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Santa Monica Daily Press

THURSDAY
03.25.21
Volume 20 Issue 112

@smdailypress @smdailypress Santa Monica Daily Press smdp.com

Underground robbery
Suspect arrested in parking garage.
Page 3

Noteworthy
R'N'R Maven.
Page 4

Freeway crash



Matthew Hall

CRASH: The Santa Monica Fire Department and California Highway Patrol responded to an accident on the 10 freeway Wednesday morning. The driver lost control of the car, hit a light pole and began driving up the embankment. The car eventually came back down and stopped with the driver side door pinned closed. Firefighters had to extricate the driver from the car due to the situation but she was unhurt.

Student organization helps kids with disabilities make friends

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

Julia Sansing knows how hard it can be for kids with disabilities to form friendships, especially in the midst of the pandemic, which is why she created Friend in Me.

Her organization pairs neurotypical student volunteers with children with disabilities for games and conversation over Zoom. Friend in Me started with just a handful of Sansing's friends volunteering, and over the last year has blossomed into a nationwide program with almost 200 participants.

Sansing has a younger brother with autism and knows how difficult it can be for him to build new friendships and how powerful and uplifting it is when he does connect with peers. Watching the challenges he faced navigating middle and high school inspired her to create Friend in Me.



Courtesy photo

FRIENDS: Friend in Me helps students form friendships via zoom.

"I always noticed how hard it

SEE **VOLUNTEERS** PAGE 6

Council extends Rent Deferment Program

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

In light of the unprecedented social and economic disruptions created by the COVID-19 pandemic, City Council has extended a previously established Rent Deferment Program, meaning tenants in city-owned properties will have until June 30, 2022 to pay back their dues.

Originally established in April 2020 in accordance with the City's emergency orders, the City's Rent Deferment Program protected those who lease or license City-owned properties from eviction and allowed them to defer any rents owed for the period of April 2020 through March 2021.

"This discussion regarding rent relief built upon the many efforts the city has been taking over the last year to address the impacts of COVID on our community," Economic Development Manager Jennifer Taylor said this week. Along with the waiving of late fees and any interest penalties that have been accumulated, the program has deferred approximately $5.3 million in rents for the 60 tenants enrolled in the Rent Deferment Program across all funds.

The deadlines for repayment depend on the classification of the tenant though some small retailers, restaurants, food vendors and others covered under the commercial eviction moratorium would have had to start paying monthly rent on April 1 and any deferred payments would begin on July 1, according to Taylor, who said she and other city leaders have recognized that it's going to be nearly impossible for many tenants to pay full rent on top of the deferred payments, which is why staff proposed an extension to the program.

Following Council's approval Tuesday, city tenants will have some or all of their rent deferred, City Attorney George Cardona said. "And then the repayment period would expire June 30, 2022, and that's obviously subject to staff coming back with additional suggestions in the future."

Councilmember Kevin McKeown said one of the suggestions he would like to see is how Council can actively get additional funds to local businesses beyond simply deferring rent payments.

Gleam Davis shared similar worries and asked if it was possible

SEE **COUNCIL** PAGE 11

Fire burns five acres of Ballona Wetlands

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

A brush fire in the Ballona Wetlands burned five acres on Tuesday but firefighters were able to prevent any structure damage or injuries.

According to the Los Angeles Fire Department, 54 firefighters worked on the blaze and while heavy brush made access to the area difficult, they were able to bring it under control in about two hours.

According to LAFD, firefighters first responded at about 3:30 p.m. and a lack of wind kept the spread to a minimum.

The area houses the ecological reserve and the Playa Del Rey oil field storage facility but no structures were damaged and the Los Angeles County Fire Department provided one water-dropping helicopter and two hand crews to assist with the operation.

The storage facility is the subject of community protest in the area with local officials citing safety concerns as reasons for SoCalGas to shutter operations there.

The area lies just below a residential neighborhood and across the street from the Playa Vista community. A sizable homeless RV encampment also borders the zone.

No cause was available at press time.

editor@smdp.com

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Newsom taps Asian lawmaker as California attorney general

KATHLEEN RONAYNE AND OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

California Gov. Gavin Newsom on Wednesday nominated Assemblyman Rob Bonta, a criminal justice reformer and the state's first Filipino legislator, to be its next attorney general.

Bonta, a Democrat, would replace Xavier Becerra, who was confirmed last week as President Joe Biden's health and human services secretary. Pending likely confirmation by the state's Democratic Legislature, Bonta would hold the job through 2022 when he would have to run for election.

Bonta, 48, had the backing of a number of Asian American and Pacific Islander groups, as well as progressive groups and leaders on criminal and environmental justice. His appointment comes amid a time of rising violence against Asian Americans. After six women of Asian descent were killed in a Georgia shooting spree, top AAPI elected officials called on Newsom to name Bonta to the job.

California is home to more than 6 million people of Asian descent.

"From his unique life and lived experience we have someone that doesn't need to be educated on these things," Newsom said during a Wednesday event with Bonta at the International Hotel-Manilatown Center, a San Francisco site rich with Filipino history.

Bonta spoke passionately about the inspiration he takes from his parents, activists in the movement for farmworker rights alongside Cesar Chavez. He was born in the Philippines when they were serving there as missionaries.

"It made me want to become an attorney to fight for people who've been wronged, who've been hurt, who've been harmed, who've been mistreated, and to be their champion," he said. "And it's that fight for justice for all Californians that continues to motivate me."

Bonta lives in Alameda and was elected to represent the east San Francisco Bay Area, including Oakland, in 2012. He is a prolific author of legislation, often with a criminal justice reform focus. State laws he's introduced that were signed into law include a measure to automatically expunge marijuana related offenses from people's records after California legalized recreational marijuana, to eliminate private prisons and to end cash bail. Voters rejected the bail change in a 2020 referendum.

"Rob represents what makes California great — our desire to take on righteous fights and reverse systematic injustices. Growing up with parents steeped in social justice movements, Rob has become a national leader in the fight to repair our justice system and defend the rights of every Californian," Newsom said in a statement ahead of a planned event with Bonta.

Minutes after the announcement, Bonta posted a campaign-style video on Twitter with details about his parents' history of activism and his legislative record.

"Rob's fight has just begun," a narrator says.

Before joining the Legislature he was deputy city attorney in San Francisco and a member of the Alameda City Council.

Attorney general is among the most highly coveted statewide offices in California, second only to the governor in terms of public recognition and power. Vice President Kamala Harris previously held the job, as did former Gov. Jerry Brown.

"It's enormously consequential at both the state and national level," said Nathan Barankin, Harris' former chief of staff. "I cannot think of a single policy area in public life that the California attorney general can't exercise some influence over."

Given California's size — it's the nation's most populous and one of the world's largest economies — decisions made by the attorney general, such as whether to prosecute a company, can move financial markets, Barankin said.

California attorneys general have used the job to go after private companies over labor law, environmental violations and predatory practices, among other things. Becerra sued the Trump administration more than 100 times during his four years in office, challenging the Republican former president's policies on immigration and health.

With Democratic President Joe Biden in office, there may still be points of friction, but they will be far smaller than those of the past four years. Instead, California's attorney general could work in partnership with the federal administration on issues like how to regulate tech companies and how to advance climate policy, Barankin said.

Gina Clayton-Johnson, executive director of the Essie Justice Group, a nonprofit for women with incarcerated loved ones working to reform the prison system, supported Bonta for the job. She cited his bill to end private prisons as well as his support for legislation to ban police from using certain restraints as examples of his commitment to reforming policing and the criminal justice system.

"He is someone who will listen and take my calls and respond to my and my community," she said.

She said California's attorney general should take on more independent investigations of police killings of Black people and to otherwise stand up for communities of color. She also suggested the attorney general help facilitate the reopening of cases where people have been wrongfully incarcerated.

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DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 249 CALLS ON MARCH 23

Living In A Vehicle 500blk California Ave 12:57 a.m.
Party Complaint 1500blk Ocean Ave 1:18 a.m.
Encampment 1700blk The Beach 5:30 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 21st St / Dewey St 5:32 a.m.
Burglary Report 2400blk Main St 6:22 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1700blk 9th St 6:42 a.m.
Loud Music 2500blk The Beach 6:48 a.m.
Person With A Gun 1300blk Palisades Park 7:11 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1700blk 9th St 7:39 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1700blk 9th St 7:39 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1500blk Oak St 8:05 a.m.
Identity Theft 2000blk Euclid St 8:17 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 20th St / Interstate 10 8:17 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1200blk Wilshire Blvd 8:19 a.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 100blk Hart Ave 8:22 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 1300blk Lincoln Blvd 8:31 a.m.
Theft Of Recyclables 400blk Raymond Ave 8:33 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 26th St / Santa Monica Blvd 8:39 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 2200blk 5th St 8:43 a.m.
General Parking Problem 21st St / Virginia Ave 8:56 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1500blk 6th St 9:15 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 300blk Olympic Dr 9:29 a.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 700blk Idaho Ave 9:33 a.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 800blk 2nd St 9:36 a.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 800blk 2nd St 9:37 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 1200blk 10th St 9:41 a.m.
Burglary Report 900blk 2nd St 9:47 a.m.
Attempt Burglary Report 1400blk Yale St 10:01 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 500blk Marguerita Ave 10:05 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 1300blk 9th St 10:09 a.m.
Critical Missing Person 1500blk Ocean Ave 10:16 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 100blk Wilshire Blvd 10:17 a.m.
Fraud Report 200blk Ocean Ave 10:50 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 10th St / Colorado Ave 10:54 a.m.
Fight 1200blk 14th St 11:00 a.m.
Found Property 700blk Raymond Ave 11:02 a.m.
Loitering 2600blk Lincoln Blvd 11:03 a.m.
Petty Theft Now 400blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:03 a.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 1500blk 11th St 11:28 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 400blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:31 a.m.
Found Property 300blk Olympic Dr 11:38 a.m.
Attempt Burglary Report 1100blk 17th St 11:40 a.m.
Panhandling 1800blk Wilshire Blvd 11:42 a.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 900blk 7th St 11:44 a.m.
Found Property Ocean Ave / Colorado Ave 11:45 a.m.
Failure To Pay Parking Fee 500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 12:05 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 2700blk Montana Ave 12:08 p.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 1900blk Ocean Way 12:13 p.m.
Missing Person 300blk Santa Monica Pier 12:17 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1900blk Wilshire Blvd 12:29 p.m.
Burglary Report 1200blk Euclid St 12:40 p.m.
Fraud Report 100blk Broadway 12:47 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 12th St / Santa Monica Blvd 1:00 p.m.
Encampment 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 1:15 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 400blk Ocean Ave 1:21 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 2800blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:25 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 800blk Ocean Ave 1:36 p.m.
Death Investigation 2500blk Kansas Ave 1:36 p.m.
Battery Report 1200blk Palisades Park 1:38 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 2100blk Ocean Park Blvd 1:40 p.m.
Fraud Report 1000blk 9th St 1:41 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1100blk Wilshire Blvd 1:42 p.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 900blk Ocean Ave 1:47 p.m.
`
Forgery Report 2700blk 3rd St 2:20 p.m.
General Parking Problem 17th St / Cedar St 2:45 p.m.
General Parking Problem 400blk Broadway 3:03 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 26th St / Wilshire Blvd 3:05 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1800blk 19th St 3:28 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 1400blk Pacific Coast Hwy 3:55 p.m.
Fraud Report 800blk 10th St 4:14 p.m.
General Parking Problem 800blk Washington Ave 4:42 p.m.
Battery Report 1600blk Ocean Front Walk 4:50 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 4:50 p.m.
Bike Theft Report 1400blk 14th St 4:52 p.m.
Domestic Violence Report 400blk 24th St 4:54 p.m.
Traffic Control Request - Level 1 1600blk Ocean Ave 4:58 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 1100blk 21st St 5:05 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1500blk Ocean Ave 5:07 p.m.
Sexual Assault Ocean Ave / Montana Ave 5:11 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 26th St / Wilshire Blvd 5:40 p.m.
Violation Of Posted Sign 300blk California Ave 5:52 p.m.
General Parking Problem 2700blk Highland Ave 6:18 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 26th St / Montana Ave 6:29 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Stanford St / Montana Ave 6:31 p.m.
Battery Now 1900blk Ocean Way 7:10 p.m.
Construction Noise 1200blk 17th St 7:19 p.m.
Grand Theft Report 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 8:16 p.m.
Party Complaint 1500blk 6th St 9:03 p.m.
Missing Person 300blk Olympic Dr 9:47 p.m.
Oversize Vehicle Violation 2000blk 3rd St 10:06 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 10:08 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 2400blk 10th St 10:46 p.m.
Living In A Vehicle Lincoln Blvd / Ozone Ave 11:44 p.m.

Demonstrators say closure of LA park would displace homeless

Associated Press

Demonstrators gathered Wednesday to protest the planned temporary closure of a Los Angeles park that would displace a large homeless encampment that has grown throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

About 200 protesters gathered at Echo Park Lake just after sunrise, carrying signs that said "dignity not displacement" and "we need long term solutions." They argued that the encampment with dozens of tents provides a makeshift community for people with nowhere else to go.

Part of the crowd marched to peacefully rally outside the nearby offices of City Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, whose district includes the neighborhood just north of downtown.

O'Farrell's office said in a statement that more than 120 homeless residents have been moved from encampments into transitional housing to prepare for closing the popular park with a large lake as its centerpiece. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority said at least 44 people were moved into shelters this week alone.

No timeline was provided for the closure, which O'Farrell's statement said was necessary to make "extensive repairs" to lighting and plumbing and for general "public safety improvements."

Homeless residents have slept in the park near downtown for years, but tents have proliferated in recent months. The group Echo Park Tent Community said in a statement that the growing encampment has provided a secure place for homeless people during the public health crisis.

"The biggest pandemic in years actually turned out to be a blessing for us," the statement said. "Without the constant LAPD and city harassment uprooting our lives we've been able to grow... to come together as a community, not just unhoused but housed as well and work together for the mutual aid and benefit of each other."

Official park closure notices would be posted soon, O'Farrell's office said.

Letter to the Editor

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Editor:

I just participated in a Zoom-Meeting with the Neighborhood Resource Officers for Beat 4. The two SM Police Officers were very knowledgeable and helpful answering all of my questions and concerns. e.g., it was pointed out that the various videos online of a "crazy" man at the Beach Chess Game facility were old news from more than a year ago, and that situation has been corrected. When I asked how SM Citizens could best assist the SMPD, in addition to "See something, Say something", they suggested:

Stay aware of the various laws and regulations affecting public safety.

Become involved in civic government and activity.

Both officers were a credit to the SMPD. I strongly suggest participating in the Neighborhood Resource Officer Zoom-Meetings in your area, Contact Suzie Lockwood for the next meeting in your area, Suzie.Lockwood@SMGOV.NET.

John Medlin, Santa Monica

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.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14 4:26 A.M.

Dispatchers received a call about a suspect who was breaking into vehicles inside a subterranean garage. Upon arrival, Officers searched the garage and located the suspect inside a vehicle. A witness relayed he had seen this individual ransacking various vehicles. The suspect was found in possession of property belonging to the owner of the vehicle, along with tools, and methamphetamine. Andre Terrel Bernard was arrested for 459 PC - Burglary on a vehicle, 466 PC - Possession of Burglary tools, 496(a) PC - Possession of Stolen Property, 11377(a) HS - Possession of Dangerous Drugs, and 11364(a) HS - Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

SEND YOUR TIPS TO THE EDITOR

Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 39 CALLS ON MARCH 23

Public Assist 2200blk 5th St 12:32 a.m.
EMS 1100blk Pico Blvd 12:57 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1400blk 4th St 1:45 a.m.
EMS 400blk Colorado Ave 2:36 a.m.
EMS 14th St / Washington Ave 4:13 a.m.
Smoke Investigation 1400blk 3rd Street Prom 4:49 a.m.
EMS 1300blk Euclid St 5:14 a.m.
EMS 400blk 24th St 8:02 a.m.
EMS 1500blk Ocean Ave 8:34 a.m.
EMS 1200blk 6th St 8:44 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1700blk Ocean Ave 9:02 a.m.
EMS 2000blk 14th St 9:36 a.m.
EMS 2000blk Pico Blvd 9:43 a.m.
EMS 200blk Euclid St 9:51 a.m.
EMS 200blk Pico Blvd 10:00 a.m.
EMS 1000blk Lincoln Blvd 10:12 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 6th St 10:28 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 17th St 10:51 a.m.
EMS 1500blk 5th St 11:11 a.m.
EMS 2500blk 20th St 12:15 p.m.
EMS 1600blk 7th St 12:25 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1000blk 2nd St 12:55 p.m.
EMS 700blk Pico Blvd 12:57 p.m.
Wires Down 900blk Stanford St 1:02 p.m.
Arcing Wires 1100blk Maple St 1:47 p.m.
EMS 1200blk Lincoln Blvd 2:33 p.m.
EMS 1800blk Pier Ave 3:40 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 16th St 4:10 p.m.
EMS 2600blk Lincoln Blvd 4:24 p.m.
EMS 1500blk Palisades Park 4:26 p.m.
EMS 300blk Colorado Ave 4:46 p.m.
EMS 2000blk Santa Monica Blvd 4:49 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1400blk 15th St 5:00 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 4th St 5:02 p.m.
EMS 300blk Strand St 5:27 p.m.
EMS Stanford St / Montana Ave 6:29 p.m.
EMS Stanford St / Montana Ave 6:31 p.m.
EMS 300blk Pico Blvd 8:16 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 1400blk 15th St 8:39 p.m.
EMS 800blk 7th St 9:12 p.m.

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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

RFP: #287 INSPECTOR GENERAL – POLICING

- **Submission Deadline is April 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM Pacific Time.**

Proposals must include forms furnished by the City of Santa Monica. Request for Proposals may be obtained on the **CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL.** The website for this Request for Proposals and related documents is ProcureNow (https://secure.procurenow.com/portal/santa-monica-ca). There is no charge for the RFP package.

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WINNER

Noteworthy

By Charles Andrews
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Ocean Park's R'N'R Maven



Courtesy photo

LOCAL CHARACTER: Ocean Park's Mike Bone in his Boomtown days.

YOU MAY KNOW MIKE BONE

He's lived in Ocean Park for decades, about as long as I have. A few blocks away. Our kids went to school together.

Mike is one of those Santa Monica "characters" that my bosses keep urging me to write about more often. You know, instead of political stuff that subjects them to nasty emails and phone calls. Why some folks refuse to distinguish between news stories and an opinion column is one of our modern mysteries. I would not want their jobs.

Profiling interesting locals is something I like too, and I have, recently. Santa Monica is oozing them. Here's another snapshot. But gosh, there is so much horribly wrong with this great little city we live in that it's hard to keep my big mouth shut.

BUT BACK TO THE BONE

This column is not really telling Mike's story. Because this column is not nearly long enough for that. Some people's lives and personalities require a lot more. Like my neighbor Neil. You should know about him but I don't even know where to begin. (I've tried a couple of times.) But sometimes I can work in some of these personalities in the context of a specific tale.

This is a music column. And that is where Mike Bone belongs. He grooved at the highest levels of rock and roll crazy back when it really was, mostly as a major label publicist, and more. So I will pass along this recent anecdote that is typical of him.

The more complete story awaits his autobiography, I suppose. Lots of people, who maybe shouldn't, in this age of easy self-publishing, do roll out their life story. But I would read Bone's bio. Except -- I think he may instead be favoring collecting his random writings, put up on social media, which paint the picture pretty well. They usually get dozens or even hundreds of comments, despite their great length.

Mike Bone is one of those writers I just hate. On the face of it, that's not who he has been in his life. A lot of people think they can write, but are kidding only themselves. The proof is in the pudding, in this case probably a Southern bread pudding, at least 80 proof. He's a Georgia refugee soaked in Southern storytelling tradition, and he is a master of it.

A FLYER IN THE MAILBOX

That's a pretty old school way to promote your band. But Emperor's Night, three Kiwi brothers, bridged the decades with that flyer that offered a free car wash if you would follow their band on Instagram. And yeah, we'll come to your driveway.

"I have seen A LOT of interesting things done to try and garner the market's attention for the artist I was promoting," Bone wrote me. "Hell, I have DONE a lot of things to try and get the market's attention…..

"I once got a blue mohawk haircut to get Haircut 100 played on KMET-FM in Los Angeles. I dyed my entire body and hair yellow to get the Swiss band Yello airplay. I bought 100 dead rats (actually, biological specimens) to get attention for the Boomtown Rats." (Now, aren't you concerned that you may have sat next to this guy at a PTA meeting?)

So of course Mike couldn't resist that flyer and he invited them over last Friday, but pushy little Peach that he is, he got them to wash four family cars. But he also provided a chilled bottle of New Zealand sauvignon blanc to ease their efforts and their homesickness, and he "even called Mystic Pete from KXLU-FM who lives down the street, and he did a brief interview with the band which aired this past Sunday." Once a promo man, always...

"So the Chalmers brothers washed four cars, did an interview for KXLU, drank some Curious Kiwi wine, got paid (I couldn't ask them for a free car wash… sorry) all in one hour."

SEE **NOTEWORTHY** PAGE 11

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

In virtual lobby meetings, local advocates asked Congress for carbon price

A group of advocates from the West LA/Santa Monica chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) participated in a nationwide virtual lobbying push for climate legislation earlier this week. These lobby meetings aim to build more support in Congress for a price on carbon emissions, which experts say is a crucial policy to fight climate change.

Monday, March 22 was the kickoff for CCL volunteers across the country to hold more than 400 virtual meetings with both U.S. House and Senate Offices, including ten volunteers from Los Angeles who met with the staff for Congressmen Ted Lieu.

"This year there's a lot of momentum for climate action, and there is broad support for putting a price on carbon emissions," said Barry Engelman, a local CCL volunteer participating in the lobbying. Engelman, a retired financial planner with Ameriprise Financial, has served on the Santa Monica Commission for the Senior Community and has been a member of CCL since 2015. "I've been excited to see business groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce talking more about the need to reduce emissions, as well as more of our elected officials."

So far in 2021, people like Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Republican Senator Mitt Romney, and Democratic Senator Sheldon Whitehouse all have spoken up about the need for carbon pricing. Here in LA, endorsers of carbon pricing include the Santa Monica City Council and the Santa Monica Democratic Club, the Board of Trustees of Santa Monica College, Superintendent/President of the Santa Monica Community College District Kathryn Jeffery, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education, State Senator Ben Allen and the LA County Board of Supervisors.

This lobbying push comes just days after high-ranking Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) introduced a carbon pricing bill of his own. Several of his Senate colleagues (Sens. Whitehouse, Schatz, Coons, and Feinstein) all backed carbon pricing bills in the 116th Congress and are expected to do so again.

Also in the last Congress, Rep. Ted Lieu was a cosponsor of the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, a carbon pricing bill in the House with the backing of 85 other members. This legislation is expected to be reintroduced into the House soon.

"Here in Los Angeles, we're still very concerned about climate change, even during this pandemic and other issues our country is grappling with," said Kathy Seal, Group Leader of the West-LA CCL Chapter. "We're ready for Congress to take action by pricing carbon emissions, and we're working to make that happen."

They're not alone in this sentiment. Polling from Yale and George Mason Universities, conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, confirms that Americans' understanding of climate change and concern about it remain at record highs. To learn more, visit citizensclimatelobby.org.

SUBMITTED BY KATIE CROCKFORD

Malibu

First impressions Lead to Lasting Impressions

Malibu Association of REALTORS' cleanup crew joined bright and early recently in support of the Adopt-A-Highway program in Malibu.

M.A.R. promotes keeping our community clean, and encourages members to sign up and participate.

Stephen Udoff, M.A.R. president, has been involved in the program since 2014. "It's a great way to create a positive connection between the environment and the community." Joining Stephen were REALTOR members and directors Jerel Taylor and Susan Cosentino.

The unsightly presence of trash along PCH leaves an undesirable impression to tourists and residents. It can pose a danger as it blows onto the highway and can endanger wildlife, especially small animals that can get trapped in soda can rings. In addition, toxins can leach into the water systems and soil. Thanks to the collaborated effort of volunteers, the positive impact is great along our coast.

M.A.R. sponsors the two-mile stretch from Las Flores Canyon to Big Rock.

As a long-time Malibu local, Susan Cosentino adds, "I love being involved in the community and it's another way that I can help make a difference."

SUBMITTED BY SUSAN MANNERS



Courtesy photo

MALIBU: Stephen Udoff, Susan Cosentino, Jerel Taylor.

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Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com

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VOLUNTEERS

FROM PAGE 1

was for him to make friends and be able to interact with peers at school," said Sansing. "I always wanted to help out with that and create opportunities for other kids that might be struggling with the same thing."

She initially wanted buddies to meet for in-person social activities at her high school, but pivoted to Zoom meet-ups due to the outbreak of Covid-19. Little did she know at the time, but this model would prove even more impactful as it allowed her to reach kids with disabilities across the country who have become increasingly socially isolated during the pandemic.

The program's ultimate goal is to build lasting friendships and dismantle the misconception that kids with disabilities can't connect with neurotypical kids.

"I think the problem is kids don't know a lot of people who have disabilities and it hasn't been normalized as much as it should be, which isolates kids with disabilities," said Sansing. "I started Friend in Me because I wanted to get rid of the stigma that kids with disabilities can't make friends with other kids and vice versa."

So far her mission is working. Not only do buddies routinely attend Friend in Me's Zoom meet-ups, but several have started FaceTiming or texting in their own time. Parents have expressed joy that their children have built new friendships with peers and many student volunteers are surprised by how much they have in common with their buddy.

"I've gotten a lot of great feedback from parents saying how hard it has been for their children to make friends during the pandemic," said Sansing. "I had one parent tell me that even before the pandemic their child didn't really have any friends and has now made a bunch of friends through Friend in Me."

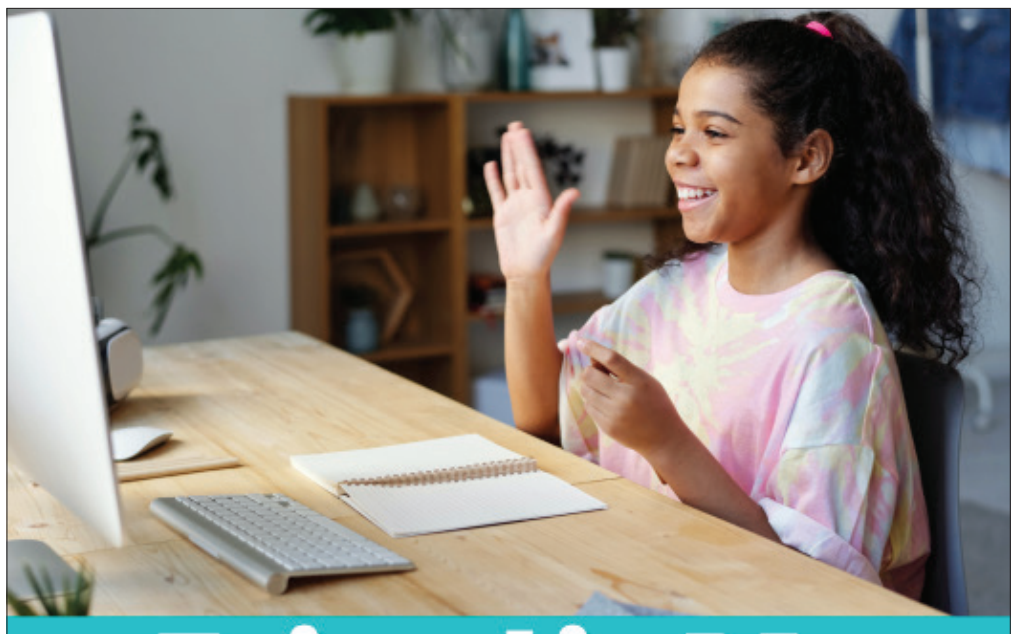
The organization is all the more impressive considering it is entirely run by a team of local high schoolers.

While Sansing heads the program, her brother Drew acts as an assistant manager and helps reach out to organizations and schools to spread the word about Friend in Me. Close friends Layla Chammas and Kavita Sekhon manage the volunteer side of the program, while Scarlett Klein runs the organization's social media.

Together these teenagers have built a highly successful program that is now partnering with Special Olympics and groups in Chicago and Boston.

Sansing would love to create in-person social opportunities in the future and continue to expand the organization's reach. She said those interested in volunteering or learning more should visit friendinmegroup.org.

Clara@smdp.com



Courtesy photo

FRIEND: The program is run entirely by a group of volunteer high school students.

No turning back: Facebook reckons with a post-2020 world

BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer

It's becoming increasingly clear that for Facebook, there is no returning to its habits of the past.

Some of its most dramatic post-election changes, from algorithm tweaks to a strict crackdown on political misinformation, were supposed to be temporary — " break-glass " measures intended to prevent civil unrest as then-President Donald Trump spread false claims of a "rigged" election.

But the Jan. 6 insurrection, the rise in COVID vaccine misinformation and the persistent spread of malicious conspiracies — coupled with a new U.S. president and growing regulatory scrutiny around the world — have forced a reckoning at the social network.

"They don't want to be the arbiters of free speech," said Cliff Lampe, a professor studying social media platforms, moderation and misinformation at the University of Michigan. "But they have to be."

For CEO Mark Zuckerberg, the past year has presented a series of humbling events that have picked away at his long-held assertion that Facebook is a worldwide force for good. In Facebook posts, public comments and discussions with employees, the CEO appears to be increasingly grappling with the dark side of the empire he created.

Take his approach to Trump, who until January enjoyed special treatment on Facebook and other social media platforms, despite spreading misinformation, promulgating hate and — what finally got him banned — inciting violence.

"Over the last several years, we have allowed President Trump to use our platform consistent with our own rules, at times removing content or labeling his posts when they violate our policies," Zuckerberg wrote on his Facebook page on Jan. 7, explaining the company's decision to suspend Trump. "We did this because we believe that the public has a right to the broadest possible access to political speech, even controversial speech."

A day earlier, violent insurrectionists, egged on by Trump, descended on the U.S. Capitol in a deadly riot. While Facebook's (and other tech companies') move to ban a sitting president was unprecedented, many called it too little, too late.

It's not yet clear if Facebook will banish the former president permanently, as Twitter has. The company batted that decision over to its quasi-independent Oversight Board — sort of a Supreme Court of Facebook enforcement — which is expected to rule on the matter in April. On Thursday, Zuckerberg, along with the CEOs of Twitter and Google, will testify before Congress about extremism and misinformation on their platforms.

Companies like Facebook are "creeping along towards firmer action," said Jennifer Grygiel, a Syracuse University communications professor and an expert on social media, while noting a Trump ban alone doesn't undo years of inaction.

Lampe said he doesn't doubt that Facebook would like to return to its pre-2020, hands-off approach, but public pressure to crack down on extremism will likely win over. That's because online extremism, fueled by social media — in the U.S. and around the world — is more and more tied to real-world violence.

The company is also facing a growing internal push from increasingly vocal employees, some of whom have quit publicly, staged walkouts and protests in the past year. Last summer, meanwhile, advertisers staged a boycott of Facebook's business. And activists are finding growing support from lawmakers on the state, federal and global level.

Jessica Gonzalez, attorney at the racial justice group Free Press, recently joined Democratic Rep. Tony Cardenas and Latino activists in calling on Facebook to crack down on hate and misinformation targeted at Latinos in the United States. She said when she and other civil rights activists met with Zuckerberg last summer during an advertising boycott of the company, she reminded him of the 2019 massacre in El Paso, when a gunman targeting Mexicans killed 23 people.

"Facebook has a choice," she said. It can be a "vector for hate and lies that harm people of color, Latinos, immigrants and other groups," or on the right side of history.

"So far it has done a lot of talking," Gonzalez said.

Facebook says it's met with the organizations and shares their goal of stopping Spanish-language misinformation on its apps.

"We are taking aggressive steps to fight misinformation in Spanish and dozens of other languages, including by removing millions of pieces of COVID-19 and vaccine content," the company said in a statement.

Though its moves have often been halting, the social media giant has worked to address some of the criticisms lobbed at it in recent years. Besides election misinformation, it has put restrictions on anti-vaccine propaganda, banned extremist groups such as QAnon, limited recommending other problematic groups to users and tries to promote authoritative information from health agencies and trusted news organizations.

"There's no single solution to fighting misinformation which is why we attack it from many angles," Facebook said in a statement, pointing to its removal of fake accounts and coordinated networks, fact-checking partnerships and providing authoritative information. "We know these efforts don't catch everything, which is why we're always working in partnership with policymakers, academics, and other experts to adapt to the latest trends in misinformation."

Facebook's reluctant shift toward more self-regulation didn't begin with the 2020 election. An earlier turning point for the company and for Zuckerberg himself, Lampe recalled, was the company's role in inciting genocidal violence against Rohingya Muslims

SEE **FACEBOOK** PAGE 11



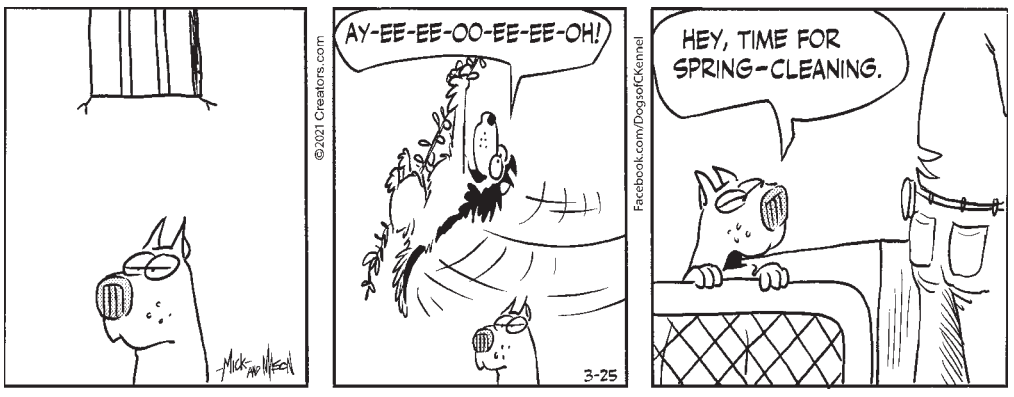
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



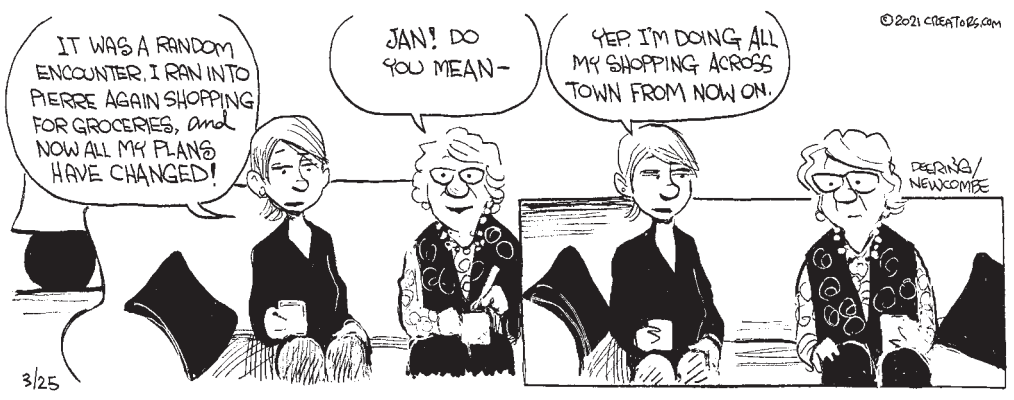
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"ERRORS ARE COMMON IN SPRING TRAINING."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 53.1°

THURSDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ Waist to stomach high
Down just a touch in size from Wednesday but still a few little peaks to track down. Wind may be light onshore in the morning. NW swell mix rebuild late as modest SSW swell continues.

FRIDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft Waist to chest high
Pulse of peaky, shorter-period NW swell strongest early. AM wind may be a touch more favorable. Refresh of NW swell mix and modest SSW swell late.

WEATHER

Thursday: A 20 percent chance of showers before 11am. Partly sunny, with a high near 59.
Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 50.
Friday: Sunny, with a high near 62.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2021/03/25	Thu	01:36 AM	1.85	L
2021/03/25	Thu	07:33 AM	5.24	H
2021/03/25	Thu	2:29 PM	-0.73	L
2021/03/25	Thu	8:54 PM	4.21	H
2021/03/26	Fri	02:15 AM	1.27	L
2021/03/26	Fri	08:16 AM	5.54	H
2021/03/26	Fri	2:59 PM	-0.83	L
2021/03/26	Fri	9:17 PM	4.61	H
2021/03/27	Sat	02:56 AM	0.68	L
2021/03/27	Sat	08:59 AM	5.65	H
2021/03/27	Sat	3:29 PM	-0.76	L
2021/03/27	Sat	9:43 PM	5.02	H
2021/03/28	Sun	03:38 AM	0.14	L
2021/03/28	Sun	09:42 AM	5.54	H
2021/03/28	Sun	4:00 PM	-0.50	L
2021/03/28	Sun	10:12 PM	5.39	H
2021/03/29	Mon	04:22 AM	-0.28	L
2021/03/29	Mon	10:27 AM	5.19	H
2021/03/29	Mon	4:31 PM	-0.09	L
2021/03/29	Mon	10:44 PM	5.66	H
2021/03/30	Tue	05:11 AM	-0.54	L

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL calottery
Draw Date: 3/20
1 6 22 42 61
Power#: 4
Jackpot: 220 M

calottery MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 3/23
12 23 35 38 55
Mega#: 11
Jackpot: 137 M

SuperLotto PLUS calottery
Draw Date: 3/20
3 23 27 34 37
Mega#: 13
Jackpot: 31 M

calottery Fantasy5
Draw Date: 3/23
25 26 31 36 38

calottery Daily3
Draw Date: 3/23
EVENING: 5 3 9

Draw Date: 3/23
MIDDAY: 5 8 9

calottery Daily Derby
Draw Date: 3/23
1st: 02 - Lucky Star
2nd: 11 - Money Bags
3rd: 08 - Gorgeous George
Race Time: 1:44.53

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 (MARCH 25)

You're inventive and will solve a problem that vexes many. In this regard, you'll carve out a niche for yourself and get a golden ticket to a new realm. It's not a one-shot opportunity though, so don't be too quick to make a deal or be exclusive. Family successes make you proud, too. You'll have plenty to celebrate together! Libra and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 5, 40, 1, 11 and 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Just as the light of the sun encourages the flowers to open up, people take your warmth as an invitation to share their stories, experiences and all the beauty inside to you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your instincts, like knives, will be sharpened by scraping the hard, flinty surface of an interesting, immobile-seeming problem. This is the kind of invaluable training that can't be bought.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You don't have a problem with biting off more than you can chew because you have the equivalent of utensils at your disposal. You have the tools to take a big chunk, and then cut it down the perfect manageable size.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There are those you know who seem averse to work and yet still come out ahead. You don't mind working but observe the "lazy strategists" anyway to be sure you're putting effort in where it's necessary and will matter.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Often the line between adversary and ally is surprisingly fine. Conflict doesn't an enemy make. Your team is stronger when you include people whose ideas conflict with yours. Diversify for might.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You've a creative way of explaining things, and people love to listen to the way you share what you know. Who else needs to know this? Your gift of teaching will augment your fortunes.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Don't worry about pleasing others. They may think they know what they want. Yet, it's something else entirely that will make them happy. You're better off pleasing yourself and letting them catch up later.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Make your presentation smooth and glossy. Getting the extra shine will take about the same amount of time as it took to build the thing to the level of "pretty good," but it will be worth it to attain that wow factor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're an excellent judge of character, so follow your sense about people to determine who will inspire you to stay on-task and in the optimal mood.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Some would say you are kind when you don't have to be, but they don't know your moral code commands kindness always. Of course, kindness comes in many forms, some unlikely.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Sometimes, the rocky road leads to a beautiful vantage, and sometimes it's a hard road to nowhere. This is something to figure out before you embark. Consult the maps and the seasoned hikers.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Things can get better on their own, but perhaps not in the time frame you'd like them to. Besides, it's more fun when you know you've had a hand in the improvement.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

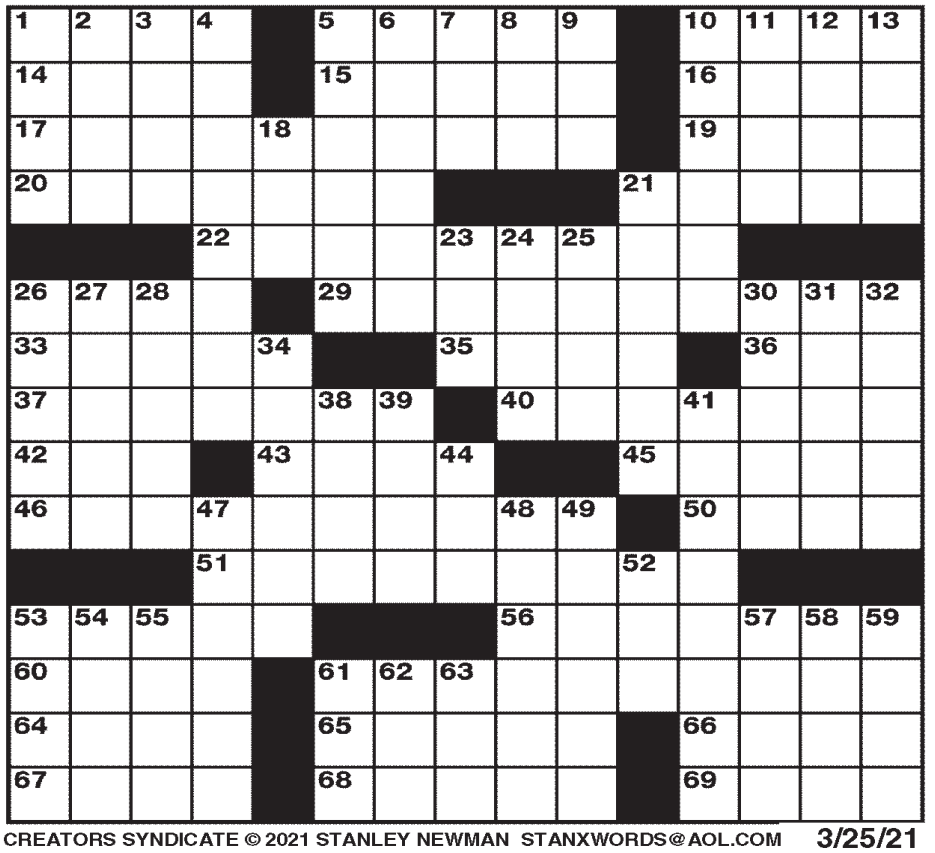
6			7					4
	9			3	8		5	
8		7		5			3	
1			5		2	4		3
		2		7		9		
3		8	4		6			2
	5			6		1		7
	2		8	1			4	
9					7			5

Newsday Crossword

TOP CHOICES by Mark McClain
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Shot in the dark
5 Restless
10 Choral part
14 Very small thing
15 Sierra Nevada lake
16 "Now see here . . ."
17 Arrangement at the line of scrimmage
19 Thin sandwich exterior
20 Southern region
21 Brazen
22 Self-evident
26 Huge quantity
29 Noble symbol
33 Annual Pamplona runners
35 Usual behavior
36 Japanese "aye"
37 Spielberg mutiny movie
40 Noise from a nest
42 A GWB degree
43 Running track
45 Burst onto the scene
46 Agile ones in stables
50 Paella ingredient
51 Country music choreography
53 Ring-shaped cake
56 Tries to shred
60 NASDAQ debuts
61 Dairy staples
64 __ fides (credentials)
65 Love around the Louvre
66 Sch. near the Rio Grande
67 Deceive, so to speak
68 Road irregularities
69 Discard

DOWN
1 Doesn't play
2 Veggie burger ingredient
3 Lots and lots
4 Caribbean island
5 Slanted to the right
6 Parlor offering
7 Sorority letter
8 Sob syllable
9 Inner urge
10 Camel cousin
11 *Family Guy* mom
12 Little ones
13 All right
18 Tex-__ barbecue
21 Flour processor
23 Big mouth
24 Surmounting
25 How you sound
26 Passport mark
27 Small band
28 Common computer font
30 Cologne's river
31 Widespread obsession
32 Makes a deal official
34 Cease and desist order
38 Stratford's river
39 Streep, in *Out of Africa*
41 Manuscript mishap, maybe
44 Jar closure
47 Familiar maxim
48 Enjoys immensely
49 Looks villainous
52 Caribbean island
53 Lobster dinner accessories
54 Surmounting
55 "That's all wrong!"
57 Explorer de __
58 Bowls over
59 Olive oil amts.
61 Sharp criticism
62 Five-foot-tall feathery runner
63 Letters after CD



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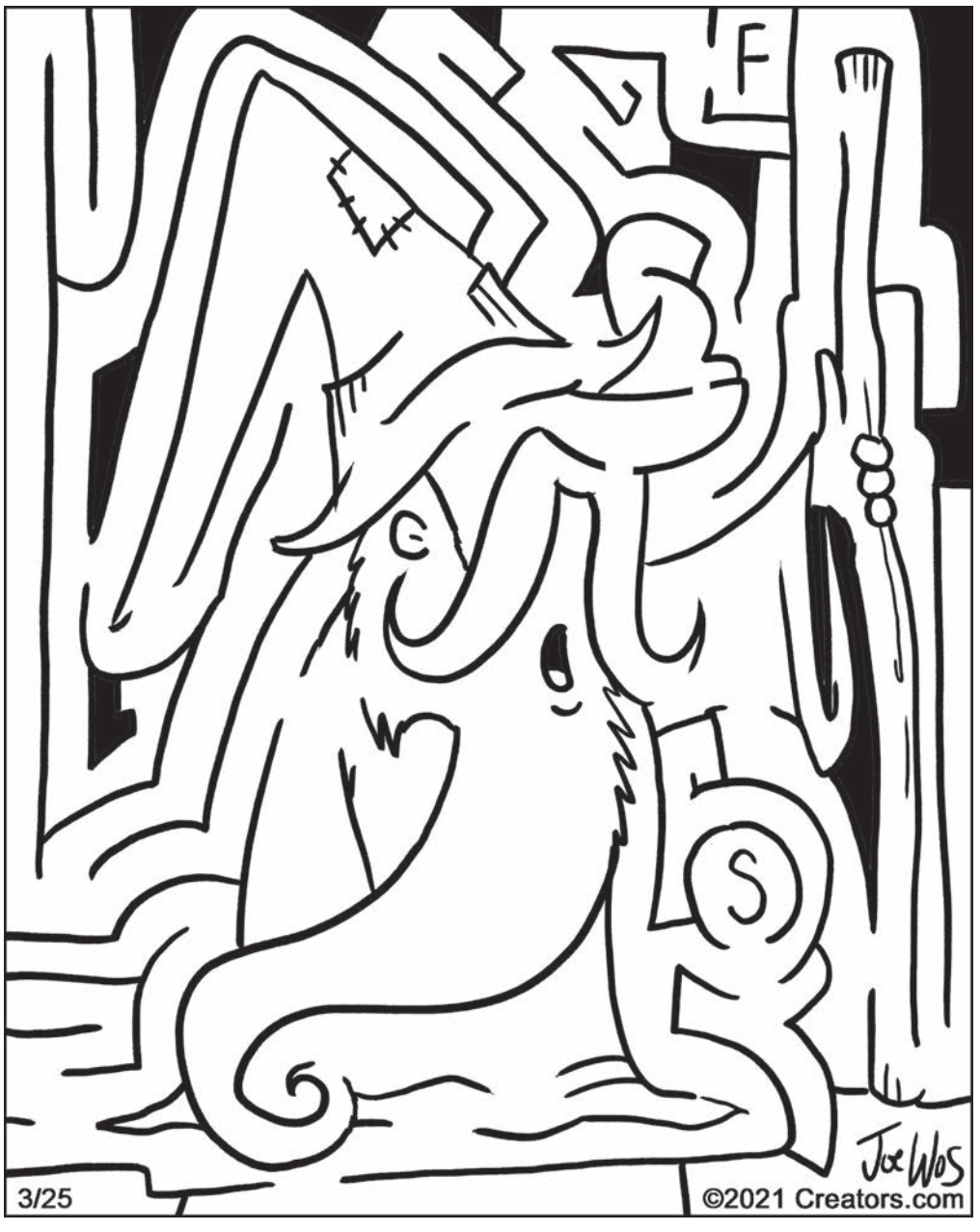
Binary Puzzle

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

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

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



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

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Beachcombing

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

Asleep
Bask
Beer
Bikini
Breeze
Burn
Cans
Clouds
Cuttlefish
Damage
Dangerous
rip
Debris
Dive
Enjoy
Eski
Film
Finds
Flags
Flies
Golf
Hats
Heat
Humid
Jetsam
Lawn
Music
Oars
Ocean
Ornamental
Outdoors
Paddle
Park
Picnic
Pool
Radio
Riders
Rocks
Rope
Sail
Sand
Seaweed
Shade
Sport
Swim
Temperature
Towel
Walk
Zinc

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
A means to an end

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NOTEWORTHY

FROM PAGE 4

MY DRIVER

I told my wife Dian about all this, and when I mentioned Mike's name she said, with a tease, "Oh yeah -- my driver."

Dian was in our Main Street Fourth of July Parade three years running, each time in a different costume from her singing career: full Carmen Miranda, silvery space captain VaVa LaVoom, and as one of The Goils, her Andrews Sisters-styled '40s -'50s era vocal group that toured the US and Japan in WWII-type military uniforms. It was as the latter two that Mike was behind the wheel of his family's red Miata convertible, with Dian in her costume perched prominently in back, smiling and waving like a royal.

He probably remembers that near the end of The Goils-costume parade ride, an older lady came up to Dian and gushed, in apparent confusion over what decade it was, "Oh, I used to go hear you and your sisters all the time!" (They died in '67, '95, and Patty, the youngest, in 2013 just short of her 95th birthday.) Sometimes old age has its exciting moments.

Parade organizer Jeff Jarrow asked Dian to be in a fourth parade but she had to decline. "I'm all out of great costumes."

So what an arc, the rocker at the top of the heap, winds up as... just the driver, in the small town parade. But I'm pretty sure Mike is good with every phase of his interesting life. Hell, he just got all his cars washed, and helped out another young band.

NICOLE RECOMMENDS:

WATCH TABLA VIRTUOSO ZAKIR HUSSAIN PERFORM LIVE, ONLINE -- If you have never had the pleasure of seeing Zakir Hussain play, now is your chance. No matter your prior interest or knowledge of tabla music, Hussain is a rockstar percussionist known the world over for his exciting performance style and mastery. He has performed with the likes of George Harrison, Yo-Yo Ma, Pharoah Sanders, Van Morrison, and so many more. He is joined by other master percussionists for a free streamable performance put on by UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP) this Friday, March 26, at 7PM PST.

Link to register: https://online.cap.ucla.edu//videos/zakir-hussain-and-masters-of-percussion.

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 34 years and wouldn't live anywhere else in the world. Really. Send love and/or rebuke to him at therealmrmusic@gmail.com

COUNCIL

FROM PAGE 1

to tell businesses they city would be flexible for repayment beyond the deadline.

"I do want to express to the businesses that we are open and perhaps even inclined to move that date," Davis said, "because I think… if they have any sense that we're going to put their feet to the fire on that date, we're gonna lose them."

Councilmembers agreed and said they'd be open to any ideas that would help tenants throughout the city, which is part of the reason why it also opted to suspend rent increases in fiscal year 2121-22.

Council also attempted to earmark American Recovery Act funds for small business recovery.

"I really do feel we need to allocate, you know, an amount of money for our city tenants and for small businesses," Christine Parra said.

Interim City Manager Lane Dilg and others were hesitant to support the move since it would reserve a large chunk of the stimulus funds expected to come Santa Monica's way before the exact amount has been determined.

Council agreed to hold off on tying a specific number to the motion but it did direct staff to return with a proposal and analysis on how city leaders can help all tenants in Santa Monica, not just those who lease or license city property.

"The reality is that it's going to mean that the city brings in less money," McKeown said, "then there may be choices and sacrifices we'll have to make to make this happen."

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FACEBOOK

FROM PAGE 7

in Myanmar.

In 2018, Facebook commissioned a report on the role its platform played in stoking ethnic cleansing. It found that Facebook "has become a means for those seeking to spread hate and cause harm, and posts have been linked to offline violence."

"It was a humbling experience for company and for (Zuckerberg) personally," Lampe said.

After Myanmar, Zuckerberg promised to do better, but its failures to stop spreading military propaganda continued. Now, with the country under a military coup, it faces yet another "emergency" situation that has no clear end in sight. The company banned the Myanmar military from its platform in March, but critics say it should have acted sooner.

The 2020 U.S. presidential election also qualified as an emergency, as did the COVID-19 pandemic, which most recently led Facebook to expand its policy on anti-vaccination falsehoods, banning claims saying vaccines aren't effective or that they're toxic, dangerous or cause autism — all of which have been thoroughly debunked.

Does this series of emergencies represent a meaningful shift for Facebook? Or is the company simply responding to the changing political climate, one that wants to see Big Tech regulated and dangerous speech reined in? Not everyone is convinced. the company has turned a corner.

"At the end of the day, Facebook's response to disinformation is always going to be driven by how to increase their user engagement and advertising revenue," said Alexandra Cirone, a professor at Cornell University who studies the effect of misinformation on government. Facebook denies that it places profits over cracking down on misinformation.

While tech companies are facing the prospect of stronger regulation with President Joe Biden's administration, Cirone said the company is more likely to respond to the fact that "there are conservative organizations, politicians, and donors that give Facebook a significant amount of money in ad revenue."

Regardless of who is president, "as long as Republicans or other groups are spending millions to advertise on Facebook, they will be slow to regulate," she said.

Classifieds

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or email **cindy@smdp.com**

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