2 **Eclipse**
Coming on Monday.

3 **County Health Survey**
Returns after hiatus.

smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

4 **Cutting the budget**
Lawmakers have a plan.

8&9 **Real Estate Map**
What's for sale?

Volume 23 Issue 100 THE WEEKENDER 4/5-4/8 smdp.com

Former Santa Monica mayor proposes initiative to amend Measure GS



Scott Snowden

CONSTRUCTION: While construction projects continue in the city, a proposed ballot measure would exempt some projects from Measure GS taxes, claiming the tax hurts housing production.

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

Two former Santa Monica mayors are at odds over housing development and taxes after one filed paperwork to alter a real estate tax implemented by the other.

Former mayor of Santa Monica, Pam O'Connor, has filed a ballot measure with the city in an effort to amend Measure GS, (that was proposed and funded by former Mayor Sue Himmelrich) to exempt the sale of multifamily housing from the city's new third tier transfer tax.

GS, known as a "mansion tax" was approved by voters in November of 2022. The measure imposes a $5,600 per $100,000 charge on real property sales or transfers exceeding $8 million. The generated revenue is used to support homelessness prevention, housing projects, and schools. However, a lawsuit was filed challenging the validity of Measure GS, arguing that it violated the "single-subject" rule in the California Constitution. The City prevailed in that case with a judge ruling the tax is consistent with the law and could be implemented.

O'Connor's measure argues the tax is an impediment to new housing construction and seeks to exempt large apartment developments from the tax.

According to a press release issued by Englander Knabe & Allen, a strategic communications firm specializing in government affairs, political campaigns, reputation and crisis communications, "Instead of alleviating the housing crisis, Measure GS has actually undercut the production of much-needed multifamily housing in the City and threatens the financial feasibility of such new development projects. The City is both losing out on unbuilt multifamily housing units as well as the anticipated funding from Measure GS."

The press release doesn't provide examples of lost housing in Santa Monica but does cite a UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies report, that says a similar tax in Los Angeles would generate little additional revenue but would reduce housing

SEE **MEASURE GS** PAGE 12



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Eclipse excites locals, but safety should be considered

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

For the second time in six months, Santa Monica residents will be able to view a solar eclipse, though the event is more rare than that timeframe would suggest.

Monday's solar eclipse, which occurs when the moon blocks out a part of the sun, will be nearly nationwide in the morning hours. According to NASA, Santa Monica will have mostly sunny skies for optimal viewing experience, and although the city won't be privy to a full eclipse, a max coverage of 48.4% is expected at about 11:11 a.m. The partial eclipse will begin at 10:35 a.m., and will be over by just after 12 p.m.

Back in October, an "annular" eclipse occurred, meaning the moon did not completely block out the sun, rather leaving a glowing ring around it. The last time a solar eclipse was seen throughout the United States was in 2017, and this will be the final chance to view the event throughout the entire nation until 2044. According to timeanddate.com, this will be the last partial solar eclipse able to be observed in the Los Angeles area until Jan. 14, 2029.

A total solar eclipse, with 100% blockage of the sun, will be seen Monday in cities like Dallas, San Antonio, Indianapolis and Cleveland. The Los Angeles area, including Santa Monica, is one of the rare spots in California to approach the 50% blockage rate, as the eclipse percentage drops further north.

To celebrate the occasion, Grant Elementary School will be offering students the opportunity to view the eclipse with special glasses for students and staff to use during the astronomical event. To meet an international standard, Grant's eclipse viewing glasses are certified to meet specific safety requirements and offer adequate protection against harmful solar radiation. The CE and ISO certified glasses ensure that students' eyes are fully protected from the damaging effects of the sun's rays, and are recognized by the American Astronomical Society's Solar Eclipse Task Force as being safe solar viewers and filters.

> While the solar eclipse is a fun and educational opportunity for everyone, there are precautions you should take to help maintain your eye health while safely viewing this spectacle
>
> - Dr. Premilla Banwait, UnitedHealthcare Vice President of Clinical Programs

All viewers of the eclipse should be taking similar precautions, said UnitedHealthcare Vice President of Clinical Programs Dr. Premilla Banwait.

"While the solar eclipse is a fun and educational opportunity for everyone, there are precautions you should take to help maintain your eye health while safely viewing this spectacle," Dr. Banwait said. "Looking at a solar eclipse without proper protection may cause serious eye damage, including blurry vision that can last months, or even permanent problems such as 'eclipse blindness.'"



Graphic Courtesy of NASA

ECLIPSE: A solar eclipse will be seen throughout the United States on Monday, including nearly 50% coverage in Santa Monica.

TO STAY SAFE, BANWAIT HAS SEVERAL TIPS TO CONSIDER DURING THE EVENT:

-Be protected with proper eclipse viewing glasses, which are much more heavily tinted than regular sunglasses.

-Use certified solar eclipse glasses, specifically ones reviewed by the International Organization for Standardization, and make sure to read and follow any instructions packaged with or printed on the glasses.

-Do not look at the sun through a camera, telescope, binoculars or any other optical device.

-Eclipse glasses should be worn during the entirety of the eclipse event.

-If you or a loved one experienced eye discomfort or vision problems following the eclipse, visit a local eye care professional for a comprehensive exam.

thomas@smdp.com

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LA County health survey details struggles for Black, Latino adults

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

In its first release since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health recently unveiled the latest LA County Health Survey, with results skewing poorly as it relates to Black and Latino residents.

The Health Survey has been conducted periodically since 1997, last released in 2018. The latest survey, encapsulating data taken in 2023, covers trends in health behaviors, conditions, neighborhood settings and the needs of LA County residents. Information was collected from 9,372 adults and 7,391 children via a survey covering health status, conditions, behaviors and other relevant topics.

> The 2023 LA County Health Survey findings confront us with the stark realities of how historical inequities continue to shape the health and well-being of our communities, especially among our Black and Latinx residents
> - Dr. Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd. Director of Public Health

Many of these topics touched on the fact that Black and Latino adults continue to struggle in health sectors like disproportional, access to care and economic security.

"The 2023 LA County Health Survey findings confront us with the stark realities of how historical inequities continue to shape the health and well-being of our communities, especially among our Black and Latinx residents," said Director of Public Health Dr. Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd. "These disparities are the result of deeply ingrained systemic injustices and policies that have, for too long, marginalized communities, affecting access to care and resources needed for good health. Along with our community partners, Public Health is committed to advancing equity and justice. It's through our collective efforts that we can ensure that every individual, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilling life."

Survey results found that Black adults experienced poorer health outcomes compared to other racial and ethnic groups in several areas. For example, 38% of Black adults reported having been diagnosed with hypertension, compared to 31.8% for White individuals and 25.7% for Asian survey takers. Black adults also reported the highest rate of current asthma (10.6%) among racial and ethnic groups, found to have significantly higher levels of obesity than White and Asian adults (nearly 40%), and had a higher self-reported prevalence of diabetes diagnoses (12.9%) than White adults (8.3%).

Several health and economic factors played into these results, such as nutrition insecurity and housing burden. In 2023, 34.7% of Black adults reported living in nutritionally insecure households, which is defined as finding it either somewhat hard, hard, or very hard for a household to regularly eat healthy foods in the past 12 months. The survey says that healthy foods are "foods that support health and well-being" and include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, yogurt and fish. Black households were also observed to be disproportionately impacted by housing burden, defined as spending more than 30% of income on rent or mortgage, of which 65.4% of LA County Black households were reported as doing.

In surveying Latino adults, the Public Health department noted that the ethnic group is "not a monolith and come from many different nationalities, backgrounds and races," but the survey focused on the "broader" adult population. In this population, Latino responders reported the highest rate of diabetes diagnosis (13.5%) among racial and ethnic groups, as well as the highest number of reports of having ever had a COVID-19 infection (65.1%), with the exception of the "Non-Hispanic Multiracial or Other Race" group.

The group also reported significant barriers to accessing healthcare, with the uninsurance rate remaining highest among Latino adults compared to all other racial and ethnic groups. Furthermore, Latino adults had the worst healthcare access rates, with 26.5% of responders reporting not having a regular source of care in 2023, an increase of nearly 7% from the 2018 survey.

thomas@smdp.com

LET US KNOW YOUR OPINION
Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **59.7**

FRIDAY — ***POOR TO FAIR***
SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist
Looking like a blow out for the afternoon. AM could be somewhat manageable. Expecting a rise in NW swell mix and breezy onshore flow from another late-season coastal low. Small S swell.

SATURDAY — ***POOR TO FAIR***
SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist
Fading NW swell mix still has fun size in morning as more favorable wind looks to return. Surf likely jumbled from the incoming high tide but there should be some options. More composed as the tide drops for many breaks.

Weather

Friday: Showers likely, with thunderstorms also possible after 11am. Partly sunny, with a high near 58.
Friday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 11pm. Partly cloudy, with a low around 46.
Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 61. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south southeast in the morning.
Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 47.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2024/04/05	Fri	01:18 AM	1.56	L
2024/04/05	Fri	07:16 AM	5.33	H
2024/04/05	Fri	2:02 PM	-0.85	L
2024/04/05	Fri	8:25 PM	4.68	H
2024/04/06	Sat	02:07 AM	0.76	L
2024/04/06	Sat	08:09 AM	5.46	H
2024/04/06	Sat	2:36 PM	-0.74	L
2024/04/06	Sat	8:52 PM	5.24	H
2024/04/07	Sun	02:53 AM	0.01	L
2024/04/07	Sun	08:58 AM	5.38	H
2024/04/07	Sun	3:09 PM	-0.45	L
2024/04/07	Sun	9:22 PM	5.72	H
2024/04/08	Mon	03:40 AM	-0.58	L
2024/04/08	Mon	09:46 AM	5.08	H
2024/04/08	Mon	3:41 PM	-0.01	L
2024/04/08	Mon	9:53 PM	6.07	H
2024/04/09	Tue	04:27 AM	-0.96	L
2024/04/09	Tue	10:37 AM	4.61	H

Daily Lottery

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the winning number information, mistakes can occur. In the event of any discrepancies, California State laws and California Lottery regulations will prevail. Complete game information and prize claiming instructions are available at California Lottery retailers. Visit the California State Lottery web site at http://www.calottery.com

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 4/3
11 38 41 62 65
Power#: 15
Jackpot: 1.23 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 4/2
10 50 56 60 66
Mega#: 19
Jackpot: 67 M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 4/3
3 5 17 33 44
Mega#: 17
Jackpot: 24 M

FANTASY 5
Draw Date: 4/3
4 16 19 35 38

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 4/3
EVENING: 7 6 8
Draw Date: 4/3
MIDDAY: 5 6 4

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 4/3
1st: 06 - Whirl Win
2nd: 02 - Lucky Star
3rd: 12 - Lucky Charms
Race Time: 1:43.21

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California Democrats agree on plan to reduce budget deficit by $17.3 billion

TRÂN NGUYỄN
Associated Press

California Democratic leaders announced Thursday they had come to an agreement on a plan that would reduce the state's staggering multibillion-dollar shortfall by $17.3 billion through a combination of spending cuts, delays and deferrals.

Gov. Gavin Newsom had enjoyed unprecedented surplus budgets of more than $100 billion throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. But the past two years have saddled him with a pair of multibillion-dollar deficits, a less-welcome position for a governor seen as a potential future Democratic presidential candidate.

Last year, facing a $32 billion deficit, Newsom and lawmakers were able to avoid major spending cuts by making smaller cuts, borrowing and pushing some expenses to future years. But this year's deficit could be as large as $73 billion, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office. Newsom said in January the deficit is actually $37.9 billion — a shortfall that, while still steep, is much easier to manage for a state with revenues expected to exceed $291 billion.

In January, Newsom proposed tapping $13 billion from reserves and cutting $8.5 billion in spending, with about half of those cuts spread across various housing and climate programs. Last month, Newsom and Democratic leaders in both houses announced they had agreed on solutions to address the deficit without sharing details.

The new agreement with Democratic lawmakers, who hold supermajority in both houses, includes many proposals Newsom and the state Senate laid out earlier this year. The plan calls for a cut of $3.6 billion in primarily one-time funding to some schools, welfare and climate programs, leaving out previously proposed $1.2 billion cuts to housing and homeless programs. The plan also delays and defers about $5.2 billion in spending for a variety of programs including on public transit and facilities for preschools. It also authorizes Newsom to freeze additional one-time funding that was included in the budget the last three years.

The agreement came after lawmakers passed legislation to increase the state's tax on managed care health plans, also known as the managed care organization tax, which is estimated to generate $3.8 billion next fiscal year. The plan doesn't touch the governor's major spending commitments, including free health insurance for all low-income adults regardless of their immigration status.

"We are able to meet this challenge thanks to our responsible fiscal stewardship over the past years, including record budget reserves of close to $38 billion," Newsom said in a statement. "There is still work to do as we finalize the budget and I look forward to the work ahead together to continue building the California of the future."

Lawmakers are expected to vote on the new budget plan next week, which would pave the way for more budget negotiations before the June deadline.

> We are able to meet this challenge thanks to our responsible fiscal stewardship over the past years, including record budget reserves of close to $38 billion
> - Gov. Gavin Newsom

"We are all committed to delivering an on-time balanced budget and this early action agreement is a critical first step to shrink the state's shortfall," Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire said in a statement.

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas called the agreement "the right way" to address the budget deficit. But Republican lawmakers slammed the plan Thursday and said they were shut out of the conversation.

"Our caucus has absolutely nothing to do with it," Republican Sen. Roger Niello said Thursday. "We learn all of these things later on, at about the same time as our 8 million constituents."

Unlike the federal government, California law says the state must pass a balanced budget — meaning it can't spend more money than it has. Newsom will present his revised budget proposal in May, and lawmakers have until June 15 to pass the budget.

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolution Adopting Amendments to Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapter 9.22, Density Bonus, for Compliance with Updates to State Density Bonus Law Adopted by Assembly Bill 1287.

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to consider the adoption of a resolution to adopt amendments to Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapter 9.22, Density Bonus, for consistency with updates to State Density Bonus Law applicable to housing project as set forth in Assembly Bill 1287.

At the time of the public hearing, the City Council will also be considering compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

DATE/TIME: **TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2024 AT 7:00 PM**

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, Second Floor, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT:
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Members of the public unable to attend a meeting but wishing to comment on an item(s) listed on the agenda may submit written comments prior to the public hearing via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov or via mail to City Clerk, 1685 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, California 90401. Written public comment submitted before 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. All written comments shall be made part of the public record. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You may also comment in person at the City Council hearing. Please check the agenda for more detailed instructions on how to comment in person.

Address your comments to: **City Clerk**
Re: Implementation of Amendments to State Density Bonus Law

VIA EMAIL: councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov
VIA MAIL: 1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION: If you want more information about this project, please email housingupdates@santamonica.gov. For disability-related accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 458-8211 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Every attempt will be made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate languages provided the request is received 72 hours prior to the meeting. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines serve City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is located at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, and is a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall, on Olympic Drive, and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the public hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2275.

Tech companies want to build artificial general intelligence. But who decides when AGI is attained?

MATT O'BRIEN
AP Technology Writer

There's a race underway to build artificial general intelligence, a futuristic vision of machines that are as broadly smart as humans or at least can do many things as well as people can.

Achieving such a concept — commonly referred to as AGI — is the driving mission of ChatGPT-maker OpenAI and a priority for the elite research wings of tech giants Amazon, Google, Meta and Microsoft.

It's also a cause for concern for world governments. Leading AI scientists published research Thursday in the journal Science warning that unchecked AI agents with "long-term planning" skills could pose an existential risk to humanity.

But what exactly is AGI and how will we know when it's been attained? Once on the fringe of computer science, it's now a buzzword that's being constantly redefined by those trying to make it happen.

WHAT IS AGI?

Not to be confused with the similar-sounding generative AI — which describes the AI systems behind the crop of tools that "generate" new documents, images and sounds — artificial general intelligence is a more nebulous idea.

It's not a technical term but "a serious, though ill-defined, concept," said Geoffrey Hinton, a pioneering AI scientist who's been dubbed a "Godfather of AI."

"I don't think there is agreement on what the term means," Hinton said by email this week. "I use it to mean AI that is at least as good as humans at nearly all of the cognitive things that humans do."

Hinton prefers a different term — superintelligence — "for AGIs that are better than humans."

A small group of early proponents of the term AGI were looking to evoke how mid-20th century computer scientists envisioned an intelligent machine. That was before AI research branched into subfields that advanced specialized and commercially viable versions of the technology — from face recognition to speech-recognizing voice assistants like Siri and Alexa.

Mainstream AI research "turned away from the original vision of artificial intelligence, which at the beginning was pretty ambitious," said Pei Wang, a professor who teaches an AGI course at Temple University and helped organize the first AGI conference in 2008.

Putting the 'G' in AGI was a signal to those who "still want to do the big thing. We don't want to build tools. We want to build a thinking machine," Wang said.

ARE WE AT AGI YET?

Without a clear definition, it's hard to know when a company or group of researchers will have achieved artificial general intelligence — or if they already have.

> Twenty years ago, I think people would have happily agreed that systems with the ability of GPT-4 or (Google's) Gemini had achieved general intelligence comparable to that of humans
> - Geoffrey Hinton

"Twenty years ago, I think people would have happily agreed that systems with the ability of GPT-4 or (Google's) Gemini had achieved general intelligence comparable to that of humans," Hinton said. "Being able to answer more or less any question in a sensible way would have passed the test. But now that AI can do that, people want to change the test."

Improvements in "autoregressive" AI techniques that predict the most plausible next word in a sequence, combined with massive computing power to train those systems on troves of data, have led to impressive chatbots, but they're still not quite the AGI that many people had in mind. Getting to AGI requires technology that can perform just as well as humans in a wide variety of tasks, including reasoning, planning and the ability to learn from experiences.

Some researchers would like to find consensus on how to measure it. It's one of the topics of an upcoming AGI workshop next month in Vienna, Austria — the first at a major AI research conference.

"This really needs a community's effort and attention so that mutually we can agree on some sort of classifications of AGI," said workshop organizer Jiaxuan You, an assistant professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. One idea is to segment it into levels in the same way that carmakers try to benchmark the path between cruise control and fully self-driving vehicles.

Others plan to figure it out on their own. San Francisco company OpenAI has given its nonprofit board of directors — whose members include a former U.S. Treasury secretary — the responsibility of deciding when its AI systems have reached the point at which they "outperform humans at most economically valuable work."

"The board determines when we've attained AGI," says OpenAI's own explanation of its governance structure. Such an achievement would cut off the company's biggest partner, Microsoft, from the rights to commercialize such a system, since the terms of their agreements "only apply to pre-AGI technology."

IS AGI DANGEROUS?

Hinton made global headlines last year when he quit Google and sounded a warning about AI's existential dangers. A new Science study published Thursday could reinforce those concerns.

Its lead author is Michael Cohen, a University of California, Berkeley, researcher who studies the "expected behavior of generally intelligent artificial agents," particularly those competent enough to "present a real threat to us by out planning us."

Cohen made clear in an interview Thursday that such long-term AI planning agents don't yet exist. But "they have the potential" to get more advanced as tech companies seek to combine today's chatbot technology with more deliberate planning skills using a technique known as reinforcement learning.

"Giving an advanced AI system the objective to maximize its reward and, at some point, withholding reward from it, strongly incentivizes the AI system to take humans out of the loop, if it has the opportunity," according to the paper whose co-authors include prominent AI scientists Yoshua Bengio and Stuart Russell and law professor and former OpenAI adviser Gillian Hadfield.

"I hope we've made the case that people in government (need) to start thinking seriously about exactly what regulations we need to address this problem," Cohen said. For now, "governments only know what these companies decide to tell them."

> I hope we've made the case that people in government (need) to start thinking seriously about exactly what regulations we need to address this problem
> - Michael Cohen

TOO LEGIT TO QUIT AGI?

With so much money riding on the promise of AI advances, it's no surprise that AGI is also becoming a corporate buzzword that sometimes attracts a quasi-religious fervor.

It's divided some of the tech world between those who argue it should be developed slowly and carefully and others — including venture capitalists and rapper MC Hammer — who've declared themselves part of an "accelerationist" camp.

The London-based startup DeepMind, founded in 2010 and now part of Google, was one of the first companies to explicitly set out to develop AGI. OpenAI did the same in 2015 with a safety-focused pledge.

But now it might seem that everyone else is jumping on the bandwagon. Google co-founder Sergey Brin was recently seen hanging out at a California venue called the AGI House. And less than three years after changing its name from Facebook to focus on virtual worlds, Meta Platforms in January revealed that AGI was also on the top of its agenda.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg said his company's long-term goal was "building full general intelligence" that would require advances in reasoning, planning, coding and other cognitive abilities. While Zuckerberg's company has long had researchers focused on those subjects, his attention marked a change in tone.

At Amazon, one sign of the new messaging was when the head scientist for the voice assistant Alexa switched job titles to become head scientist for AGI.

While not as tangible to Wall Street as generative AI, broadcasting AGI ambitions may help recruit AI talent who have a choice in where they want to work.

In deciding between an "old-school AI institute" or one whose "goal is to build AGI" and has sufficient resources to do so, many would choose the latter, said You, the University of Illinois researcher.

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GUEST COMMENTARY

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Elections can be 'rigged' – just not the way Katie Porter or Donald Trump wrongly suggest



Photo courtesy of NewsNation

ELECTIONS: U.S. Senate candidate Rep. Katie Porter speaks during a televised debate at KRON4 studio in San Francisco on Feb. 12, 2024.

JIM NEWTON

Rep. Katie Porter's parting comments after her failed bid for U.S. Senate have been widely and appropriately denounced. Calling the primary race "rigged" was ill-tempered and immature, and it helped reassure those who voted against Porter that they were entirely justified for having done so.

She later apologized, sort of, acknowledging during an interview on "Pod Save America" that she "obviously" wished she had "chosen a different word."

Yet she did have a point.

No, the election was not "rigged" in the way that former President Donald Trump disparages any election he loses. There were no unfounded allegations of voter fraud or tampering with voting machines. There were no fabricated conspiracies involving Italian interference as Trump supporters claimed the same day thousands stormed the U.S. Capitol.

It was a clean primary that Rep. Adam Schiff won and former baseball star Steve Garvey managed to advance in thanks to Schiff's help.

That's not a rigged election. That's how elections work. Porter's inability to find a lane, to connect with voters, to perform at the debates or to offer a convincing message were textbook examples of another aspect of elections: Bad campaigns lose.

Still, American elections, including those in California at the state and local levels, often become exercises in influence as much as they are contests of ideas or candidates. In that bigger sense, our elections are, indeed, rigged – just not the way that either Porter or Trump contends.

The roots of this particular political crisis date to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1976, when the court held in Buckley v. Valeo that spending on behalf of candidates and causes (separate from direct contributions to candidates) was protected speech and could not be regulated by the government.

That's a shaky, though not crazy, idea. But its implications have reverberated through American politics ever since, amplified by the better-known case in 2010, Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission.

As UC Berkeley law school dean Erwin Chemerinsky wrote a decade ago, the effect of those rulings has been to clear the way for deep-pocketed interests to exercise sweeping influence.

> When corporations and the wealthy can spend unlimited sums of money – as they now can – they have the ability to drown out other voices and create a political system that is stunningly unequal
>
> - Erwin Chemerinsky

"When corporations and the wealthy can spend unlimited sums of money – as they now can – they have the ability to drown out other voices and create a political system that is stunningly unequal," he wrote in 2014.

Bob Stern, who authored state campaign finance laws and helped create the Fair Political Practices Commission in the 1970s, was one of the many Californians that bristled at Porter's comments. He felt "frustrated" was a better word than "rigged."

Stern and many other campaign reform advocates are frustrated that the court, by having equated speech with contributions, has erected an edifice of inequality that favors money over ideas and incentivizes corporations, unions and the wealthy to spend money on campaigns to protect their interests.

There are efforts, in California and elsewhere, to tackle that problem. Some areas are experimenting with ranked-choice voting, others scoping out ideas such as campaign contribution vouchers that would allow voters to steer money to campaigns.

But the court has, at least for now, blocked the most obvious solution: Capping spending by any entity – humans, unions, corporations, committees – on candidates or causes. Under those circumstances, Stern lamented, "There is no good solution."

This is not a partisan question, nor purely a federal one. Elections in Los Angeles, for instance, largely turn on the support of organized labor, which has a deep interest in the outcomes of local races since the winners will consider contracts for government workers and set policies – the local minimum wage, to cite just one – that shape working conditions.

So labor in L.A. does exactly what one would expect: Groups spend money and use their influence to shape elections – even to draw district lines, as the infamous backdoor conversation between Los Angeles council members and labor leaders in 2021 highlighted.

For those seeking ways to curb some of those excesses, a first step is disclosure. Requirements that force PACs and others to reveal the sources of their money at least let voters take that into account when considering an attack.

"More disclosure would be good," Stern noted, though he conceded that even that "is not ideal."

After all, disclosure merely makes information available. It doesn't mean much unless voters take advantage of it, and it sometimes comes too late for candidates to make an issue of it.

That was part of Porter's beef with the March primary, when a contingent of wealthy crypto and tech magnates spent millions of dollars on ads criticizing her – precisely the type of political involvement that Buckley v. Valeo and Citizens United sanctioned. Porter called it "an onslaught of billionaires" who had contributed to Fairshake, a PAC that says it "supports candidates committed to securing the United States as the home to innovators building the next generation of the internet."

Again, though, she chose the wrong example to make an important point. Yes, billionaires – along with other wealthy interests – have too much sway over our politics. Yes, some of the ads Fairshake bought came late in the campaign, but they didn't move the needle much. Porter entered the race behind Schiff, stayed behind him the whole way and then sputtered as Schiff cleverly aired ads warning of Garvey's conservatism.

"Big money makes a difference," Stern said. "But in this case, I don't think it made much of a difference."

It was Schiff's ads that altered the structure of the race. The ads cleverly raised Garvey's profile in the guise of criticizing him, and they pushed him past Porter, just as Schiff had hoped they would. The result is that Schiff now has an easy path to victory in November against a former first baseman whose knowledge of politics is so thin that it's hard not to wince when he talks.

Porter was understandably upset to lose to such a laughable candidate – but that's politics, not a rigged election. Just ask Hillary Clinton.

Trump has commandeered the word "rigged," and Porter's use of it is what set off alarms. But Trump wields it selectively and self-servingly, as he does all things. The Senate race was no more "rigged" against Porter than the criminal justice system is "rigged" against Trump.

If our politics are rigged, they are rigged in favor of money. That's worth addressing.

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

HOA HOMEFRONT

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Why They Won't Volunteer

KELLY G. RICHARDSON, ESQ. CCAL

Filling open HOA board seats is a vexing and discouraging problem for some associations. However, there may be reasons why neighbors are not interested in serving. Could any of the below characteristics describe your association?

Volunteer Managers. Do directors spend many hours each week on HOA business, inspecting the property, observing vendors, and otherwise dealing with the HOA's daily matters? The well-intentioned sacrifice of so much time and energy may deter others from board service. Some neighbors may be retired or have the energy to spend 20-30 hours each week on association matters, but many don't – and they are frightened of that level of commitment. Let the manager manage, or hire a better one. If the association does not have a manager, hire one. Volunteers need to be reassured they are not signing up to be free HOA co-managers.

Fire and Brimstone at the Board Table. Some associations have meetings fraught with conflict and low standards of board behavior. Few volunteers want to join a board in which directors display hostility toward each other, or serve an association that seems to be always in litigation.

Chaotic Meetings. Disruptive and uncomfortable meetings filled with hostility between directors and the audience will repel most volunteers, who decide that life is too short to deal with unpleasant people. They will avoid meetings and not volunteer. Elevate professionalism and civility in board meetings, and consider adopting board meeting rules promoting civility and order.

Fear of Liability. Volunteer directors should not fear liability, even while making important association decisions. The Business Judgment Rule, corporate process, directors' and officers' errors and omissions insurance all protect volunteers. Stay within those protections and the director's role, which is directing - making decisions. Leave actions to managers and vendors. Directors should be continually trained on these important protections.

El Jefe. A president acting as the HOA's "boss" discourages volunteers by not recognizing that the board actually is the boss. Who wants to join a board where their contribution seems unnecessary and their views unimportant? If the president plays the dictator, regularly squelching differing viewpoints, don't be surprised at the short list of applicants for board seats. Homeowner associations act through the board, not the president. Presidents inhibiting reasonable discussion and unilaterally making decisions without board votes are disrespecting the role of the other directors. HOA presidents should be leaders but not bosses of their associations.

Ignorance is Not Bliss. Some associations suffer from poor member participation because members have no idea what their board is doing. Find additional methods to keep your neighbors informed about the goings-on in their association other than just posting the minutes. Better communication leads to greater confidence in association governance and a greater willingness to volunteer.

Major Projects. It is difficult to find volunteers during a major renovation or repair, governing document overhaul, or even a lawsuit. Find volunteers before the major project begins.

Big Boards. Some boards are unnecessarily large for the size of the association. For example, does a 25-member association need 5 directors - 20% of the membership? A 3-member board may be adequate and much easier to staff. Changing the board size to a more appropriate number probably will require a membership vote to amend the association bylaws.

Adjust some things, and get those board seats filled!

Kelly G. Richardson CCAL is a Fellow of the College of Community Association Lawyers and Partner of Richardson Ober LLP, a California law firm known for community association advice. Send column questions to Kelly@roattorneys.com. Past columns at www.HOAHomefront.com. All rights reserved®.

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Carolwood Estates bjorn@bjornfarrugia.com



SANTA MONICA

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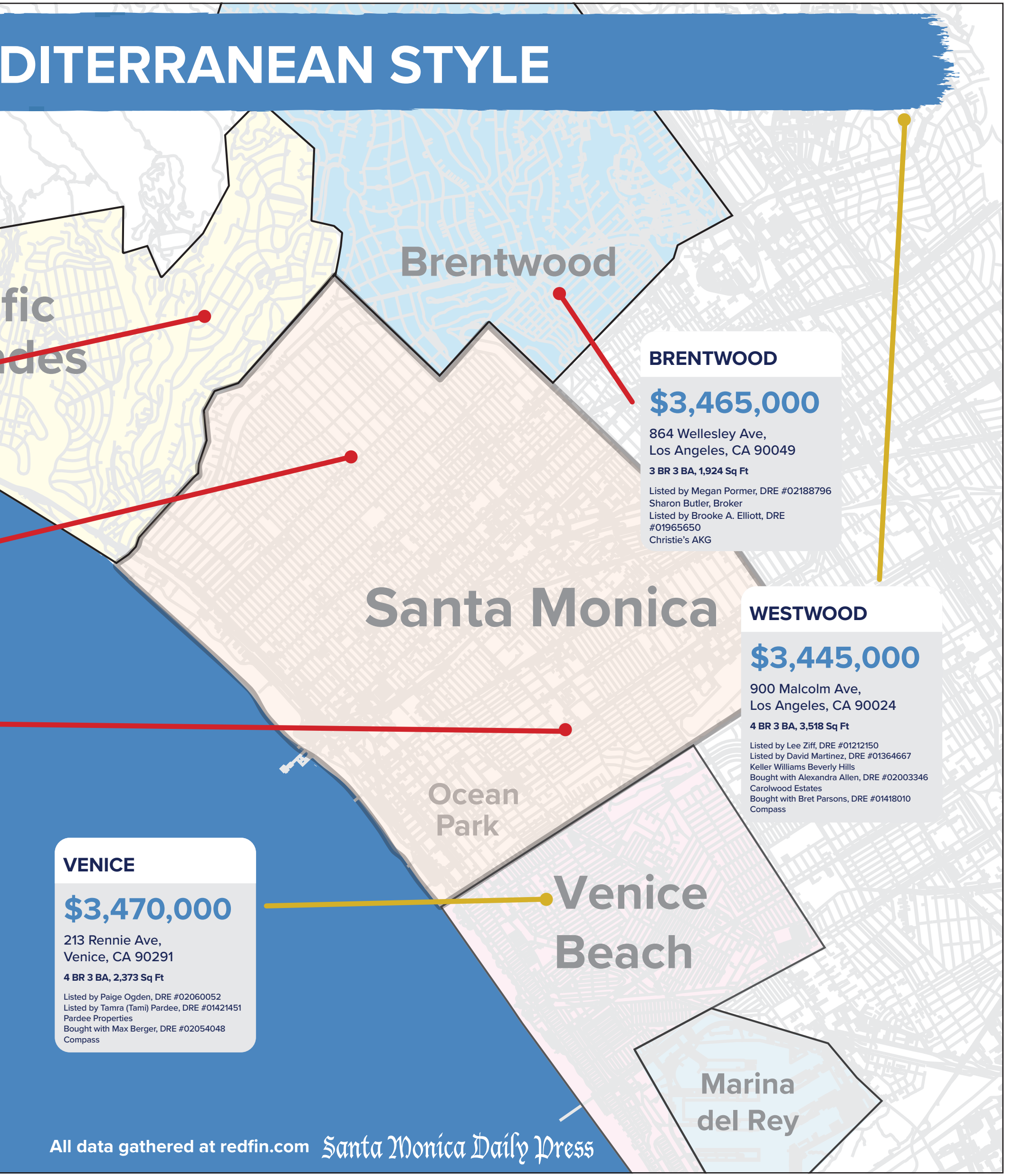
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Listed by Megan Whalen DRE #01374178,
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Sharon Butler, Broker
Listed by Brooke A. Elliott, DRE #01965650
Christie's AKG

WESTWOOD

$3,445,000

900 Malcolm Ave,
Los Angeles, CA 90024

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Listed by Lee Ziff, DRE #01212150
Listed by David Martinez, DRE #01364667
Keller Williams Beverly Hills
Bought with Alexandra Allen, DRE #02003346
Carolwood Estates
Bought with Bret Parsons, DRE #01418010
Compass

VENICE

$3,470,000

213 Rennie Ave,
Venice, CA 90291

4 BR 3 BA, 2,373 Sq Ft

Listed by Paige Ogden, DRE #02060052
Listed by Tamra (Tami) Pardee, DRE #01421451
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City of Santa Monica
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Cemetery
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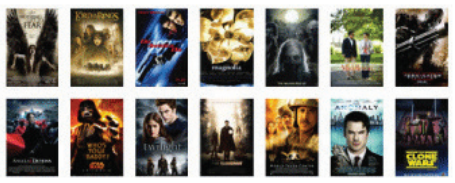
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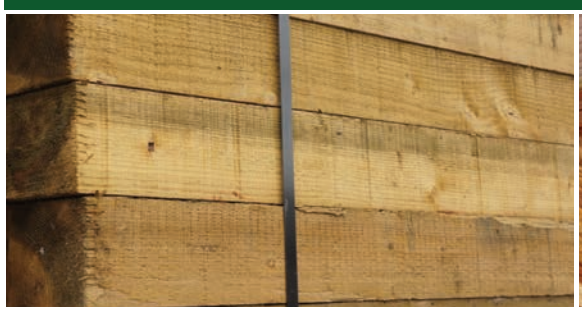
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Comedy fest continues at Bergamot









Photos by Kiel Phillips/Courtesy The Crow

COMEDY: The best of comedy and entertainment professionals continue to grace The Crow comedy club at the Bergamot Station Arts Center this week as part of the Bergamot Comedy Fest. The opening night on Monday was centered around "Tomorrow's Ladies of Late Night," including an educational panel and a showcase followed by the festival's opening party. Along with comic showcases on Tuesday and Wednesday, panels featuring industry experts took place on the topics of agents and managers, as well as breaking into comedy clubs. The festival continues through Saturday with multiple showcases and panels, as well as private perks like Tarot readings on Thursday and a special panel held by the Los Angeles Times on Saturday. For tickets to the rest of the showcases and more information, visit bergamotcomedyfest.com.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Citywide

Rotary Club of Santa Monica Raises Over $21,000 for Santa Monica College Guardian Scholars

The Rotary Club of Santa Monica has awarded the Santa Monica College (SMC) Guardian Scholars Program a grant of $21,750 to help current/former foster youth enrolled at the college with the cost of textbooks, food, transportation, and to ease the burden of certain fees. The funds were raised by Rotary Club at the 16th Annual Santa Monica Rotary Wine Festival held Saturday, March 9 at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles—the highest amount the club has raised for a featured charity. Last year, Rotary awarded a $10,000 grant to support SMC's basic needs programs.

Established in Fall 2013, SMC's Guardian Scholars program came into being thanks to a three-year grant from the Angell Foundation, and additional support came through grants from the S. Mark Taper Foundation, The Whittier Trust, Stuart Foundation, Attias Family Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, California Community Foundation, The Mark Hughes Foundation, and Providence/St. John's Health Center as well as through state funding for equity-focused programs. Guardian Scholars Program supports the academic and personal goals of current and former foster youth attending the college—through intensive academic and career counseling, priority enrollment, tutoring, meal assistance, student success workshops, mental health therapy and much more. (SMC also has a state-funded NextUp program for foster youth, alongside Guardian Scholars—not all foster youth are eligible for NextUp—the two programs comprise a support system for foster youth).

Andrea Gressinger, chairperson for the Rotary of Santa Monica Wine Festival event, said, "The Rotary Club of Santa Monica is proud to support the Guardian Scholars program at SMC and the amazing students they support. Their dedication to giving former and current foster students the help they need to succeed is gift to all of us as it makes the world a better place."

"Many Guardian Scholars have graduated and transferred to four-year schools including UC Berkeley, UCLA, USC, and Cal State Northridge," said Debra Locke, SMC's Interim Dean of Special Programs. "Close to 1,000 former or current foster youth have received targeted counseling, meal and transportation services, as well as resources for housing and medical services. I cannot overstate the impact of this generous assistance provided by Rotary Club Santa Monica—thanks to them, more Guardian Scholars will receive much-needed help as they navigate college and follow in the footsteps of those who have transferred or started a career of their choice."

Janee Keaton, a Guardian Scholar and Liberal Arts major stated that the program's support "meant the world and allowed me to feel a stronger sense of self-worth while helping me advocate for myself."

To learn more about Guardian Scholars (and NextUp) visit www.smc.edu/fosterservices. More information about Rotary Club of Santa Monica is available on the club's webpage at rotary5280.org. Santa Monica College is a California Community College accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

SUBMITTED BY GRACE SMITH

SMC

Santa Monica College to Stage "Project Fear (And All the Feels)" April 19-28

The Santa Monica College (SMC) Theatre Arts Department will perform "Project Fear (And All the Feels)" April 19-28 in the Theatre Arts Studio Stage on the main SMC campus, 1900 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. Two of the performances — on April 19 and April 21, will include an audience Q&A after the performances.

The stories of middle school and high school kids about the fears and challenges they face during this time in history are presented in "Project Fear (And All the Feels)," a docu-play that reflects the results of interviews with more than 50 teens — from Alaska to New York to South Carolina to California — from a range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Prompted to tell stories that were meaningful to them, these teens covered a wide range of topics and concerns. Their words will be delivered onstage by student actors.

The docu-play was written by Michelle Kholos Brooks. The SMC production is directed by Aric Martin.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 19 (with audience Q&A) and April 26, and Saturday, April 20 and April 27. Matinees are at 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 21 (with audience Q&A) and April 28. All performances subject to change or cancellation without notice.

Advance (pre-sale) tickets, which range from $18 to $20 ($15 for SMC students and staff) plus a modest service charge, can be purchased online at smc.edu/tickets at any time, or by calling 310-434-3005 Monday through Friday. Tickets purchased on performance weekends at the Events Box Office (at the Theatre Arts building) are $3 higher. Parking is free, and information on parking, transportation, and directions can be found at smc.edu/transportation.

SUBMITTED BY GRACE SMITH

Beverly Hills

Beverly Hills Man Pleads Guilty to Transporting to Florida Items He Stole from Guests Staying at Luxury Hotel

A Beverly Hills man pleaded guilty today to stealing jewelry and other items from victims staying at a luxury hotel last year, then traveling to Florida to sell the stolen goods.

Jobson Marangoni De Castro, 38, pleaded guilty to one count of interstate transportation of stolen property, a felony that carries a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

According to court documents, two victims – both residents of Brazil – traveled together to Beverly Hills in May 2023 to attend a fashion event scheduled several days after their arrival. On the evening of May 10, 2023, De Castro traveled by Uber to the victims' hotel, tricked a hotel employee into giving him a key to the victims' room, and – while the victims were away having dinner – stole six suitcases belonging to them.

The suitcases contained jewelry, clothing, and accessories worth as much as approximately $1.8 million, prosecutors contend.

Later that evening, the victims returned to their hotel room to discover all six of their suitcases were missing. The hotel staff then notified law enforcement about the theft.

De Castro then traveled to Miami and, on May 17, 2023, messaged a buyer in Miami on Instagram. De Castro told the buyer he wanted to sell jewelry – a diamond necklace and luxury watch – but he did not have papers for them because he had found them in a box belonging to his late mother. The jewelry matched the description of that stolen from the victims in Beverly Hills a few days earlier, according to court documents. The next day, the buyer wired De Castro $50,000, for the jewelry, which De Castro brought to the buyer's store in Miami.

The name De Castro provided to the buyer was "Jobs Marangoni," the same name he used for his Uber account.

De Castro has been in federal custody since August 2023.

United States District Judge Hernán D. Vera scheduled an April 30 evidentiary hearing for De Castro to determine the loss amount. A sentencing hearing is expected to be scheduled in the following months.

The FBI and the Beverly Hills Police Department investigated this matter.

Assistant United States Attorney Alexander S. Gorin of the General Crimes Section is prosecuting this case.

SUBMITTED BY CIARAN MCEVOY

Los Angeles

Los Angeles Youth Orchestra Presents Annual Spring Concert Series

The Los Angeles Youth Orchestra (LAYO) is gearing up for its annual spring concert series, titled "A Pastoral Celebration," scheduled for Sunday, April 14, and Monday, April 15. This year's performances will take place at two esteemed venues, catering to audiences on both the west and east sides of Los Angeles.

Under the baton of conductors Russell Steinberg and Jorge Padrón, LAYO will showcase the talents of students from 70 public and private schools in the Los Angeles area. The orchestra, a revered institution celebrating its 25th year, comprises gifted musicians between the ages of 8 and 18.

The concerts promise an enchanting evening of classical repertoire, featuring beloved compositions such as Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 in F major (the "Pastoral" symphony), Haydn's "London Symphony No. 104," Bartok's "Pieces for Children," Brahms' Hungarian Dance No. 2, and the world premiere of Conductor Russell Steinberg's Cirrus Nimbus.

Russell Steinberg, LAYO's Founder and Artistic Director, is renowned for his multifaceted contributions to the classical music world. As a Harvard-trained composer, conductor, pianist, and educator, Steinberg's passion for instilling a love for classical music in others is evident through his dynamic lectures and extensive body of work.

Jorge Padrón, LAYO's Assistant Conductor, brings his expertise as a doctoral student at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. With a dedication to music education, Padrón's leadership has positively impacted young musicians across Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles Youth Orchestra, consisting of over 110 student musicians annually, serves as a beacon for music education in the region. Through rigorous training and collaboration with professional coaches, LAYO provides students with unparalleled opportunities to master challenging masterworks.

Concertgoers can experience the magic of LAYO's performances at the following venues and times:
Westside:
Date: April 14, 2024
Time: 7:30 pm
Venue: Barnum Hall, 600 Olympic Blvd, Santa Monica, CA
Eastside:
Date: April 15, 2024
Time: 7:30 pm
Venue: Ambassador Auditorium, 131 S. St. John Street, Pasadena, CA

Tickets for these captivating performances are available online, and patrons are encouraged to support youth in music by attending these unforgettable concerts.

In addition to the concerts, LAYO invites the community to a free pre-concert Zoom presentation on April 8, 2024, at 5 pm, where Conductor Russell Steinberg will delve into the selections for the April concert.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit https://bit.ly/layospring2024.

SUBMITTED BY JOYCE LABRIOLA

Citywide

Committee for Racial Justice presents: 2024, the Year of Action - REVISITING REPARATIONS – Local & Statewide

For the month of April, the Committee For Racial Justice (CRJ) will be returning to a zoom -only workshop on Sunday evening, 4/7. Continuing with the theme of follow up on the Black Apology – 2024, the Year of Action, this workshop is entitled REVISITING REPARATIONS – Local & Statewide. They are doing it by zoom so that they can show several videos more easily as they present a brief recap of the need for reparations and updates on bills related to reparations that are pending in the California state legislature, in addition to looking at what's happening with the local Silas White case of the theft by the city, through eminent domain, of his vision of an Ebony Beach Club in Santa Monica in the 1950's.

The state commission on reparations has completed their document of recommendations, some of which have led to a number of bills that will be trying to work their way through the state legislature this year and we want to start mapping out a campaign to prioritize which ones to push for action by our elected officials. Also, the California Legislative Black Caucus has released a 2024 Reparation Legislative Package.

Click on this link: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrdeuoqzssG9Zj1_MYxuEV6lQkOw0B1ZqS to receive the link for Sunday evening's zoom CRJ workshop which starts at 6:30 p.m.

They May 5th workshop will return to hybrid, with opportunities to meet in person at Virginia Ave. Park For more information, call Joanne at 310-422-5431

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This Los Angeles heist sounds like it came from a thriller novel. Thieves stole $30 million in cash

Thieves got away with $30 million in cash from a money storage facility in Los Angeles by breaking into the building on Easter Sunday and cracking the safe. Now detectives are seeking to unravel the brazen cash heist, reportedly one of the largest on record in Los Angeles.

Police Cmdr. Elaine Morales told The Los Angeles Times, which broke the news of the crime, that the thieves were able to breach the building, as well as the safe where the money was stored. The operators of the business did not discover the massive theft until they opened the vault.

Media reports identified the facility as a location of GardaWorld, a global cash management and security company, in Sylmar. The Canada-based company, which also operates fleets of armored cars, did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

LAPD Officer David Cuellar, a department spokesperson, confirmed that officers received a call for service at 4:30 a.m. Sunday at a business on the street where GardaWorld's Sylmar location is.

Several TV news crews were filming outside the facility Thursday morning in an industrial part of the San Fernando Valley neighborhood, which is about 20 miles (30 kilometers) north of downtown Los Angeles.

Aerial footage from KABC-TV showed a large cutout on the side of the building that appeared to be boarded up by a piece of plywood.

The LAPD and FBI on Thursday would only say that they were jointly investigating the theft "to determine the person or group responsible." The agencies sought tips from the public, but they did not confirm how much was stolen or give other details such as the name of the company.

The Times reported that the break-in was among the largest cash burglaries in city history and surpassed that of any armored-car heist in Los Angeles.

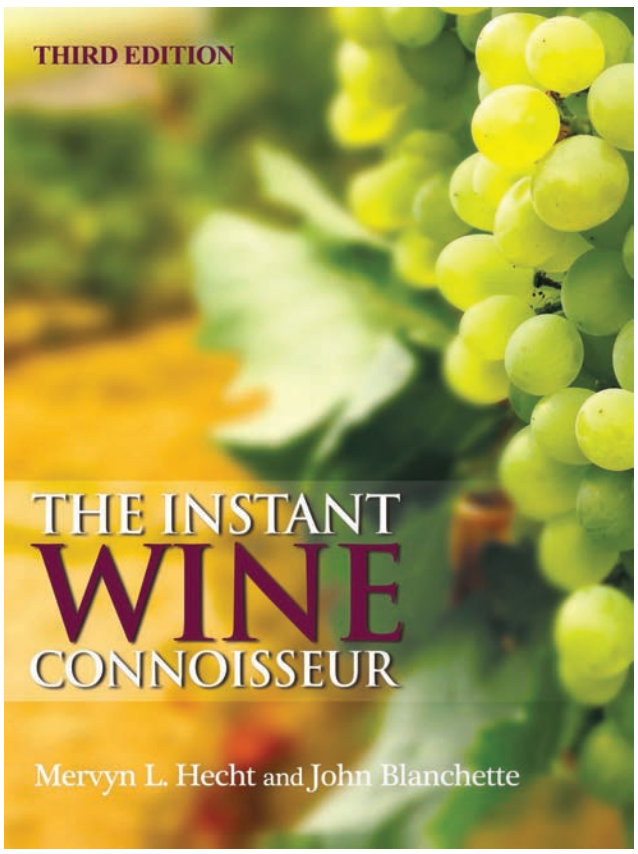
Nearly two years ago, as much as $100 million in jewels and other valuables were stolen from a Brink's big rig at a Southern California truck stop. The thieves haven't been caught.

Jim McGuffey, an armored car expert and security consultant, called the Sylmar theft "a shock." Any such facility should have two alarm systems and a seismic motion detector right on the safe, he said, as well as additional motion sensors throughout the building.

"For that kind of money, you don't just walk in and walk out with it," he told AP. "A facility should be protected from the top to the bottom and the sides."

GardaWorld has a good reputation in the industry, McGuffey said, but every cash management company has "isolated incidents like this that just make no sense, but it happens to the best of them."

★★★★★ A light-hearted fun read.
★★★★★ Well written, particularly useful, instantly accessible.
★★★★★ ...Hecht has a joyful eye and fabulous taste



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MEASURE GS

FROM PAGE 1

production.

The Los Angeles tax was predicted to bring in $672 million a year. Instead, it brought in $173 million in its first year, just 25% of its own estimate. According to the LA Times and The Real Deal, the measure has raised money for housing projects but it has also chilled the housing market.

Measure GS is estimated to raise about $50 million per year and has generated about $17 million so far.

"Sometimes, initiative measures have unintended consequences that must be fixed," said O'Connor in the same press release. "Not only will this amendment allow us to meet our State-mandated housing requirements, it will help keep rents lower and prevent displacement."

O'Connor served on the Santa Monica City Council for 24 years, including five terms as mayor before leaving in 2018.

Himmelrich (who was mayor in 2022) is not supportive of this amendment, noting that GS already exempts affordable housing projects from the transfer tax.

"GS was endorsed by Santa Monicans for Renters Rights, the Santa Monica Democratic Club, the Los Angeles County Democratic Party, Santa Monica Forward and numerous others. Developers, landlords and their allies spent more than $500,000 in opposition to GS, but they lost at the polls. They then sued to invalidate GS, but they lost in court," Himmelrich told the Daily Press.

"This is just their latest desperate effort to undo GS, but this too will fail. Santa Monica voters will not be fooled into signing these petitions which seek to take money from our schools, and from rental assistance and affordable housing programs, in order to further enrich greedy developers and landlords," Himmelrich said.

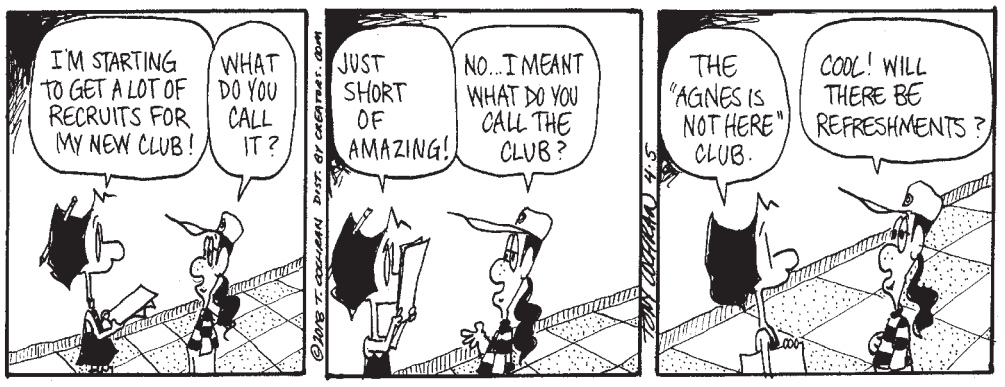
"At a time when the State has upzoned our City without requiring any additional affordable housing, developers certainly can afford to and should pay the GS tax if and when they sell their projects for $8 million or more. And landlords likewise can and should pay the GS tax when they sell their buildings for $8 million or more, at which point they are no longer the landlord and cannot raise the rents. The recycled scare tactics being pedaled by disgraced former Mayor Pam O'Connor — who unlawfully pressured the then City Manager to fire Santa Monica resident Elizabeth Riel because of her political views, in violation of the First Amendment — will not fool Santa Monica's voters."

The City of Santa Monica states that in order to qualify a measure for placement on the ballot, proponents must obtain signatures from 10% of the estimated 68,952 registered voters in the City.

scott.snowden@smdp.com

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



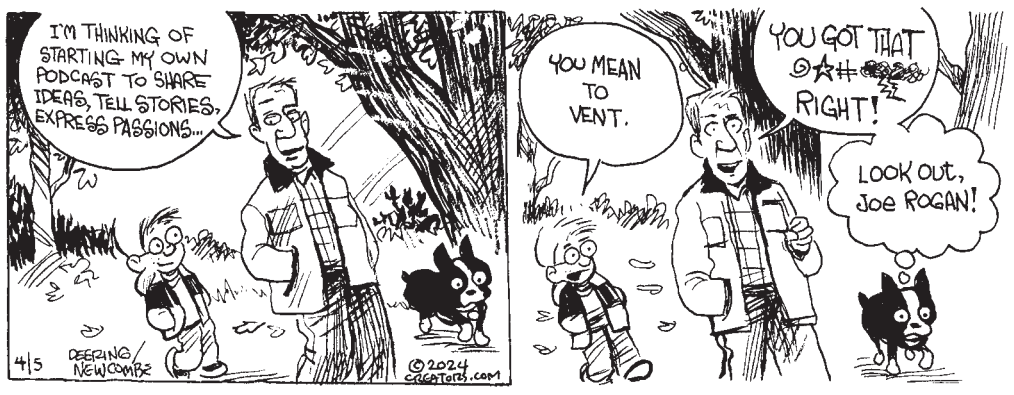
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



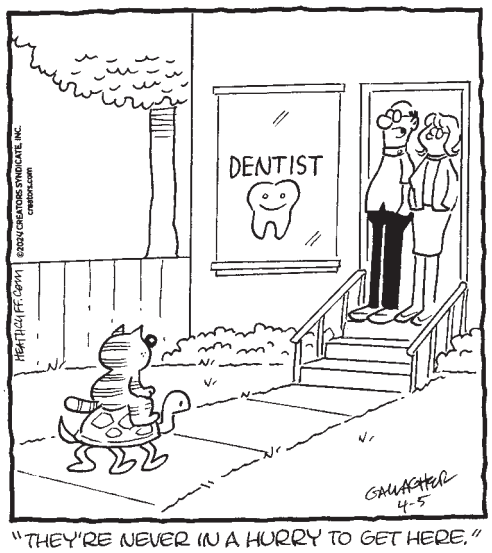
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"THEY'RE NEVER IN A HURRY TO GET HERE."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 21 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

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A native garden

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

Acacia	Figs	Invasive	Rush
Annual	Fruit	Lime	Scent
Beds	Gums	Liquid	Shrubs
Birds	Gypsum	Loam	Soak
Boree	Hakea	Lomandra	Soil
Cane	Herbicide	Micro	Sowing
Cedar	Huon	Mulch	Sucker
Coral	Indigo	Organic	Telopea
Cover	Insect	Pigface	Waratah
Erica	Kangaroo	Rain	Wollemi
Fern	paw	Rhizome	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 5)

Your motto: No waiting. Walk forward and the sea parts, your schedule clears, the money comes and your guides show up, too. More highlights: nostalgic reunions, a game-changing investment and a re-frame for your personal life that changes the color of your memories and casts golden light on your future. Cancer and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 7, 30, 28, 14 and 29.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll give a stellar performance of sorts. As informal as it may be, it's complex work that engages your talent and has positive social repercussions. Just be sure to keep reading the room and keep your hand on the "volume" knob.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). A social mood takes hold and you have a talent for talking to anyone about anything. People open up to you because they sense you're non-judgmental. Most of the day's interactions will leave all feeling lighter and brighter.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're a lifelong learner and the world is your classroom. Actual classrooms, however, may feel too confining. You'll get hooked into a subject and many avenues of information and hands-on learning will open to you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). What if your future was like today, multiplied many times forward? How does that prospect appeal to you? Use the idea as a guiding principle and make the adjustments that will favorably color your tomorrows.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Genuinely curious, you'll gain a greater understanding of someone's world and still want to know more. Share about yourself, too. As trust builds, so will the potential for the relationship.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You have a wide array of talents to offer and will be interested in one who is equally gifted. You may flirt without realizing it. Others will though, so you'd do well to be careful how you wield that charm.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You feel mysteriously connected to place you've never been before. The mere idea of it lights you up. When you finally go there, you'll meet people who give you an immediate feeling of belonging.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Everyone knows the phoenix wasn't born from an egg. Some say its mother is a flame, its father the grim reaper, but the phoenix knows that death and fire were but midwives in the process of birthing oneself.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). An objective witness, you'll take in your surroundings and observe the unfolding plot without personalizing the action. You'll see how things really are and you'll choose your path from a place of clarity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When we are isolated, it can seem like no one else feels like we do. Of course it's not the case. As unique as you are, you're not inventing new feelings for humans and you can rest assured knowing you are definitely not alone.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Everyone grows up with certain patterns in their childhood that will feel familiar and be repeated in adulthood. For whatever reason, if you want to break out of the pattern, today gives you the opportunity and tools.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Though the future is uncertain, you're an excellent predictor of it, especially when it comes to your loved ones. You can guess how a loved one will behave and you'll be right. Learning people well will be rewarding on many levels.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

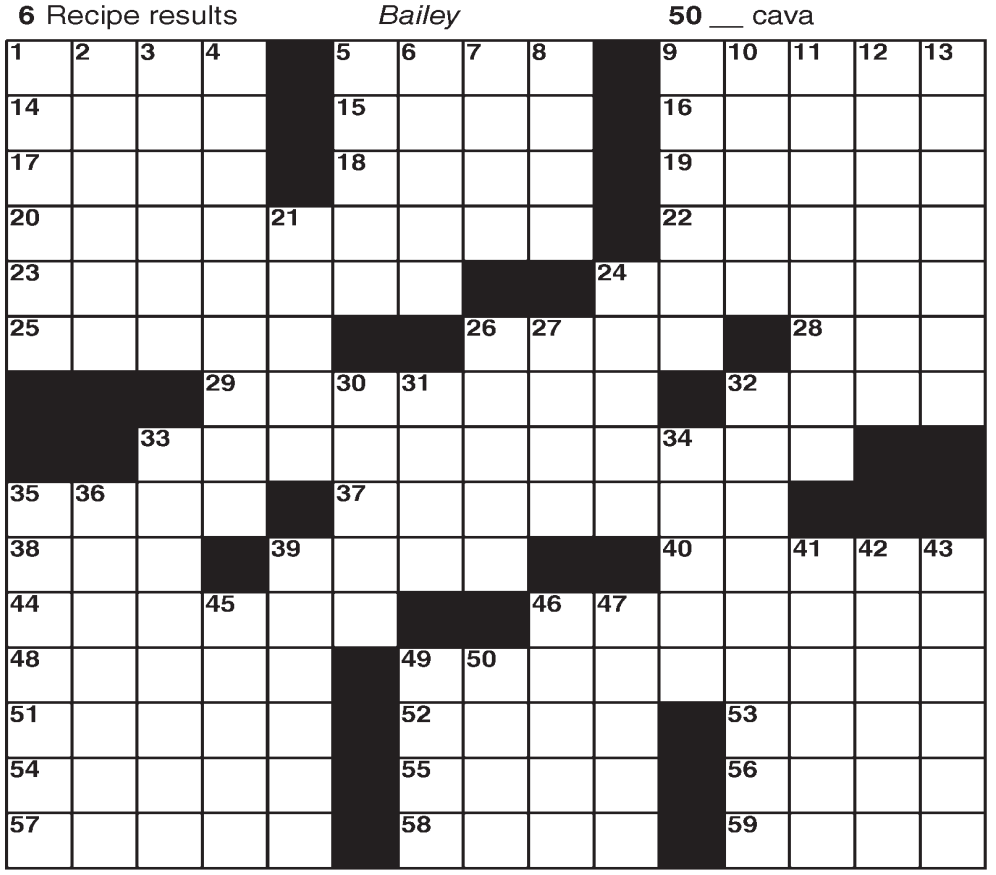
WHODUNIT CLICHÉS by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Amuse highly
5 Tourney passes
9 First installment
14 Extreme __ (action sport with sticks)
15 Deputy
16 "Is that my cue?"
17 Org. co-founded by Helen Keller
18 Dreamcast game console maker
19 Animated characters
20 __ DID IT
22 How ballerinas dance
23 Articulated
24 Small bar glass
25 Tops
26 Medical care options
28 Medical specialty
29 Great care
32 X-ray measures
33 __ DID IT
35 Shade similar to cyan
37 Flies from Africa
38 *Meet the Press* reporter
39 Raise (up)
40 Spin-off groups
44 Silvery strands
46 Hardly any
48 Ward off
49 __ DID IT
51 Whatsoever
52 Of no consequence
53 Articulated
54 Ma's expertise
55 Disentangle
56 Register a choice
57 Hair sample
58 Get smart with
59 Deleted

DOWN

1 Jacuzzi
2 Twelve-time Olympic medalist Ryan
3 Lace tips
4 "Without a doubt!"
5 Denounce vigorously
6 Recipe results
7 Crunchy area of a brownie
8 Scorch
9 Regional dialect
10 Included in
11 Gas masks, shields, etc.
12 Without success
13 Coupon holders
21 Alpha __ Minoris (Polaris)
24 Singing trio's surname
26 Successful candidate
27 Walker of *Beetle Bailey*
30 Up to
31 Small job
32 Transcended
33 Lose color
34 Apt to snap
35 Draw
36 Less talkative
39 Conversation starters
41 Pine-Sol's owner
42 Thus far
43 Smartly fashioned
45 Deals in
46 Brainy bunch
47 Dirt cake ingredients
49 Green egg layers
50 __ cava



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



FRIDAY | APRIL 5

PILATES MOVEMENT
The Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd., hosts a pilates movement class beginning at 11 a.m. Develop strength, flexibility and balance through the fusion of pilates mat and various styles of movement. All levels welcome. No entry after the first ten minutes. Program generously funded by the Friends of Venice Library.

SO HOW YOU DOING?
The play "So How You Doing?: A Playful Play on Co-Dependency," written and directed by Tom Parker and produced by Denise Klein, is a theatrical experience with audience participation based on codependency. The audience accepts the role of mental health colleagues and observers of a meeting of group therapy participants, sharing stories with humor, emotion and insight before tension mounts, requiring a solution. As a show souvenir, the host offers the audience a Codependency Assessment to take home "for someone who may need it." Starts at 1 p.m. at Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th St. Tickets $25. To purchase, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/so-how-you-doing-a-playful-play-on-co-dependency-tickets-859861979327.

AN AFTERNOON WITH MEG MEDINA
Santa Monica Public Library and Children's Book World are honored to present an afternoon with author Meg Medina, the Library of Congress' current National Ambassador for Young People's Literature. Ms. Medina will introduce her new platform, ¡Cuéntame! Let's Talk Books, a Spanish-English bilingual effort that encourages young leaders to connect with each other while talking about books. Starts at 4 p.m. in the Thelma Terry Room at Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave.

SATURDAY | APRIL 6

VIRGINIA AVENUE PARK FARMERS MARKET
The family market in the heart of Pico neighborhood's Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave, is widely considered to be among the best on the west coast. Featuring field-fresh produce, hundreds of kinds of vegetables, brilliant cut flowers, breads, cheeses, delicious foods, live music and more.

DOWNTOWN SANTA MONICA WALKING TOUR
Discover the architectural gems and rich history of Downtown Santa Monica, beginning at Hostelling International Santa Monica, 1436 2nd St., at 10 a.m. Visit a 12-story Art Deco office tower, the British pub where Jim Morrison played his first show, the city's best example of a Queen Anne Victorian home, a lavish hotel that housed a speakeasy during Prohibition and more. Tours are approximately 2 hours and cover 6 blocks. Reservations suggested. Open to all ages. Tickets $10. For more information, visit: https://smc.givecloud.co/dwt.

GEEBO THE CLOWN
The Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library, 501 S. Venice Blvd., hosts the incredible Geebo the Clown, El Payaso Loco, starting at 10:30 a.m. Think clown, magician, and incredible balloon animals. The whole family will enjoy this funny show full of magic tricks, sight gags and balloons. Geek's performance is to celebrate El die de los ninos/El die de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), commonly known as Dia, a nationally recognized initiative that emphasizes the importance of literacy for all children from all backgrounds. This program is generously funded by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles.

COMMUNITY DOG TRAINING CLASSES
Love At First Sit, a pet care and dog behavior and training company in Santa Monica, hosts Community Dog Training Classes Saturdays at 12 p.m. at Virginia Ave Park in Santa Monica. Class fee is $5, then pay what you can after that. Class proceeds are donated to various charities for people and animals, animal shelters, and animal rescues. Class topics explore basic obedience, manners, enrichment and more.

PET-CHEWLLA PET ADOPTION FAIR & FESTIVAL
Green Dog Veterinary Center, 210 Main St., Venice, is hosting the second annual Adoption Fair and Pet Festival starting at 1 p.m. You'll have the chance to meet adoptable dogs and cats needing great homes from eight different Los Angeles-based rescues. A day filled with furry friends, fantastic food, lively tunes and refreshing drinks. Donate to the silent auction, shop local vendors and get your face painted or a flower crown for your dog. This event is family-friendly, and leashed pets are encouraged to come.

SOUNDWAVES NEW MUSIC CONCERT
Soundwaves celebrates LA's diverse history of innovative underground music with free performances by world-class artists. The show at the Edye Theater a t the Broad Stage, 1310 11th St., is Cold Blue Music-Compositions by John Luther Adams, Christopher Roberts and Nicholas Chase. Starts at 3:30 p.m.

THE ASTROLOGY OF 2024
This workshop, held at IntoMeSea, 1812 Lincoln Blvd., is designed to help you navigate these cosmic frequencies, aspects and transits. Beginning at 5:30 p.m., Gahl Sasson will walk you through the questions of 2024, and investigate things such as dates of Mercury, Mars and Venus retrogrades; Full and New Moons, how to work with Moon magic, blessed & challenging dates, eclipses and other important periods. Tickets $45. To purchase, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-astrology-of-2024-the-once-and-future-year-with-gahl-sasson-tickets-853286150847.

SUNDAY | APRIL 7

MAIN STREET FARMERS MARKET
The Sunday Main Street Farmers Market, located at 2640 Main St., features some of California's freshest produce plus prepared foods from local Main Street restaurants as well as artisanal foods prepared with ingredients sourced from California farmers. Also enjoy musical entertainment from a variety of featured weekly bands, face painting, balloon designs, and bi-weekly cooking demonstrations featuring local produce. Runs from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

GOAT YOGA IN THE PARK
Goat yoga is back at Marine Park, 1406 Main St. (next to the tennis courts), from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Hosted by Laughing Frog Yoga, it is the only yoga studio in Los Angeles currently offering goat yoga, with two baby goats who are friendly and excited to meet yoga practitioners. Classes are catered towards all levels. The last 30 minutes of class is reserved for hangout and selfie time with the goats. Tickets $45, purchase at: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/goat-yoga-in-the-park-march-24-at-930am-tickets-836906478807.

ALEICHEM SHOLOM
Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th St., hosts "Aleichem Sholom!: The Wit and Wisdom of Sholom Aleichem," a musical starring Chris DeCarlo and Evelyn Rudie. Part of the Jewish Heritage Series, this joyous and poignant musical follows the life of the beloved Yiddish story-teller as he spins tales of his loves and losses, his fame and failures, his travels, travails and the tremendous optimism that kept him going against all odds. Starts at 3 p.m. Tickets $35. Discounts for students, teachers, seniors and military. For tickets, visit: https://www.showclix.com/event/aleichem-sholom-01.

MONDAY | APRIL 8

LANDMARKS COMMISSION:
Established in 1975, the mission of the Landmarks Commission is "To protect improvements and areas which represent the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history; safeguard the City's historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage; and promote the use of landmarks and historic districts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people." Begins at 7 p.m. in City Council Chambers at Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St.

REBEL WILSON WITH JESS CAGLE
The scene-stealing star of "Pitch Perfect" and "Bridesmaids" comes to The Ann and Jerry Moss Theater at New Roads School, 3131 Olympic Blvd., beginning at 8 p.m. Rebel Wilson discusses her new memoir "Rebel Rising" which follows her journey from fertility issues, weight gain and loss, sexuality, overcoming shyness and rejections. General admission ticket plus a signed copy of "Rebel Rising," $55. Two tickets plus a signed copy, $80. To purchase tickets, visit: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rebel-wilson-with-jess-cagle-tickets-845509280017.

TUESDAY | APRIL 9

SOCIAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE
Help with family nutrition and health care access is resuming at Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave., thanks to Providence St. John's Community Health Program. Trained community health workers will be available to meet in-person with community members at the Park Center Building from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The trained staff can assist with enrollment in CalFresh, the state of California's food subsidy program created to improve the nutrition of families through access to healthy foods. Staff can also help navigate enrollment or questions for MediCal and Medicare. Appointments can be made by calling 310-458-8688. Drop-ins are also welcome.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
The City Council is made up of seven members elected at-large for staggered four-year terms. Every two years, after each election, the City Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore.The City Council also sits as the following bodies for the City of Santa Monica: Housing Authority, Parking Authority, Public Financing, Redevelopment Successor Agency and Audit Subcommittee. Begins at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main St.

SOCIAL SERVICE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY PROVIDENCE ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM
Help with family nutrition and health care access is resuming at Virginia Avenue Park thanks to Providence St. John's Community Health Program. Trained community health workers will be available to meet in person with community members at the Park Center Building in Virginia Avenue Park. The first Tuesday of the month 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The trained Providence St. John's staff can assist with enrollment in CalFresh, the state of California's food subsidy program created to improve the nutrition of families through access to healthy foods. Staff can also help navigate enrollment or questions for MediCal and Medicare. If you have questions about whether you qualify for benefits or if you need help completing enrollment forms, you can make an appointment by calling 310-458-8688. Drop-ins are also welcome. Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave.

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