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Woman stabbed on Grant
Suspects escaped.
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Your Column Here
Unplugging Tesla.
Page 4

School reopening protest



Courtesy photo

SCHOOLS: Parents held a protest last weekend to advocate for faster reopening of local schools.

Verdi Chorus carries operatic singers through tumultuous times



Courtesy image

CHORUS: The Santa Monica group has kept music alive during the crisis.

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

At a time when group singing is a forbidden and dangerous activity, the virtual programming of Santa Monica's own Verdi Chorus has created a sanctuary for opera singers and appreciators alike.

Facing an indefinite industry shutdown, the chorus has come together to build an artist relief fund and an online concert series featuring some of the most promising professional area singers.

At the helm of this effort is founding Artistic Director Anne Marie Ketchum, who has helped steer the 54 member strong group through 38 seasons. She

SEE **VERDI CHORUS** PAGE 6

City Council sets priorities ahead of budget process

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

Santa Monica City Council has set the community priorities that will guide the city's budget process through 2023 during a meeting Saturday that featured hours of debate on the most significant problems facing the city.

"As you know well, this week marks the one-year anniversary of our lives in the pandemic. And what I want you to hear from me today is that while we are looking back on the one-year anniversary of the pandemic and all of the emotions that brings up within the community, we also are in a moment where we will begin to see, quite soon, the very earliest stages of our community recovery," Interim City Manager Lane Dilg said Saturday while she outlined the recent restructuring of city services and finances.

Now, with Santa Monica eying a bright future that's faintly visible on the horizon, Dilg added, Council has a chance to articulate what are the community's most pressing priorities for the upcoming two years and where should the City focus its limited resources.

In a 4-3 vote following Dilg's remarks, City Council chose addressing homelessness, creating a clean and safe Santa Monica, and pushing for an Equitable and Inclusive Economic Recovery as its top priorities for the upcoming biennial budget process.

Councilmember Kevin McKeown, who joined Councilmembers Gleam Davis and Kristin McCowan as a dissenting vote, initially made a motion to couple affordability,

SEE **BUDGET** PAGE 11

One year into the pandemic, rents remain expensive in Santa Monica

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

While there was widespread speculation of plummeting rents in urban areas during the pandemic, Santa Monica remains an expensive city to rent in.

This is also true for new market rate leases on controlled units, which barely dipped over the last year, according to data from the Rent Control Board. Rent controlled units represent over half of the City's total rental stock and under Santa Monica's Rent Control laws, units reset to market rate when a tenant vacates an apartment.

In 2020 median initial rents for newly leased controlled units fell by 2.8 percent for studios and by 1.5 percent for two bedroom units, while they were up by 1 percent for one bedroom units.

SEE **RENTS** PAGE 11

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California governor launches campaign against likely recall

MICHAEL R. BLOOD
AP Political Writer

California Gov. Gavin Newsom established a political committee Monday to begin raising money to defend his seat in a potential recall election, the strongest acknowledgment to date that he expects to be on the ballot this year.

The Democrat's new fundraising arm could soon send a powerful message to his possible rivals: Under state rules, Newsom alone is allowed to raise money in unlimited amounts, while other candidates must adhere to contribution limits.

It's likely he will soon receive a flood of cash from his familiar Democratic constituency, including powerful public workers' unions that spent millions of dollars helping get him into office in 2018. The California Democratic Party quickly showed its support with a $250,000 contribution.

Organizers of the recall say they have collected over 2 million petition signatures to place the election on the ballot – about 1.5 million are needed for it to qualify, though hundreds of thousands must still be validated by election officials.

In a tweet, Newsom said, "I won't be distracted by this partisan, Republican recall — but I will fight it. There is too much at stake."

Newsom has lined up support from state and national Democrats to defeat the campaign against him. The committee started the drive with an advertisement attacking the recall effort as a Republican power grab.

New Jersey Democratic Sen. Cory Booker said in a statement released by the committee that Newsom's leadership during the pandemic "kept Californians safe and helped them recover financially."

Defeating the recall "will be one of the most important priorities for Democrats this year," Booker said.

Stacey Abrams, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, progressive California U.S. Rep. Ro Khanna, and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders also added their names to the anti-recall effort.

Democrats have depicted the recall effort as seeded with extremists and supporters of former Republican President Donald Trump. However, recall organizers say 38% of petition signatures have come from independents and Democrats. That could not be immediately verified.

By painting the recall effort as driven by Republicans and Trump backers, Democrats hope to keep independents and Democrats who may be frustrated with Newsom on their side. Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans by nearly 2 to 1 and Republicans have not won a statewide election in California since 2006.

Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis said Democrats must "reject the efforts of the Republican party to sow discord in our state and their longshot attempt to slip a Republican governor into the bluest state in the country."

Newsom for months sidestepped questions about the recall but has more recently started to ramp up his political operation and strategy.

He's been traveling the state holding events to highlight coronavirus vaccinations, while a string of supporters have started staging online news conferences in an attempt to turn public favor his way.

The governor made his most direct comments on the recall Friday in an interview with San Francisco's KQED news radio station, depicting the effort as a challenge to his administration's progressive policies and not a reaction to his leadership during the pandemic that has claimed over 55,000 lives in California.

"It's about immigration. It's about our health care policies. It's about our criminal justice reform. It's about the diversity of the

SEE **CALIFORNIA** PAGE 5

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA
NOTICE INVITING BIDS

OTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Santa Monica invites Contractors to complete and submit electronic bids for the:

17th Street/SMC/Expo Bike Path Connection
SP2484

Bids will only be accepted through the CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL, ProcureNow or https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca. They must be received by the specified date and time. Late bids will not be accepted. Please allow sufficient time for uploading of documents. The bid opening will be electronic, all submitted bids will be viewable by the public via ProcureNow immediately after bid close time.

MANDATORY PRE-BID JOB WALK: N/A

PROJECT ESTIMATE: **$6,000,000**
CONTRACT DAYS: **420 Calendar Days**
LIQUIDATED DAMAGES: $2,900 Per Calendar Day

Bidding Documents may be obtained by logging onto the City's bidding website at: https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca. The Contractor is required to have an **Class A** license at the time of bid submission. Contractors wishing to be considered must submit Bids containing all information required pursuant to the City's Request for Bids.

Pursuant to Public Contracts Code Section 22300, the Contractor shall be permitted to substitute securities for any monies withheld by the City to ensure performance under this Contract.

Down from mountain, Japanese internee's remains return home

BRIAN MELLEY
Associated Press

When Giichi Matsumura arrived at his final resting place in December, the people who knew him best already were there.

His wife, Ito, who had mourned his passing for 60 years before her death in 2005, was buried in the same plot, as was his daughter, Kazue, who died in 2018. His father, Katsuzo, who died in 1963, was nearby. His brother and two of his three sons were a short walk away, all buried in the shady, grassy haven of Woodlawn Cemetery in Santa Monica.

They last saw Giichi alive in the waning days of World War II at the Manzanar internment camp, one of 10 where the U.S. government held more than 110,000 people of Japanese descent for more than three years, claiming without evidence they might betray America in the war.

In the summer of 1945, Matsumura hiked from camp into the nearby Sierra Nevada, the rugged spine of California, and never returned. His remains were committed to a lonely mountainside grave left to the elements.

None had lived long enough to bring him home 75 years later, after his remains were unearthed by a hiker in 2019.

The duty to bring him back fell to a granddaughter born decades after he died.

Lori Matsumura never expected to play this role. She knew of her grandfather's unfortunate death, but it wasn't something she often thought about.

Then she got a call in October 2019 from the head of search and rescue for Inyo County.

A hiker bound for the summit of Mount Williamson, a massive peak overshadowing Manzanar, had veered off route near a lake and spotted a skull in the rocks. He and his partner uncovered a full skeleton.

"It was a complete surprise when I received a call from the sheriff," Lori Matsumura said. "There were stories my grandmother told me about her husband passing on the mountain. They were stories to me, and it wasn't reality. But then when the sheriff called it, you know, brought it into reality."

The sheriff wanted a DNA sample to determine if they were the bones of her grandfather.

It became the first step in a mission to reunite her ancestors, a journey that awakened her to a history she heard as child from a generation more inclined to look forward than dwell in the past. Stories that once seemed rosy lost their bloom when she faced with the harsh landscape where her relatives were imprisoned.

Lori's father, Masaru, was a senior in high school in Santa Monica when his family was bused to Manzanar War Relocation Center in April 1942, about two months after President Franklin Roosevelt ordered the imprisonment of all people of Japanese descent on the West Coast.

Lori Matsumura always meant to visit Manzanar. Now she had to make the three hour drive north from Los Angeles.

In October 2019, she gave an oral DNA swab at the sheriff's station in Lone Pine and then drove a few miles north to the former camp, where the National Park Service operates it as a historic site.

The sentry house still stands at the entrance. A replica of one of eight guard towers and replica barracks, a latrine and a mess hall recreate what the camp looked like, minus hundreds of other structures once crammed in the square mile of high desert surrounded by barbed wire.

"How could something like this happen in America?" Lori thought.

She was only struck by the gravity of her family's loss when she visited the land they once inhabited.

Standing near a sign for Block 18, Matsumura was filled with sorrow looking at a barren patch of scraggly brush and weeds.

"I was blown away by how desolate the place was," she said. "Seeing it in person made it so sad for me. I don't think I could have survived that."

For the first time, Matsumura felt a connection to the place her family lived. Walking in their footsteps made it real.

While the buildings were gone, one reminder loomed large: Mount Williamson standing at 14,374 feet (4,381 meters) to the west.

Her grandfather hiked toward that peak on July 29, 1945 to paint while other men went fishing in a chain of alpine lakes. He got lost in a storm Aug. 2 and perished on the mountain.

The fishermen searched in vain when the weather cleared and then returned to camp, assuming he had retreated below. Subsequent search parties found only his sweater.

A local hiker discovered the body in the granite in September.

A burial party laid him to rest near one of the lakes. A piece of paper affixed provided his name, age and said, "Rest in Peace" in Japanese characters.

The gravesite location was not widely known so it initially appeared to be a mystery when hikers unearthed it Oct. 7, 2019. Inyo County Sheriff's officers flew by helicopter to retrieve the remains.

After Lori's DNA was matched with a tooth found in the grave, she and other family members went to the county coroner's office to view the remains.

As Coroner Jason Molinar began to lead Lori and her niece, Lilah, from his office to a private viewing room, Lori halted in the doorway to reassure the scared 11-year-old.

"They're just his bones. That's all it is," she said. "You'll be fine."

Laid on a sheet-covered gurney were the bones of the grandfather she'd never met.

The skeleton was roughly arranged in order. The skull was bleached white, most likely from sun exposure. The ribs, spine and joints were stained a shade of brown.

Molinar pointed to a coil of fishing line, the remains of a rusty pocket knife and two buttons found with the bones.

"The crazy part is the fact that it's this well-preserved," Molinar said. "Usually after this many years, you just find fragments."

Lori and Lilah said a prayer that he would rest in peace and be reunited with his family.

SEE **INTERNEE** PAGE 6

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 216 CALLS ON MARCH 14

Vehicle Parked In Alley 1700blk Ocean Ave 12:06 a.m.
Living In A Vehicle 2300blk 28th St 12:10 a.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 7th St / Georgina Ave 12:21 a.m.
Loud Music 100blk Winnett Pl 12:26 a.m.
Loud Music 1600blk 17th St 12:36 a.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 1700blk Bryn Mawr Ave 12:38 a.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Lincoln Blvd / Colorado Ave 1:50 a.m.
Loud Music 800blk 7th St 1:56 a.m.
Missing Person 1800blk 12th St 3:23 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1400blk Ocean Ave 3:29 a.m.
Loud Music 800blk 7th St 3:39 a.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 9th St / Santa Monica Blvd 4:20 a.m.
Auto Burglary Now 200blk Marine St 4:26 a.m.
Encampment 1100blk Palisades Park 6:21 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 0blk Arcadia Ter 7:59 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 600blk Wilshire Blvd 7:59 a.m.
Petty Theft Now 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 8:08 a.m.
Scar Investigation 2600blk Virginia Ave 8:40 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1000blk 25th St 9:48 a.m.
Exhibition Of Speed Lincoln Blvd / Marine St 9:53 a.m.
Burglary Investigation/Walk Through 700blk Arizona Ave 9:58 a.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries Neilson Way / Hill St 9:59 a.m.
Unknown Trouble 1200blk Washington Ave 10:00 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 500blk Pacific St 10:12 a.m.
Red Zone Violation 1000blk Lincoln Blvd 10:19 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation Neilson Way / Hill St 10:24 a.m.
Petty Theft Now 500blk Wilshire Blvd 11:06 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 100blk Pacific St 11:10 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 1200blk 10th St 11:11 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 500blk Broadway 11:44 a.m.
Encampment 1000blk Interstate 10 11:45 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 2600blk 31st St 11:52 a.m.
Theft Of Recyclables 700blk 12th St 11:59 a.m.
Fraud Report 1900blk Broadway 12:05 p.m.
Violation Of Restraining Order Report 500blk Pico Blvd 12:09 p.m.
Loitering Lincoln Blvd / Pico Blvd 12:30 p.m.
Unknown Trouble 1300blk Franklin St 12:39 p.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 900blk Lincoln Blvd 12:49 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 2700blk 4th St 1:15 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1600blk Colorado Ave 1:52 p.m.
Prowler Just Left 2700blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:53 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 2700blk 2nd St 1:55 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 7th St / San Vicente Blvd 2:12 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 17th St / Santa Monica Blvd 2:12 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 5th St / Santa Monica Blvd 2:32 p.m.
Burglary Report 200blk Marine St 2:37 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1800blk Ocean Park Blvd 3:04 p.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 100blk Fraser Ave 3:10 p.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon Just Occurred 1300blk Grant St 3:16 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1000blk Wilshire Blvd 3:28 p.m.
Fight 2200blk Colorado Ave 3:30 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 200blk Santa Monica Blvd 3:31 p.m.
Traffic Hazard Moomat Ahiko Way / Ocean Ave 3:38 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 1100blk 21st St 3:41 p.m.
Burglary Report 1400blk 10th St 3:45 p.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 1400blk 2nd St 4:02 p.m.
Violation Of Posted Sign 1500blk Lincoln Blvd 4:17 p.m.
Violation Of Temporary No Parking Signs 2900blk Arizona Ave 4:20 p.m.
Person Down 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 4:21 p.m.
Indecent Exposure Now 34th St / Pico Blvd 4:25 p.m.
Vehicle Parked On Sidewalk 1000blk 9th St 4:39 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 0blk Vicente Ter 4:44 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 400blk Marine St 5:00 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 500blk Marine St 5:13 p.m.
Drinking In Public 800blk 25th St 5:36 p.m.
Domestic Violence Now 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 5:38 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred 2600blk 28th St 5:42 p.m.
Public Intoxication Ocean Ave / Wilshire Blvd 5:43 p.m.
Drinking In Public 500blk Marine St 5:48 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1800blk Ocean Park Blvd 5:48 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred 1900blk Pico Blvd 5:53 p.m.
Grand Theft Report 1400blk Ocean Ave 5:56 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 2900blk Main St 6:15 p.m.
Burglary Report 1400blk Princeton St 6:22 p.m.
Burglary Report 1400blk Princeton St 6:24 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries 23rd St / Wilshire Blvd 6:36 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 1100blk 21st St 6:41 p.m.
Loud Music 2800blk 2nd St 6:47 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 500blk 12th St 7:43 p.m.
Petty Theft Now 2200blk Wilshire Blvd 7:46 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 900blk 25th St 7:47 p.m.
Loud Music 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 8:08 p.m.
Smoking Violation 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 8:39 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 20th St / Pico Blvd 8:40 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Ocean Ave / Colorado Ave 8:42 p.m.
Found Property 1400blk Marine St 8:46 p.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 500blk Colorado Ave 8:57 p.m.
Found Property 800blk 25th St 9:24 p.m.
Loud Music Main St / Hollister Ave 9:39 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 500blk Pacific St 10:19 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 1500blk 2nd St 10:22 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 5th St / Santa Monica Blvd 10:47 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Ocean Ave / Olympic Dr 11:31 p.m.
Loud Music 2000blk Ocean Ave 11:53 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 25 CALLS ON MARCH 14

EMS 300blk Santa Monica Pl 5:59 a.m.
EMS 1200blk 6th St 6:19 a.m.
EMS 2600blk 24th St 8:03 a.m.
EMS 1700blk Expo Line 9:26 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 17th St 11:16 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 2700blk 14th St 11:44 a.m.
EMS Lincoln Blvd / Pico Blvd 12:22 p.m.
EMS 3200blk Highland Ave 1:06 p.m.
EMS 1100blk 6th St 1:25 p.m.
EMS 900blk Pico Blvd 1:38 p.m.
EMS 2500blk 3rd St 1:44 p.m.
EMS 1300blk Grant St 3:16 p.m.
EMS 1400blk 3rd Street Prom 3:33 p.m.
EMS 1900blk Pico Blvd 3:46 p.m.
EMS 1300blk 15th St 4:04 p.m.
EMS 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 4:22 p.m.
EMS 400blk Lincoln Blvd 4:40 p.m.
EMS 14th St / Olympic Blvd 5:07 p.m.
Wires Down 18th St / Ashland Ave 5:10 p.m.
EMS 1200blk Franklin St 6:25 p.m.
EMS 1400blk Olympic Blvd 6:35 p.m.
Vehicle Into A Structure 2300blk Wilshire Blvd 6:36 p.m.
EMS 900blk 21st St 9:28 p.m.
EMS 400blk Expo Line 10:57 p.m.
EMS 6th St / Colorado Ave 11:26 p.m.

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Your column here

By Paul Scott

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Unplugging Tesla

Disclosure, I own shares of TSLA.

Santa Monica is experiencing several significant problems simultaneously. In addition to the pandemic, we have a housing shortage, and then there is climate change, the big, existential problem that affects every person on Earth. Our city leaders have been proactive on all fronts, but a recent shortsighted council decision has put a major crimp in the city's ability to fight climate change.

After a thorough search, Tesla, the world's leading electric vehicle manufacturer, found a location for their new Superchargers, which can charge a car in only 30 minutes, at 14th Street and Santa Monica Boulevard. Most of Tesla's Superchargers are located between major cities near freeways to allow interstate travel.

This particular site, however, is geared toward folks who live in apartments and condos who want to switch to an EV, but have no access to a charger at home. Having a 62-stall Supercharger site, where drivers can always get a charge, would enable as many as a couple of thousand Santa Monica residents to dump the pump. This facility will be the first of its kind in the world and is a new service Tesla plans to offer in communities where there is a lot of multi-family housing. Think of it as a "gas station" for EVs, but it uses clean solar energy instead of filthy gasoline thanks to solar panels on site. Santa Monica has over a dozen gas stations, every one a hazardous waste site, but it has no equivalent Supercharger sites. With over 70% of Santa Monica residents living in multi-family housing, robust public charging facilities are a necessity if EVs are to succeed.

On November 14, 2017, the Santa Monica City Council adopted the Electric Vehicle Action Plan, which was meant to triple the number of public charging stations in Santa Monica within three years. The plan was to focus on "expanding charging opportunities for residents who live in multi-unit residential buildings and neighborhoods, where charging infrastructure is more challenging to install."

The city had planned to expand its public charging ports from 89 to over 300 within three years, including curbside charging, streetlight charging and fast charging stations.

"Implementation of this plan will help facilitate the rapid transition to more sustainable forms of transportation and keep Santa Monica on the leading edge of this technological transformation," said Public Works Assistant Director Dean Kubani.

This plan came at a time when electric vehicles are becoming more available to the mass market and are expected to increase significantly in the coming years. The state of California aims to have 1.5 million zero-emission vehicles on the road by 2025. Transitioning vehicles to electric is essential for Santa Monica to reach its carbon reduction goals as vehicles account for 64% of total greenhouse gas emissions.

Because of the pandemic and budget concerns, most of the work on this charging infrastructure has been postponed, with only about 200 chargers installed to date, and almost all of them the slower "Level 2" chargers that take hours to fill a battery. The number of Superchargers Tesla wants to install represents about 15 times the combined charging speed of all the currently-installed public chargers in Santa Monica. This is a big deal! Tesla is increasing the charging capacity of the entire city by more than an order of magnitude with one facility.

The effect this facility will have on the public's belief that they will be able to charge their EV, even if they don't have a charger at home, will be enormous. It is estimated that up to 2,000 people could use this facility and many will be new EV owners, having switched from emitting greenhouse gasses to "driving on sunshine." And the city doesn't have to spend a dime. Tesla will pay for everything.

Tesla has been working with planning staff for many months to get approval from the city's Planning Commission, which it granted March 3. Tesla's plans were to have the facility running by the end of summer. However, at the March 9th City Council meeting, this project was included in a moratorium on all new commercial development while an inventory of potential housing sites was conducted. After a representative of one of the car dealerships asked the council to exempt all of the car dealerships on Santa Monica Blvd. from the moratorium, the request was granted. Several other projects already in the planning stages were also exempted, but the council specifically targeted the Tesla facility to keep it from being built.

Councilor Kevin McKeown derisively described the facility as a "parking lot with plugs." In contrast to the city's claim that it wants residents to switch to EVs, the council allows all the gas car dealerships exemptions from the moratorium, but the most important EV project in the city's history is denied. It should be noted that McKeown drives a gas-burning car. It should also be noted that there seemed to be a decidedly anti-Tesla attitude among several councilors as they kept asking if Tesla was not included in the exemptions, seemingly wanting to make sure the Supercharger facility was axed. Finally, while public testimony was allowed in the Planning Commission meeting, there was no opportunity for the public to comment on this maneuver as the agenda did not signal this action.

Tesla has single-handedly dragged the entire auto industry into the EV world. To deny this company the right to build its facility while allowing its competitors to build whatever they like is discriminatory. I recognize the need for more housing, but there are dozens of sites that can accommodate housing, but only one that works for Tesla's Supercharger site. Let's prove that Santa Monica can work on both problems at once by allowing the Tesla facility to go forward while repurposing many of the empty office buildings around town for housing.

Paul Scott, Santa Monica

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WINNER

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Santa Monica Police Department Seeks Community Assistance in Attempted Armed Robbery

On Sunday, March 14, about 3:15 p.m., Santa Monica Police Department (SMPD) officers responded to a radio call for service near the 1300 Block of Grant Street. When officers arrived on scene, they located one male and one female victim with moderate injuries as the result of an attempted armed robbery. The Santa Monica Fire Department was dispatched to treat and transport the female victim to a local area hospital where she was treated for moderate stab wounds.

During the follow up investigation, officers learned that the two victims were walking along the sidewalk when approached by two males attempting to snatch the female victim's purse. The following suspect descriptions were provided:

Suspect #1: Male, African-American, late teens to early 20's with chin-length dreadlocks. Last seen wearing a light green hooded sweatshirt and a face mask.

Suspect #2: Male, African-American, late teens to early 20's wearing a beige crewneck sweatshirt, face mask and armed with a possible pocketknife.

Suspect Vehicle: Black 4 door sedan last seen fleeing northbound on Euclid Street from Grant Street at a high rate of speed.

SMPD is seeking the public's assistance in identifying the suspects wanted for this attempted armed robbery and assault with a deadly weapon or for security video that may have captured the incident. Anyone with information pertaining to this incident is strongly encouraged to contact Detective Murphy, Nicole.Murphy@smgov.net or (310) 458-8491.

SUBMITTED BY LIEUTENANT RUDY FLORES

Letter to the Editor

By Gordon Elkins Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Editor:

In regard to the letter from Colin Langridge, that questions the safety of the McClure Tunnel(March 12), in which he feels that 'there is going to be a big accident and a fatality', I would note that at least one such tragedy has already occurred. In 1962, as I recall, two of my parents closest friends were in an "accident " when a speeding driver crossed the center line and totaled our friends' car. 'Uncle' Fred Reynolds was killed and his wife, 'Aunt' Bertha Reynolds was nearly killed and was in a body cast for months. She eventually regained some of her abilities. Fred and Bertha had been strong proponents for the civil liberties and general welfare of Angelenos.

It was after that tragedy that some safety improvements were installed to better separate tunnel traffic. However, I have never felt safe in the tunnel and I agree with Langridge about the necessity of bright lighting.

Gordon Elkins, Santa Monica

CALIFORNIA

FROM PAGE 2

state. It's about our clean air, clean water programs, meeting our environmental strategies," he told KQED.

Newsom received high praise for his aggressive approach to the coronavirus last spring, when he issued the nation's first statewide stay-at-home order.

But in more recent months, he has faced growing public anger and frustration over health orders that shuttered schools and businesses and a massive unemployment benefits fraud scandal. He also took a public drubbing for attending a birthday party with friends and lobbyists at the exclusive French Laundry restaurant, while telling residents to stay home for safety.

Responding to Newsom's campaign, the California Republican Party pointed to a slew of issues beyond the coronavirus.

"The highest poverty rate in the nation, the largest number of homeless, some of the highest gas prices, unemployment checks going to death row inmates, and up to $31 billion in unemployment fraud," the party tweeted at Newsom. "The recall is gaining momentum because of your failed leadership."

Two Republicans have announced their candidacies: Kevin Faulconer, the former Republican mayor of San Diego, and Republican businessman John Cox, who Newsom easily defeated in 2018.

Another name being discussed in GOP circles is former President Donald Trump's then-acting director of national intelligence, Richard Grenell, who has not responded to requests for comment on a possible candidacy.

It's not uncommon in California for residents to seek recalls, but they rarely get on the ballot — and even fewer succeed.

Asked about what direction the governor should take in light of the potential recall, Dee Dee Myers, director of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, said Newsom needs to keep focusing on his job.

"He just needs to get up every day and do what he's been doing, which is get vaccines distributed ... continue to invest in our business and help them recover and get kids back in school," said Myers, a former Warner Bros. executive who earlier served as former President Bill Clinton's first White House press secretary. "I think that's the path forward for the state to get through this and I don't think anything else matters that much."

"It's been a tough year for everybody," she added in an interview last week. "Some people are frustrated."

Associated Press journalist Kathleen Ronayne contributed from Sacramento, Calif.

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6255

VERDI CHORUS

FROM PAGE 1

is organizing a series of musical soirees highlighting the talent and tenacity of opera singers from the choir's young professional 'Fox Singers' program.

"These singers are the beginnings of their career. It's a horrible thing to happen when you're just starting to pull it together and suddenly there are no opportunities," said Ketchum. "It becomes really hard to get yourself to learn new music and keep your art going, so it's been part of my goal to give these people something to do when there's nothing else out there."

This fall's Spanish focused 'Amor y Odio' concert was met with an outpouring of support from the classical music community, and the Fox Singers are preparing to bring the lush world of Italian art songs to life for the April 11 'Amore della Vita' concert.

While the Chorus is known for its large group numbers, this online series gave singers the opportunity to showcase solos and delve into the world of art songs, which are opera songs that don't form part of a larger operatic work.

"It's like the difference between a poem and a novel," said Ketchum. "A novel would be the opera, the whole story, and an art song is like a poem that stands on its own."

The upcoming event is a far cry from typical Zoom performances, which are plagued by poor sound quality and audio lags. Each piece is rehearsed extensively and professionally filmed in a recording studio. The videos are then stitched together and interspersed with Ketchum's narration of their language, significance, and history.

"The Verdi Chorus wanted us to have as close to a real life classical music making experience as possible, because it's fulfilling for us as artists intrinsically as well as extrinsically, and the audience hears a difference too," said Fox Singer Tiffany Ho.

When Covid hit last spring the Verdi Chorus had to put the emergency brakes on its major spring concert. Ketchum felt deeply for all of her singers and put together a relief fund to ensure everyone received at least part of their planned compensation.

"When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade and I feel like the Verdi Chorus has really done that and tried to make the best lemonade possible out of these lemons," said Ho.

Ho has been with the Chorus for four seasons and was on the cusp of leaving her day job to perform full time when the pandemic inserted an unplanned intermission into her blossoming career. She helped build the 'SoCal Vocalist Relief Fund' to compensate the broader community of singers who have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

Not only did vocalists lose all job opportunities, but because many of them are contract workers they often didn't quality for unemployment benefits or Covid-19 related relief programs.

Even in the best of times the opera world is incredibly competitive and employment opportunities are scarce. While it forms a niche section of today's music industry, opera is a 400 year art form that spans many cultures and languages.

"Opera blends together so many different things whether it's theater, dance, art, language, or history," said Fox Singer Joseph Gárate. "Every opera role has so much to explore and has become a lifestyle that has continued to sustain me artistically and personally, so I'm incredibly grateful to be part of the Verdi Chorus."

The upcoming Amore della Vita concert will be released at 10am on April 11 on the Verdi Chorus's website. The concert is free to all but viewers are encouraged to contribute to the Artist Relief Fund: https://www.verdichorus.org/artist-relief-fund/



Courtesy image

CONCERT: **The virtual show is April 11.**

Clara@smdp.com

INTERNEE

FROM PAGE 2

Lost once and found twice, it was now time properly bury Giichi Matsumura.

On Dec. 21, Lori, two brothers, a sister-in-law and niece and nephew held a service at Woodlawn.

The Rev. Shumyo Kojima, a Buddhist priest, said the service was to make his final resting place peaceful and reunite Giichi with his wife. She had been buried with the lock of his hair and nail clippings and his name was already on the gravestone.

"He moved from the high Sierra to here. All of you are eyewitnesses," Kojima said. "This is a kind of house-warming party. So, everyone will be here to celebrate his new residence."

Kojima lit incense and rang a bell at different intervals as he chanted ancient sutras, bowing repeatedly.

A cemetery worker placed the container of ashes in the shallow grave and Lori took her turn sinking a shovel into a pile of dirt and dropping it on the ashes.

Thinking back on her more than year-long mission, she wished the hikers hadn't disturbed the grave. She imagined it as a beautiful setting in mountains he loved.

But she was happy to bring him home.

"His body is laid to rest with everyone, so it's kind of just closed the chapter on my dad and his siblings and parents," she said.

She only regretted they weren't alive to see it.

‘Mank’ leads Oscar nominations in a year of record diversity

JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

After a pandemic year that shuttered movie theaters and upended the movie business, Academy Awards nominations on Monday went to two female filmmakers for the first time, to a historically diverse slate of actors and to David Fincher’s lead-nominee “Mank,” a traditional kind of Oscar contender — an old Hollywood homage — in very untraditional year.

Fincher’s “Mank,” a black-and-white, period drama about “Citizen Kane” screenwriter Herman Mankiewicz, easily topped nominations for the 93rd Academy Awards — delayed two months by the coronavirus pandemic — with 10 nominations, including best picture, best director, acting nods for Gary Oldman and Amanda Seyfried, and a host of others for its lavish craft.

Nominations were spread among a wide variety of contenders. Six films, all of them also up for best picture, score six nods: “Judas and the Black Messiah,” “Nomadland,” “Minari,” “Sound of Metal,” “The Trial of the Chicago 7” and “The Father.” Also nominated for best picture was Emerald Fennell’s “Promising Young Woman.”

History was made in the best director category. Only five women have ever been nominated before. For the first time, two were this year. Chloé Zhao got a nod for her elegiac road-trip drama “Nomadland” alongside first-time feature filmmaker Fennell for her pitch black #MeToo revenge comedy. “Never going to stop crying,” Fennell, also nominated for best screenplay, said on Twitter.

Zhao, the first woman of color nominated for best director, is the most nominated woman in a single year in Oscar history. She was also tipped for the film’s adapted screenplay, editing and as a producer in the best picture category. The other directing nominees were Lee Isaac Chung for the tender family drama “Minari,” Fincher for “Mank” and Thomas Vinterberg for his heavy-drinking Danish tragicomedy “Another Round.”

For performers, it’s the most diverse group of nominees ever — and a far cry from the all-white acting nods that spawned the #OscarsSoWhite hashtag five years ago. Nine of the 20 acting nominees are people of color, including a posthumous best-actor nomination for Chadwick Boseman (“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”), as well as nods for Riz Ahmed (“Sound of Metal”), Steven Yeun (“Minari”), Viola Davis (“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”) and Andra Day (“The People vs. Billie Holiday”) and supporting nominations for Daniel Kaluuya and Lakeith Stanfield (“Judas and the Black Messiah”), Leslie Odom Jr. (“One Night in Miami”) and Yuh-Jung Youn (“Minari”).

“We have to recognize how hard these people have worked,” said Day, nominated for her performance as Billie Holiday. “We have to recognize their talent.”

“When you hear your own name it’s a weird feeling,” said Ahmed, the first Muslim nominated for best actor. “I just quietly gave thanks and felt some gratitude.”

Davis, who won for her performance in 2016’s “Fences,” landed her fourth Oscar nomination, making her the most nominated Black actress ever. Yeun is the first Asian American ever nominated for best actor. “Judas and the Black Messiah,” Shaka King’s powerful Black Panther drama, is the first best-picture nominee with an all-Black producing team (King along with Ryan Coogler and Charles D. King). Overall, a record 70 women were nominated for 76 Oscars, the academy said.

The other nominees for best actress are: Carey Mulligan (“Promising Young Woman”); Frances McDormand (“Nomadland”); Vanessa Kirby (“Pieces of a Woman”). The remaining nominee for best actor is Anthony Hopkins for the dementia drama “The Father.”

With moviegoing nearly snuffed out by the coronavirus, the best-picture nominees had hardly any box office to speak of: $14.1 million in U.S. and Canada ticket sales. For the first time, Hollywood’s biggest and most sough-after awards belong to movies that were almost entirely seen at home.

“We learned a lot of hard lessons last year, but a nice one was that people will find a way to go to the movies, even if they can only go as far as their living rooms,” said Aaron Sorkin, writer-director of “The Trial of the Chicago 7,” in a statement.

Netflix, as expected, led all studios with 35 nominations. The streaming service is still hunting its first best-picture winner, and this year has two shots in “Mank” and “The Trial of the Chicago 7” — a movie Paramount Pictures sold off during the pandemic. Netflix led last year, too, with 24 nominations, but came away with just two wins.

Other streamers were in the mix. Amazon Studios, in particular, was well represented with “Sound of Metal,” “Borat Subsequent Moviefilm” and “One Night in Miami” — leading to 12 nominations overall. Both Apple TV+ (“Wolfwalkers,” “Greyhound”) and Disney+ (“Soul,” “Onward”) landed their first nominations. The film that tried to lead a box-office revival — Christopher Nolan’s “Tenet” — walked away with nominations for production design and visual effects.

The nominations were announced from London by presenters Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra Jonas. The Academy Awards would typically have happened by now but this year will be telecast April 25. The film academy said Monday that the show will be held at both its usual home, the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, and the city’s railway hub, Union Station.

This year’s awards season — typically a monthslong circuit of screenings, cocktail parties and schmoozing — has been entirely

SEE **OSCAR** PAGE 11



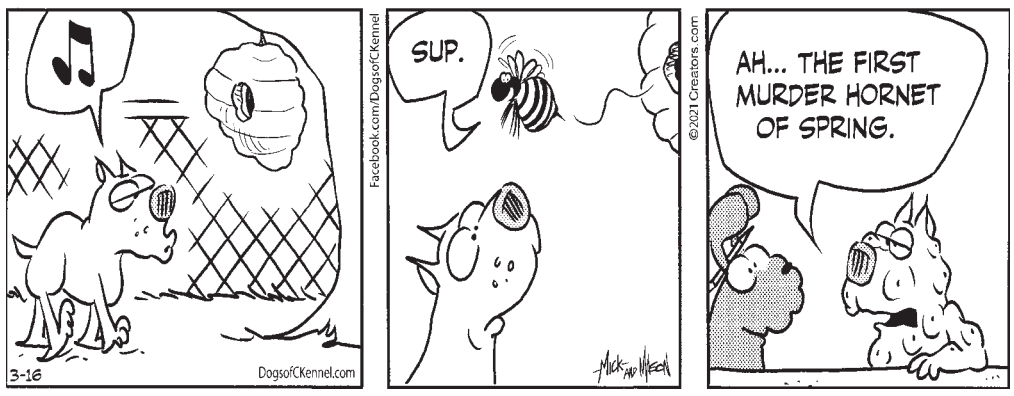
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



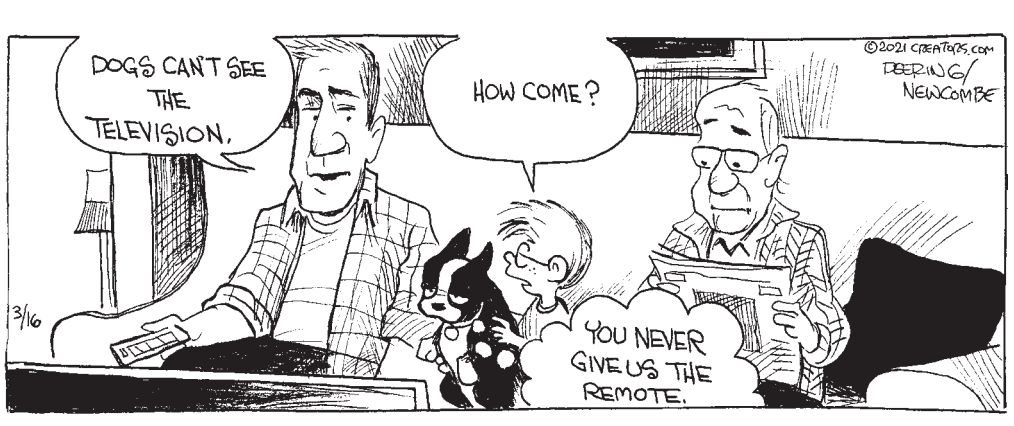
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 57.2°

TUESDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft Waist to chest high
Early tide push shoulder be peaky and fun off a mix of swells. Wind looks more favorable as the decent pulse of NW swell mix from Monday eases. S swell builds, is strongest west of Pt Dume.

WEDNESDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ Waist to stomach high occ. 4 ft
Early tide push is peaky, fun off a mix of swells. AM wind should be offshore. Selective NW swell mix drops out. S swell holds steady, is strongest west of Pt Dume.

WEATHER

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 58.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 48.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 61.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2021/03/16	Tue	05:45 AM	0.63	L
2021/03/16	Tue	11:45 AM	3.93	H
2021/03/16	Tue	5:35 PM	1.00	L
2021/03/16	Tue	11:51 PM	4.65	H
2021/03/17	Wed	06:25 AM	0.71	L
2021/03/17	Wed	12:26 PM	3.38	H
2021/03/17	Wed	5:52 PM	1.48	L
2021/03/18	Thu	12:17 AM	4.54	H
2021/03/18	Thu	07:12 AM	0.86	L
2021/03/18	Thu	1:18 PM	2.83	H
2021/03/18	Thu	6:03 PM	1.92	L
2021/03/19	Fri	12:46 AM	4.38	H
2021/03/19	Fri	08:18 AM	1.03	L
2021/03/19	Fri	3:05 PM	2.41	H
2021/03/19	Fri	5:51 PM	2.30	L
2021/03/20	Sat	01:26 AM	4.18	H
2021/03/20	Sat	10:10 AM	1.03	L
2021/03/21	Sun	02:40 AM	4.01	H
2021/03/21	Sun	11:50 AM	0.71	L
2021/03/22	Mon	04:30 AM	4.08	H
2021/03/22	Mon	12:46 PM	0.28	L

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 3/13
5 11 51 56 61
Power#: 2
Jackpot: 184 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 3/12
2 24 25 31 65
Mega#: 18
Jackpot: 93 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 3/13
3 7 8 13 21
Mega#: 19
Jackpot: 29 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 3/14
1 4 21 23 34

Daily 3
Draw Date: 3/14
EVENING: 8 9 4

Draw Date: 3/14
MIDDAY: 0 3 8

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 3/14
1st: 06 - Whirl Win
2nd: 12 - Lucky Charms
3rd: 11 - Money Bags
Race Time: 1:43.93

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (MARCH 16)

The year features a work advancement, but it's relationships that grow you the most. You'll meet people who help you elevate your body, mind and spirit. You will not be able to work on one aspect without improving the others. A quest begins in the summer and will last two years, culminating in bodywork and insights. Gemini and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 13, 5, 33, 28 and 10.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll get what you want and need because you're willing to let go of certain positions and ideas about yourself. For instance, you're more than willing to sacrifice vanity and pride at the feet of a larger purpose.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). If you are very hard on yourself, then you might rise to superior standards or you might quit out of exhaustion. Self-directed harshness eats energy. Play the middle ground with gentle encouragement toward improvement.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Add your flavor to the conversation without worrying if others will relate. You bring a multidimensionality that will extend beyond its context into other days, days in which new understandings will be reached. This is just the start.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The simplest answer is not always the best answer. In fact, today it's a one-size-fits-none result. You're safe to assume the problem is custom-made and to seek a bespoke solution.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The weakness is a strength, though it's not activated until someone applies it to a worthy purpose. You've a gift for seeing the potential of qualities (in yourself or others) and putting them to good use.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've been listening, and you really understand the needs of others. Your calm support will be impactful. You will reassure and speak for those who haven't quite found the right words yet.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). There are certain actions you take that you do recognize for the rituals they are. Their devotional qualities are hidden to you, though today you'll be made quite aware of the quirkier things you've made sacred.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You don't have to respond to every notification, phone call or question. You are the gate, the gatekeeper and all that's behind the gate, too. Take the first two responsibilities seriously and your domain remains your own.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). No need to reward or punish yourself. The reward is intrinsic in an action or it's not. And if you didn't make the right move, that's the punishment. Your job is to keep moving in acceptance that you're learning as you go.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Should you settle for a thing that's working pretty well or go for what you really want? It's not an "either/or" situation right now. You can do both. Enjoy your place while you visualize, plan and invest in your leap to the next level.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You might not be aware of how valuable your opinions are to other people. When you phrase your support well, it will stick with others in a positive way and even be a guiding light.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Well-being is for the well-rested and well-hydrated. Also, it helps to believe that it's all going down just as it needs to, so dial up the volume on your senses and breathe it all in.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

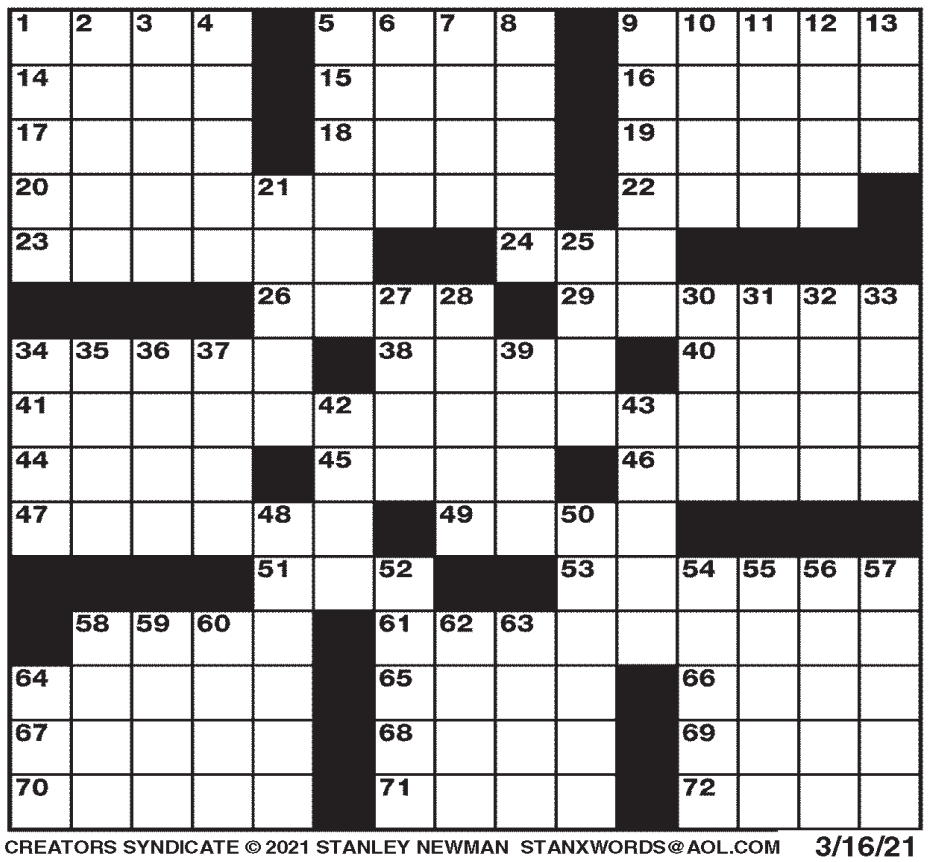
		9		3			1	
3		1	2			7		
					6		3	4
		3				5	7	
5			7		3			9
	9	7				2		
4	7		9					
		5			4	6		8
	8			6		4		

Newsday Crossword

ON THE MARCH by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Chauffeur-driven car, for short
5 Gambling probabilities
9 Coffee-chocolate blend
14 All over again
15 What a furnace supplies
16 In the lead
17 Dole (out)
18 Bump __ (meet)
19 Triangular traffic sign
20 Marcher promoting a cause
22 Emcee
23 Gullible accomplice
24 Night before a holiday
26 Country singer McEntire
29 Intensifies, informally
34 Orchard fruit with a core
38 Basics
40 Volcano of Sicily
41 Marcher at a boot camp
44 Grade school support orgs.
45 Money in Mexico
46 Mom's sisters
47 Be in charge of
49 __-of-the-moment (without preparation)
51 Tooth pros' grp.
53 Capital of Kansas
58 Fencing contest
61 Marcher leading a school band
64 Ski jacket
65 Interoffice note
66 Sassy
67 Building wing
68 Quaint hotels
69 Highest cards in poker
70 Untidy
71 Tugboat sound
72 Hang around

DOWN
1 Nightstand lights
2 Not moving
3 "Same here"
4 Be a debtor of
5 "So that's it!"
6 Fender ding
7 See socially
8 Stash away
9 Rowdy disorder
10 Cleveland's state
11 Mediocre grades
12 Sentry's "Stop!" order
13 Tack on
21 "Snowy" marsh bird
25 Bouquet container
27 Unadorned
28 Bottomless pit
30 Andes nation
31 Leave speechless
32 Apartment in a complex
33 Gentle touches
34 Digital clock toggle switch
35 Bread with a pocket
36 Make preparations
37 The *Mona* __
39 Any farm harvest
42 Imitated
43 Billiards bounce
48 Our Milky Way, for one
50 Maximum effort
52 Allow to enter
54 Dads
55 Boot out
56 Divided Asian peninsula
57 Pretentiously designed
58 Native of Copenhagen
59 Caterer's coffeepots
60 __ out a living (scrapes by)
62 Nevada city
63 "Well, I forbid it"
64 Nonstick cooking spray brand



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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

O	O	I	I	O	I	I	O	O	I	O	I
O	O	I	O	I	I	O	I	I	O	I	O
I	I	O	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	O	I
I	O	I	I	O	I	I	O	O	I	O	O
O	I	O	O	I	O	O	I	I	O	I	I
O	I	I	O	O	I	I	O	O	I	I	O
I	O	I	I	O	O	I	O	I	I	O	O
I	I	O	O	I	O	O	I	I	O	O	I
O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	I	O
O	O	I	I	O	I	I	O	I	I	O	O
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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 26 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 5054

Flooded out

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

Alert
Aware
Caravans
Catastrophe
City
Clean up
Contamination
Creek
Dams
Downpour
Drain
Ecology
Evacuate
Float
Glacier
Hazard
Horses
Lakes
Levee
Lull
Measure
Muddy
Observe
Plant
Relief
Reports
Response
Rise
Ruin
Ruts
Silt
Submerge
Swim
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Tide
Treatment

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BUDGET

FROM PAGE 1

environmental sustainability and access to mobility and transportation with the other priorities, but Council had differing opinions on the matter.

"If I went out in the street, right now, and all seven of us took ten different blocks of the city, right now, and walked it for the next two hours, and talked to people on the street, you would find that they're concerned about crime; they're concerned about homelessness; they're concerned about having safe parks… they're concerned about reducing the amount of burglaries (and) the perceived safety in our city," Councilmember Phil Brock said.

"As a city, we cannot continually be reactive. We need to be proactive in taking care of residents' concerns, and I think that's a very important point — we've become reactive. So for me, public safety and homelessness are intertwined," Brock said. "We've got to help get people off our streets. We've got to make our city safe and if we don't do that, we're letting our residents down because that's what I hear every day."

Davis said it really disturbed her to hear Council say homelessness and crime are intertwined.

"I understand that some people do believe that a lot of crime in the city is related to homelessness. I think that's unfair and I think it's inappropriate. I think it's not true. There's a lot of uncomfortable and maybe even antisocial behavior that we see among people who are unhoused. But I think somehow intertwining those is, just in all honesty, not treating people with dignity and inappropriate," Davis said, adding, "I do agree, however... that I think we need to be a little more less siloed and more broad thinking about these problems."

McCowan agreed.

"I just think the substitute motion is almost too narrow. And I would really like to see it broadened a bit," she said. "We are going to have a new city manager, one that may not have the institutional knowledge and background that our current interim city manager has, so I'm concerned that if we too greatly narrow our priorities and their descriptions then we will find ourselves in some very uncomfortable meeting situations in the future."

Brock said if Council spreads itself too thin when setting its priorities then nothing will get accomplished. "And we'll say the same thing over and over again, so I will favor Mayor Himmelrich's motion because I really want to see us focus and concentrate. And, yes, I believe that will help lead to economic recovery."

After the narrow vote, McKeown explained his no-vote reflects what's not included in the motion.

"I'm appalled that this ignored the existential crisis of our time — climate change," McKeown said as he also took issue with Council deciding to not make affordability another priority.

"My no-vote for the substitute motion was because I believe that we so narrowly defined our priorities that we excluded things that I believe are critically important," McCowan said. "We did not explicitly lay them out in a way that I believe we should have, particularly in the areas of affordability and sustainability."

Davis shared similar thoughts after she said none of the priorities will matter if we're all living in a climate crisis with 120 degree days in a city nobody can afford.

"Additionally... I think our efforts of equity, completely and exclusively to economic recovery, is inappropriate. Social justice is a broader topic, and there may be a lot of things that we need to do to address the effects of intentional racism in the history of our country as well as the history of our community that don't have anything to do with economic recovery but have to do with creating a socially just community," Davis said. "And not including those in these days and times is inappropriate."

The priorities selected by Council will now inform an April 13, City Council meeting that will be held to decide how to allocate the American Rescue Plan stimulus within the allowable areas outlined in the bill. A biennial budget study session will then be held on May 25, before the budget's adoption, which is set for June 22, 2021.

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RENTS

FROM PAGE 1

"So while we have gone down from 2019, you're still seeing very high, record high rents which will likely continue as pandemic conditions get better and the economy gets back on track," said Morena Zelaya, information analyst for the Rent Control Board.

Since vacancy decontrol began in 1999, median initial rental rates on rent controlled apartments have risen almost every year with the exception of a small decrease following the 2008 recession. Even with the pandemic related drop, all newly leased units are at or higher than initial rent rates set in 2018.

The median initial rent rates for controlled units in 2020 were $1,895 for a studio, $2,475 for a one bedroom, $3,200 for a two bedroom and $4,600 for a three or more bedroom unit.

"The market, even with those dips, continues to only cater to the very wealthy," said Zelaya. "No household earning the area median income for Los Angeles which is $77,300 could afford even a market rate studio in Santa Monica."

While rent controlled units held high values, data from online rental site Apartment List suggested that rents for market rate units were more significantly impacted.

By examining trends from private listing sites, Apartment List estimated that rents in Santa Monica have dropped by as much as 14 percent compared to March year. Apartment List calculated median market rate rents at $1,889 for a one bedroom and $2,376 for a two bedroom apartment.

This data is extrapolated from online listings and likely less precise than that of the Rent Control Board, which came directly from signed leases. Still, it highlights a disparity in how the economic crisis of Covid-19 impacted rates for controlled and uncontrolled housing.

Data across the board shows that Santa Monica remains an expensive place to live. Apartment List reported that Santa Monica had the third highest median rent rates of the 10 largest cities in the Los Angeles metro area. It also indicates that the market was rebounding as rents in Santa Monica, and generally the rest of Los Angeles, have been trending upwards for the past two months.

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OSCAR

FROM PAGE 7

virtual, taking much of the buzz and predictability out of the Oscars. Eligibility was extended to early 2021 releases and to movies that bypassed theaters.

"In our industry there is nothing more traditional than the Academy Awards, which hopefully sends a sign of hope that we will get out of this," said Oldman in a statement. "The Oscars are such a sign that normalcy still exists."

Among the films that had hoped for a better result Monday was Spike Lee's "Da 5 Bloods" — which was nominated only for its score. Just eight out of a possible 10 movies were nominated for best picture, leaving out "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom," Regina King's "One Night in Miami" and Golden Globe winner "Borat Subsequent Moviefilm."

Despite the best-picture snub for "Borat," Sacha Baron Cohen, who created the title character, was still a nominee for his supporting role as activist Abbie Hoffman in "The Trial of the Chicago 7," and "Borat" star Maria Bakalova was nominated for best supporting actress. Also nominated in the category: Glenn Close for "Hillbilly Elegy" and Olivia Colman for "The Father."

The most competitive category might have been documentary, where "Collective," "Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution," "The Mole Agent," My Octopus Teacher" and "Time" ultimately landed nominations. "Collective," the Romanian documentary about investigative journalism and government corruption, became just the second film nominated for both best documentary and best international film. The other international film nominees were "Quo Vadis, Aida?," Bosnia and Herzegovina; "Another Round," Denmark; "Better Days," Hong Kong; and "The Man Who Sold His Skin," Tunisia.

The nominees for best animated feature: "Onward"; "Over the Moon"; "A Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon"; "Soul"; "Wolfwalkers."

The film academy and ABC will hope that the nominees can drum up more excitement than they have elsewhere. Interest in little golden statuettes has nosedived during the pandemic. Ratings for a largely virtual Golden Globes plunged to 6.9 million viewers — a 64% drop from 2020 — last month. Though on Sunday the Grammys managed to break through the Zoom trap.

With the notable exception of fueling streaming subscriber growth, the pandemic has been punishing for the movie industry. Production slowed to a crawl, blockbusters were postponed or detoured to streaming and thousands have been laid off or furloughed.

But the outlook for Hollywood has recently brightened as coronavirus cases have slid and vaccines have ramped up. Movie theaters are reopening in the U.S.'s two largest markets, New York and Los Angeles. And several larger movies — including the Walt Disney Co.'s "Black Widow" (May 7) — are scheduled for May and beyond.

AP National Writer Jocelyn Noveck in New York and Jamia Pugh in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

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