2/19
3 12 24 30 36
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 19 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 2/22
1 2 7 12 30

Daily 3
Draw Date: 2/22
EVENING: 6 3 8

Draw Date: 2/22
MIDDAY: 4 0 6

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 2/22
1st: 09 - Winning Spirit
2nd: 07 - Eureka
3rd: 02 - Lucky Star
Race Time: 1:44.71

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

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (FEBRUARY 24)

That great universal force called attraction is working for you. Somewhere between tiny electrons flying around the nucleus of atoms and the grand galactic swirl is you, following the attractions you find meaningful. Your love will be well-placed and reciprocated. What you accomplish in a supportive group will amaze. Libra and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 30, 9, 6 and 41.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Understanding the experience of others is more important than who is right or wrong. If you want to lower the levels of confrontation, use "I" statements instead of "you."

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When the lightbulb goes out, you change the lightbulb; you don't get a new house. Narrow your focus to the problem area, then zero in on the problem spot and finally the problem source, which will be quite small and fixable.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). No relationship is perfect. Conflict is a fact of life. What matters is the desire to live in harmony. Some things won't be solved, but the intent to solve them counts for a lot.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Those who do wrong will self-punish, while those who do right will self-reward. In light of this, there is no need to condemn or elevate anyone, so avoid the pressures (or pleasures, as the case may be) of judgment.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Ever the entertainer, you don't have to worry about being perceived as boring — it's just not an option. Behaving in such a way that others will find humorous or fascinating is part of your subconscious plan.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Things have changed. You're no longer sure what you want. The big picture seems overwhelming, but you can put your finger on the following question: In the coming six weeks, how do you think you can best serve your people?

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Maybe you'll call out the untruth when you hear it; you always hear it. Then again, people need their defenses. A lie can seem very small next to your big, gracious heart. And so, you let it slide.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). A long time ago you made a commitment. Do you remember why you made that choice? That answer will be the light that guides you. If it's hard to answer this question, maybe it's time to reevaluate.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The goal seems achievable, yet you haven't. It's not for lack of desire, and you've certainly put in work, but something is just off. Either change the goal or change the plan. An outsider's perspective will help.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It is logical to believe that if you do the right thing, then the next right thing and the next, you will eventually achieve success. This only works if your "right things" are aligned in a row toward the target. Organize your efforts.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Bad habits die hard but die they will for those who keep trying things until something works. Ideally, you'll believe in yourself, but if you don't, that's OK too. Just act "as if" for a while and one day it will be true.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). When a friend needs a listening ear, you'll resist the urge to tell your own story (especially an exciting, glamorous version that few can relate to) and give your full attention.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

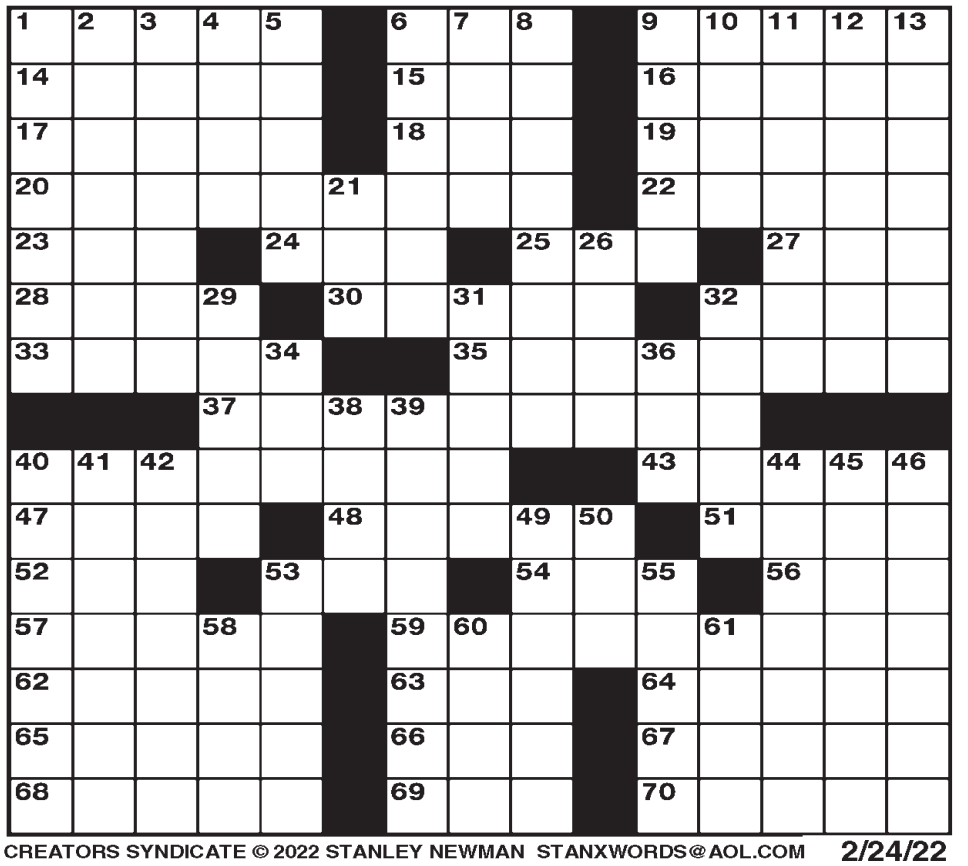
2	3		5		7		6	
	4			3		9		1
1			4		9		3	
					3	4	7	
8				7				9
	7	4	9					
	5		7		8			6
9		6		5			4	
	2		6		1		8	3

Newsday Crossword

MOVING RIGHT ALONG by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Small chirpers
6 Speak for, for short
9 Wallops
14 Charge toward
15 Go amiss
16 Public promenade
17 First Lady who penned *Becoming* (2018)
18 Castilian kinsman
19 Leans to one side
20 Start of an "entertaining" adage
22 First words
23 Prefix that may mean "green"
24 Shark's stabilizer
25 A way to stand
27 Election ender
28 Of two minds
30 French royal house
32 Much valued
33 Dawning
35 In a sly way
37 Middle of adage
40 In direct confrontation
43 *Battlestar Galactica* star
47 Heavy load
48 Tough slogs
51 Blood bank inventory
52 Organic sealant
53 Most preferred
54 ER readout
56 Up-and-down agreement
57 Obliterate
59 End of adage
62 Merchant ship supervisor
63 NBC comedy showcase
64 Really like
65 Completely unfamiliar
66 GPS display
67 Is acquitted
68 Coating on ceramics or sweets
69 Run, as a program
70 Comic Wanda

DOWN
1 Corresponded with
2 Fateful crossing point
3 Bewitches
4 Roster entry
5 Fill with workers
6 Pupil's neighbor
7 Water part of four state borders
8 Shakespearean sorcerer
9 Of two minds
10 Reclined
11 Company with a Pittsburgh "Tower"
12 Stop dreaming
13 Expression of regret
21 Trucker ID
26 One of the Aleutians
29 Lizardlike amphibians
31 Draft depositor
32 Robin Hood contests
34 However, in brief
36 A way to sway
38 Ending like -let
39 The Hague's water
40 Swag holder, often
41 Doing great
42 Where most people live
44 Family guys
45 Satirist P.J.
46 Gloom
49 Very strong synthetic
50 Travel on powder
53 Cylinders under sauce
55 Mimics a mouse
58 Mideast's Gulf of __
60 Starter like counter-
61 Sydney salutation



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What's Up Westside
out and about in Santa Monica

THURSDAY | FEB 24

THE COLLEGE PROCESS FROM A-Z
Get the inside scoop on the college admissions process, including high school academics and course planning, building a college wish list, navigating the application process, and applying for financial aid. Presented by Diana Hanson of Magellan College Counseling. Register for this virtual workshop at: shorturl.at/dpuRT. 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY | FEB 25

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CONVERSATION, LOW
SMPL hosts an ongoing series of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes taught by Adult Education Center instructors. Classes are free and students must be 18 years or older to attend. Community parents and SMMUSD parents have priority enrollment. Learn more about California adult education at caladulted.org. Enrollment is through the SMMUSD Adult Education Center, located at 2510 Lincoln Blvd., Room 203, Santa Monica, CA, 90405. Visit smmusd.asapconnected.com or contact Olga Saucedo at osaucedo@smmusd.org or (310) 664-6222, ext.76203 to enroll. Classes will begin in a virtual format. 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

SATURDAY | FEB 26

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CONVERSATION, HIGH
SMPL hosts an ongoing series of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes taught by Adult Education Center instructors. Classes are free and students must be 18 years or older to attend. Community parents and SMMUSD parents have priority enrollment. Learn more about California adult education at caladulted.org. Enrollment is through the SMMUSD Adult Education Center, located at 2510 Lincoln Blvd., Room 203, Santa Monica, CA, 90405. Visit smmusd.asapconnected.com or contact Olga Saucedo at osaucedo@smmusd.org or (310) 664-6222, ext.76203 to enroll. Classes will begin in a virtual format. If live classes become possible, they will take place at the Pico Branch Library, 2100 Pico Blvd. 12 - 3 p.m.

DOWNTOWN SANTA MONICA WALKING TOUR
Discover downtown Santa Monica's architecture, history and culture with one of our highly engaging docents. See where Jim Morrison played his first show and visit the lavish Art Deco hotel that housed a speakeasy during Prohibition. Tours are free for members and $10 for the general public. The reservation link is smc.givecloud.co/dwt. The walking tour covers about 6 blocks in 2 hours and begins at the city's first landmark, the 1875 Rapp Saloon. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. 1436 2nd St.

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET
Arizona Ave. (between 2nd & 4th)
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

PICO FARMERS MARKET
Pico Blvd. & Cloverfield Blvd.
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

SUNDAY | FEB 27

MAIN STREET FARMERS MARKET
2640 Main St.
8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

MONDAY | FEB 28

SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MEETING
Visit https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Architectural-Review-Board/ for more information. 7 p.m.

SANTA MONICA AIRPORT COMMISSION MEETING
Visit https://www.smgov.net/Departments/Airport/Airport_Commission/Airport_Commission.aspx for more information. 6 p.m.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) CONVERSATION, HIGH
Santa Monica Public Library hosts an ongoing series of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes taught by Adult Education Center instructors. Classes are free and students must be 18 years or older to attend. Community parents and SMMUSD parents have priority enrollment. Learn more about California adult education at caladulted.org. Enrollment is through the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Adult Education Center, located at 2510 Lincoln Blvd., Room 203, Santa Monica, CA,90405. Visit smmusd.asapconnected.com or contact Olga Saucedo at osaucedo@smmusd.org or (310) 664-6222, ext.76203 to enroll Classes will begin in a virtual format. If live classes become possible, they will take place at Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

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

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 20 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 5400

I won!

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

Bank	Excited	Money	Stock
Boat	Faro	News	market
Broker	Flight	Omen	Streak
Cards	Gain	Pamper	Sunny
Cash	Gold	Party	Tour
Chic	Idle	Placegetter	Travel
Cigar	Jewels	Purse	Visit
Content	Joyous	Relax	Wealth
Cruise	Lotto	Risk	Wept
Dice	Lucky	Rolls Royce	Yacht
Draw	Maid	Shop	
Envy	Millionaire	Spoils	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
Famous wine region

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Santa Monica Daily Press office (310) 458-7737

PIER

FROM PAGE 1

includes one police sergeant and four officers; one code enforcement supervisor and two officers; two fire inspectors; four public works staff members; and private security officers, who all work at the Pier on Fridays through Sundays enforcing vendor laws, cleaning up trash and maintaining order.

The increased enforcement came at the request of Council following health and safety complaints throughout 2021, according to a report delivered by Council & Legislative Affairs Liaison Stephanie Venegas.

According to Venegas, the timeline begins with then-Governor Jerry Brown signing SB 946 into law in September 2018. The California bill decriminalized sidewalk vending and prompted Santa Monica's vending ordinance establishing a permitting program, which was approved in April 2019.

Following COVID-19 shut-downs throughout 2020, traffic began to pick up at the Pier in 2021, and with it, a wave of food vendors appeared on the Pier, Venegas described.

That was when City Council approved the ordinance that banned the use of combustible fuel and the dumping of solid and liquid waste in municipal trash cans or into the ocean or storm drains. Following further complaints, the Task Force was established as what Deputy City Attorney Anuj Gupta called "an experiment."

That experiment found favor among all of Santa Monica's city council members, including Phil Brock.

"There were times in 2021, I would go down, I'd see a fight. I'd see different things going on. I would see no police department personnel on the Pier," Brock said. "And to see the difference is just outstanding. And that Task Force is not only [on] the Pier, it's also the boardwalk, it's also the parking lot.

"It's not only about vendors, it has been about safety for the thousands and thousands of visitors that come to the Santa Monica Pier daily, weekly, monthly from around the world," Brock continued. "And I see just the difference. I feel the difference at the top of the Pier, down the Pier."

Brock said he would support the full Task Force operations through the summer months, but in the end council members requested a slightly modified version that would save the City close to three-quarters of a million dollars for fiscal year 2022-23.

The longer-term Task Force adjustments will include going from two fire inspectors down to one, no longer assigning a code enforcement supervisor to the Task Force, and moving the public works staff to "on-call" rather than "dedicated support." No changes in police staffing were made.

Although many local business owners and stakeholders appeared during the lengthy public comment period to praise the Task Force and thank the City for its efforts on the Pier, there were also many comments from vendor advocates and attorneys who challenged the City's enforcement tactics, alleging racial profiling on the part of enforcement officers and police.

Several representatives from the progressive advocacy group the National Lawyers Guild spoke at the meeting representing Pier vendors, both permitted and unpermitted.

These lawyers and law students described numerous instances of alleged discrimination and unnecessary use of force. One told a story about an officer who did not speak Spanish putting his hands on the cart of a street vendor and eventually handcuffing her. Another complained of excessive penalties and fees.

"Those who are in favor of this Task Force continue to say they're in favor of permitted street vending, but they continue to harass vendors," National Lawyers Guild member Sarah Handloser said, later adding, "I find it ironic that this Task Force presentation overused the vague term 'success,' but fails to define it as anything other than running as many low income people of color working as vendors off of the Pier as possible."

Later in the meeting, Council Member Lana Negrete expressed skepticism about some of the complaints.

"I do want to attest to the fact that our Task Force in particular, and actually our police department, is more diverse in the community it represents," Negrete said. "So, the idea that there were racial slurs or that our officers don't speak Spanish? Most of them are bilingual on that Task Force and the only racial slurs that I actually watched on video were thrown at our police officer."

Venegas said that since 2019, approximately 400 vendors have secured permits to operate in Santa Monica, with about 125 active permits as of the latest tally. However, Gupta acknowledged the process of achieving a permit was "still too difficult and still too cost prohibitive."

"Many of the public health regulations, I think it's fair to say, are archaic and not tailored to the actual realities of sidewalk vending," Gupta said. "They haven't adapted to the nature of sidewalk vending as a means of, kind of, economic activity."

Council Members also presented ideas for enhancing permitted vendor activity including a "night market" style event held on the Pier parking lot, which has been closed since March 2020 but is set to reopen soon.

"We have gone over the last two years of COVID without having cars parked in the Pier parking lot, and the world has not collapsed. Nobody died," Council Member Gleam Davis said. "And so, I'm wondering … is there a way to create vending opportunities in the Pier parking lot and over the long term, and maybe use it to house vendors instead of cars, which to me would be a much more pleasant experience?"

City staff said that the Pier parking lot is operated through a conditional use permit issued by the California Coastal Commission and any substantial change to its use would need to be approved by the statewide governing body; however, staff said the space was "flexible," and could continue to be a multi-use space, as it has been utilized during the pandemic.

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[1] "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2020
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SANTA MONICA PIER