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Locals travel to Chicago to mark symbolic starting point of Route 66

Courtesy photo

ROUTE 66: Santa Monica Pier executives attended a dedication ceremony in Chicago last month marking Navy Pier as the new symbolic eastern starting point of Historic Route 66, part of celebrations marking the iconic highway's 100th anniversary. The March 25 ceremony at Navy Pier's South Dock featured city officials unveiling a sign designating the lakefront landmark as the beginning of the roughly 2,400-mile cross-country route that terminates in Santa Monica. Pier Executive Director Jim Harris and Marketing and Brand Manager Kayla Nieto represented the Santa Monica Pier Corporation at the event. "Route 66 represents freedom, exploration, and the spirit of the American road trip," Harris said. "We are proud to continue welcoming travelers to Santa Monica — where the journey reaches its unforgettable conclusion at the edge of the Pacific Ocean." Known as the "Main Street of America," Route 66 spans eight states between Chicago and the Pacific Coast. The Santa Monica Pier has long served as the route's western terminus, marked by an "End of the Trail" sign on the pier near the intersection of Olympic and Lincoln boulevards. "The connection between Chicago and Santa Monica has always been at the heart of Route 66," said Kayla Nieto, Marketing and Brand Manager at the Santa Monica Pier. More information is available at santamonicipier.org.



Two L.A. women turn personal experiences into companionship service for older adults



Zsuzsi Steiner

LAUNCH: Sarah Kolenik and Kat Hatayama launched Karma Companions, pairing adults 55+ with paid companions for friendship.

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

business built on a deceptively simple premise: that older adults don't always need a caregiver — but many do need a friend.

A chance friendship between two neighbors on the same Los Angeles street has grown into a

SEE **BUSINESS** PAGE 5

Raman blasts Bass homelessness record and unveils rival plan for L.A. Mayor's race

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

casting the initiative as an expensive failure that has left the city without a working system.

Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman on Wednesday launched a sweeping homelessness platform for her mayoral campaign, seizing on new data showing that 40% of participants in Mayor Karen Bass's flagship Inside Safe program have returned to the streets and

"Homelessness in Los Angeles is a humanitarian crisis," Raman said in a statement accompanying the plan's release. "Despite billions of dollars spent, 27,000 people sleep on our streets every night. The

SEE **HOMELESS** PAGE 11

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Candidates for governor are playing it safe. Gen Z voters can't afford that.

The next governor of California will set the stage for the economic mobility, success and safety of Generation Z.

Gen Z voters are looking for candidates who have a plan of action. For our entire lives, we were sold the California Dream — affordable housing, quality education and access to good-paying jobs. Yet today those promises feel increasingly distant, as students take on massive debt and multiple degrees just to stay afloat economically.

Although we both study policy at UCLA and UC Berkeley, our peers on campus seem hardly interested in this race for the governorship or don't understand how a new governor will affect our future. So, instead of waiting for a TikTok to break down each of the candidates' platforms, we set out to see for ourselves.

Through our work with the Ad Hoc Latino Leaders group, we aimed to attend as many publicly accessible gubernatorial forums across the Bay Area and Los Angeles as possible, to provide our fellow students with a high-level understanding of how prepared candidates were to advance a policy agenda focused on our issues of health, wealth and dignity.

Of eight forums, these candidates showed up most consistently: Betty Yee,

Antonio Villaraigosa, Katie Porter, Xavier Becerra and Tom Steyer. They attended events hosted by health coalitions, labor groups, civil rights organizations and community forums.

When we looked at the substance of all the candidates' policies, specifically at which communities and issues they talked about most, we were left wanting.

The candidates appeared cautious to fully embrace the bold leadership needed to lead the fourth largest economy in the world. California deserves a governor who breaks from legacy policy frameworks and instead paves a new future for the Latinos and young voters in the state.

The economic challenges Californians are experiencing are not abstract to me, Andrea. As a full-time student, I have to balance two jobs to afford tuition and rent in Los Angeles.

My main focus was how candidates are planning for economic mobility for not only our generation, but for Latinos as a whole. For the past few years, it feels like state leaders have balanced the budget against our future.

We wanted to hear a plan for affordable housing and for increased CalGrant funding to help us make ends meet with rising costs. Instead young

voters and Latinos were talked about in the abstract.

Without a clear plan to address the issues we care about, like college access and affordability, these candidates remain disconnected from mobilizing young voters like us.

It's a much broader problem though. Despite the growing concern of voters against violent immigration enforcement and raids, few candidates spoke about immigrants, or Latinos. To these candidates, immigration is framed as an identity marker, with candidates invoking their immigrant heritage, lifelong advocacy or platitudes about protecting the immigrant community.

But voters have been clear that threats to democracy and worsening economic conditions are the most important problems the U.S. is facing.

For myself, Joselen, being a student at UC Berkeley — the birthplace of the Free Speech Movement during the Vietnam War era — I cannot help but feel that history is repeating itself. While international tensions once again raise the specter of war, California's next governor must be prepared to fight for civil rights here at home.

We need candidates who are ready to act on the issues that voters care about: economic mobility, civil rights protections, and affordable housing.

Betty Yee and Tony Thurmond were the only candidates who had clear plans for increasing health care access, taking on ICE and the federal government, and increasing access to food security resources. Both are polling near the bottom of the field but are the only candidates taking a risk by advancing their vision for Californians.

Polling has never been more important in this race, as institution after institution is using polls to cull the field. The recent USC debate cancellation brought these metrics into sharp relief, with all the candidates of color not qualifying for the forum under its criteria. Rather than consider which voices they were leaving unheard, USC moved to cancel the event.

Candidates like Yee have continued to highlight the underrepresentation for candidates of color at these forums. And USC's move calls into question how the race is being shaped by external forces rather than a focus on what the candidates are looking to achieve.

It is not enough to acknowledge communities of color and young voters as being part of California's story. We need substantive policy measures we can use to hold our leaders accountable when they are in office.

We need to be sold a vision for California that does more to ensure that young Californians can stay in this state, have quality jobs and are protected from the threats from the federal government. Governor Gavin Newsom's sparring style might be polarizing, but the state's voters need to feel their next governor is passionate about more than just being elected.

With every new forum ahead, we continue to evaluate who is stepping up to be the leader our generation so desperately needs.

Joselen Contreras is an undergraduate public health student at UC Berkeley and a fellow at Unseen. Andrea Escobar is pursuing a masters in public policy at UCLA and is a senior fellow at Unseen.



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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Battles over business regulation resume in California's Capitol with new legislation

A nearly two-hour hearing in the Assembly Judiciary Committee Tuesday encapsulated the Capitol's longest-running conflict — going at least a half-century and still counting.

It pits the state's business community against four interest groups over how much corporate operations should be regulated with new laws, new rules and lawsuits.

Each year, the four interest groups — unions, plaintiffs' attorneys, consumer organizations and environmental advocates — persuade friendly legislators to introduce bills that would impose new regulations, raise taxes and fees, or make it easier to sue.

The measures are needed, sponsors say, to protect consumers and workers from shabby treatment by corporate interests.

Each year, the affected business interests contend that overregulation generates costs that will be passed on to consumers as higher prices, or it will reduce employment or encourage corporations to flee California.

Tuesday's debate was over Assembly Bill 1776, which would expand California's 119-year-old law, known as the Cartwright Act, that prohibits companies from colluding to create monopolies that undermine competition.

The measure, if passed, would ratify recommendations by the California Law Revision Commission and allow single companies to be sued for monopolization, even if they don't collude with other corporations.

Trial lawyers, unions and dozens of other groups back the measure, carried by Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, a Democrat from Davis. Proponents lined up to say the legislation is needed to curb anti-consumer domination by corporate giants, with Amazon one obvious target.

An even longer list of opponents, led by the California Chamber of Commerce, is opposing the measure as creating a pathway for extensive litigation that would discourage business investment and kneecap technological innovation.

AB 1776 is one of the business community's top targets this year, but not the only one.

The Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, the California Manufacturers & Technology Association

and other business groups have drawn up lists of several dozen bills they will oppose.

The chamber no longer publishes its annual list of "job killer bills," but nevertheless it has cited 26 "damaging legislative proposals" it opposes, some of which appear on other lists.

Bills to regulate the use of artificial intelligence are prominent — a conflict that could involve Gov. Gavin Newsom, who has largely protected AI from calls for more oversight.

Another biggie on the corporate target lists is Senate Bill 982 which, like AB 1776, would increase corporate exposure to potentially costly litigation.

Carried by state Sen. Scott Wiener, a San Francisco Democrat running for Congress this year, the measure would allow companies to be sued for their contributions to the effects of climate change.

The Business Roundtable and the manufacturers' association have singled out SB 982 as an open invitation for the attorney general and perhaps private attorneys to file sweeping lawsuits, especially against oil companies, alleging they are a "significant factor" in climate impacts.

"What are these legislators thinking? California families are already paying some of the highest prices in the country, and this bill will make it worse," Rob Lapsley, president of the Business Roundtable, said as the group released an analysis of the bill's potential impacts.

"SB 982 adds yet another layer of costs onto gasoline and diesel, pushing prices even higher at the pump and across the economy. When you raise diesel prices, you raise the cost of everything — groceries, housing, transportation — everything Californians rely on every day."

This year's version of the perennial conflict is being played out against what should be a serious concern about the state's economy. The Legislature's budget analyst, Gave Petek, has described it as "sluggish," with virtually no net growth in employment and other measures of economic health, as well as job cutbacks in technology and some spectacular corporate migrations out of California.

Dan Walters, CalMatters Opinion Columnist



Surf report WATER TEMP: 64.4

THURSDAY FAIR SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist

Peaky little swell mix for the small wave gear. Light wind early. Little bump in NW swell mix sets up peaky surf across the regions combo exposures as some modest SW swell blends in. The SW swell is modest/creeping up but there's rideable surf just about everywhere. Wind looks light for the morning, trending onshore from the WSW through the afternoon.

FRIDAY FAIR SURF: 2-3ft+ Thigh to stomach

Decent to locally fun SW swell (220-200 degrees) builds through the day, peaks the 10th-11th. Not a major swell but shaping up to be a nice round of waves for North LA, with playful lines for average zones - definitely worth keeping an eye on. The storm lived up to expectations, boosting confidence in waist-chest-shoulder high surf at the better breaks, standouts head high to a little larger. Morning wind is light but far from perfect - SE/S wind likely adds some ruffle early and will add some lump midday as it puffs up a bit. Wind should lay down in the evening... watch that window.



Thursday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 69. Light and variable wind becoming west southwest 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon.

Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 58. Southwest wind 10 to 15 mph becoming light west southwest after midnight.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 67. Light south wind becoming southwest 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon.

Friday Night: A chance of rain and thunderstorms before 11pm, then rain likely between 11pm and 2am, then rain likely and possibly a thunderstorm after 2am.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2026/04/09	Thu	01:38 AM	4.06	H
2026/04/09	Thu	11:00 AM	0.58	L
2026/04/10	Fri	03:38 AM	3.90	H
2026/04/10	Fri	11:59 AM	0.36	L
2026/04/10	Fri	7:37 PM	3.35	H
2026/04/10	Fri	11:43 PM	2.87	L
2026/04/11	Sat	05:12 AM	4.04	H
2026/04/11	Sat	12:40 PM	0.16	L
2026/04/11	Sat	7:37 PM	3.63	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>

<p>Draw Date: 4/6 7 24 37 42 57 Power#: 5 Jackpot: 20 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 4/7 4 8 23 28 29</p>
<p>Draw Date: 4/7 5 15 22 33 37 Mega#: 2 Jackpot: 110 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 4/7 EVENING: 0 9 9 Draw Date: 4/7 MIDDAY: 0 9 0</p>
<p>Draw Date: 4/4 3 6 14 34 43 Mega#: 14 Jackpot: 9 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 4/7 1st: 01 - Gold Rush 2nd: 04 - Big Ben 3rd: 08 - Gorgeous George Race Time: 1:42.75</p>

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Santa Monica Daily Press

GET IT DAILY...



Classifieds

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026056721. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: CHAPTER AND CHARMED, CART BLANCHE, FIG AND FLEUR, 30306 BARCELONA RD, CASTAIC, CA 91384, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): MOSAIQ CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS LLC, 30306 BARCELONA RD, CASTAIC, CA 91384. This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ CHRISTOPHER ROBINSON, MANAGER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 03/13/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 03/26/2026, 04/02/2026, 04/09/2026, 04/16/2026

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026059115. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: DUFFYIMUSIC, 2835 HADDINGTON DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90064-4442, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): AARON ZIGMAN, 2835 HADDINGTON DRIVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90064-4442. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 01/2026. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ Aaron Zigman, OWNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 03/17/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 03/26/2026, 04/02/2026, 04/09/2026, 04/16/2026

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Summons

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL) Case No. 25STCV27676. NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: Gerald L. Davis, Old Republic National Title Insurance Company, DOES 1-20, and All Persons Unknown, Claiming Any Legal or Equitable Right, Title, Estate, Lien or Interest in the Property Described in Complaint Adverse to Plaintiff's Title, or Any Cloud upon Plaintiff's Title Thereto. YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: Gia Ventures LLC. NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your

case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center, your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. The name and address of the court is: Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 North Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012. The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney is: Steven J. Mirsky, Esq., Mirsky Corporate Advisors, APC, 901 Dove St., Ste. 120, Newport Beach, CA 92660, (949) 200-6837. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 04/02/2026, 04/09/2026, 04/16/2026, 04/23/2026

Petition to Admin Estate

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of Cynthia Ann Montenay, aka Cynthia Ann Hugoboom. A Petition for Probate has been filed by Vanessa Michelle Roche in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. The Petition for Probate requests that Vanessa Michelle Roche be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The

independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows: Date: April 20, 2026 | Time: 8:30 AM | Dept: 2D Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Stanley Mosk Courthouse. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative,

NOTICE OF PUBLIC LIEN SALE Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700et. seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction, on April 16 2026 personal property including but not limited to business equipment, electronics, furniture, clothing, tools and/or other miscellaneous items located at: A-AMERICAN SELF STORAGE (formerly known as Affordable Mini Storage) 2157 Murchison Ave., Pomona, CA 91768 @ 8:00PM, via Storageauctions.net STORED BY THE FOLLOWING PERSONS: Guillermo Arciniega, Sophia Gilwood, Michelle Lozano, Khoudia Syllia. All sales are subject to prior cancellation. Terms, rules and regulations available at sale. By A-American Storage Management Co. Inc. (310)914-4022. Publish on April 9th, 2026.

Lien

AROUND TOWN

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Gallery Openings, Pet Fairs, and Bagel Fest!

SMDP's Weekly Guide to Food & Entertainment Goings-On In & Around Town includes Santa Monica's first municipal art gallery, the Sounds of Santa Monica Kids Club, a deep dive into deep space, Bagel Fest, and much more!

Santa Monica's first-ever municipal art gallery opens at Bergamot Station Arts Center: Kicking off the celebration is an opening reception for the gallery's inaugural exhibit "Case Study: Adapt" on Friday, April 10 from 10 a.m.–noon. The reception will feature light refreshments and remarks by California for the Arts Executive Director Julie Baker and a commendation for State Senator Ben Allen, founder of Arts Month. <https://www.santamonica.gov/press/2026/04/02/santa-monica-s-first-ever-municipal-art-gallery-opens-at-bergamot-station-arts-center>

Sounds of Santa Monica Kids Club: Families are invited to sing, dance and play, featuring a live performance by The BeatBuds, an interactive musical duo dedicated to engaging young audiences through rhythm, movement and creativity. The experience includes hands-on activities, crafts and giveaways, all complimentary for attendees. Friday, April 10 11 a.m.-12 p.m., 395 Santa Monica Place <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sounds-of-santa-monica-kids-club-edition-tickets-1984406738975>

Marina WELL Rey - a free Health, Wellness & Selfcare Expo: Over 60 local businesses will be offering Free Classes, Talks, Doggy Yoga, Vendors and Entertainment. Saturday, April 11, Coco Beach Sports Bar & Grill, 404 Washington Blvd., Venice [eventbrite.com/e/marina-well-rey-health-wellness-self-care-expo-tickets-1985527200305](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/marina-well-rey-health-wellness-self-care-expo-tickets-1985527200305)

Wally's Tasting - Spring Whites & Asparagus: From vibrant, mineral-laced whites to aromatic, terroir-driven selections, showcasing spring's freshness, precision, and harmony. Saturday, April 11, 3p.m., 214 Wilshire Blvd. [wallywine.com/events](https://www.wallywine.com/events)

Westside Chamber Orchestra: The riches of Germanic music are represented by masters from three different centuries. Mendelssohn's Nocturne for winds from the 19th century is followed by Strauss' post-war Metamorphoses for strings and concluding with Mozart's Symphony #39. **DEAR FREE.** Saturday April 11, 7p.m., St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 958 Lincoln Blvd. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-westside-chamber-orchestra-mendelssohn-strauss-mozart-tickets-1982733584525>

Pup-chella - Ollie + Bob n' Cars: Cars, Coffee, & Dogs: Not in Indio for Coachella? Come along to goodboybob's pup-chella.. As the sun sets, stroll through the lineup of rare cars, coffee, cake, burritos, wine, beer, and plenty of good boys on the lineup. Saturday, Apr 11 6:00pm – 8:00pm, 2058 Broadway <https://partiful.com/e/irnewfx16GJKjwP1g2h5>

Venice Street Fair: The fair will close 3rd Ave between Rose Ave and Sunset Ave for artists and small businesses. Sunday, April 12, 9:30a.m. - 4:30p.m. [instagram.com/theartistfair](https://www.instagram.com/theartistfair)

Free Pet Resource Fair at Penmar Park: Reducing Animal Stress, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to supporting animals in shelters and rescues. One of our missions is pet retention (keeping pets and people together and out of the shelter). We are working with Councilmember Tracy Park's office to host a free and open to the public community Pet Resource Fair. Sunday, April 12, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 1341 Lake St. Venice <https://www.venicepaparazzi.com/2026/02/10/reducinganimalstress/>

Sound is Medicine: This free public program invites participants into the practice of deep listening as a creative act. Through guided listening, shared sound experiences, and moments of collective reflection, we'll explore sound as a medium for awareness, transformation, and connection. Drawing from traditions of sonic art and listening practices, the gathering treats sound not just as something we hear, but as something we feel and inhabit. Sunday, April 12, 4 – 7 p.m. Camera Obscura Art Lab, 1450 Ocean Ave. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sound-is-medicine-tickets-1984321973439?aff=oddtcreator>

Inside Santa Monica's Most Coveted Historic Homes: The Landmarks of Adelaide Drive is a walking tour highlighting prominent homes such as the Frank Gehry residence, with interior tours of the Second Roy Jones House and Boehm House. Sunday, April 12, 1 - 4p.m. <https://smc.givecloud.co/2026adelaide>

Mahjong Mondays at Zinque Venice: Join either a beginner-friendly night where you'll learn the fundamentals or if you already know the basics, skip the lesson & join for guided play. If you've been looking for a reason to leave the house on a Monday,

HOURS MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00am - 5:00pm
LOCATION 2219A Main St Santa Monica, CA 90405

BUSINESS

FROM PAGE 1

Sarah Kolenik and Kat Hatayama launched Karma Companions, a Los Angeles-based service that matches adults 55 and older with paid companions for friendship, outings and conversation. The company targets what its founders describe as an underserved gap in the senior services market — active, independent older adults whose social circles have quietly contracted over time, not from incapacity, but from the ordinary passage of life.

“We were surrounded by older adults who were sharp, independent, and fully capable — but whose social worlds had become smaller over time,” Kolenik said. “Their lives were still full, but something essential was missing: consistent, meaningful interaction.”

The two East Coast transplants — Kolenik with a background in entertainment, Hatayama in real estate — say their paths to founding the company were shaped by personal experience rather than market research. For Kolenik, it began during the pandemic, when she volunteered with Meals on Wheels and found herself forming genuine friendships with clients.

one loves, what one is good at, and what the world needs. They say the founding of Karma Companions represented their own search for purpose — and that they hope to help both clients and companions find theirs.

What sets Karma Companions apart from other senior services, the founders say, is its deliberate rejection of technology-driven matching. There is no algorithm. Every pairing is made by Kolenik and Hatayama themselves, based on in-depth conversations with clients, their families and prospective companions.

“A computer can’t pick up on the nuances we see in an in-person conversation — what drives someone, what makes them laugh, what sparks a memory, how they speak about their life, their purpose, or even loss,” Kolenik said. “Those are the things you uncover sitting across from someone, often over coffee and a really tasty treat.”

Matches are made based on personality, interests, lifestyle and overall energy. The founders say they are open to unexpected pairings — noting that a retired physician whose entire social world has revolved around medicine might be better served by a companion who is a glass-blowing enthusiast with a passion for pickleball than by someone with a similar professional background.

Companions are also vetted carefully, with the founders spending time understanding their motivations and what makes the work feel fulfilling. “We want this to be meaningful for them as well — not just a job, but something they genuinely want to show up for,” Hatayama said.

Karma Companions operates as a boutique placement service. Clients or their families pay a \$500 upfront fee to initiate the search. Once a match is made, a placement fee — generally around 25% of the companion’s annual compensation — is charged. Companions are then paid directly by the client on an hourly basis, typically ranging from \$35 to \$50 per hour depending on the role and level of experience.

Because the service is centered on companionship rather than medical care, it is not covered by insurance. The founders say many families nevertheless view it as an investment in well-being and their loved one’s continued independence.

Some clients are drawn to a more traditional companionship arrangement — shared outings, conversation and social activity. Others opt for what the founders call a “companion-assistant” role, which incorporates an element of structure and logistical support in daily life.

Karma Companions launched in Los Angeles with a focus on the Westside, including Santa Monica and Brentwood, where the founders say they identified a high concentration of active older adults alongside what can be an isolating urban environment.

The response so far has been encouraging, the founders say. Nearly every person they have spoken to has reacted with a version of the same sentiment: they didn’t know such a service existed, but immediately recognized the need.

“Success in year one is really about depth, but also about awareness — making sure people know we exist and understand that this kind of support is available,” Hatayama said.

Karma Companions is based in Los Angeles. More information is available at karmacompanions.com.

maaz@smdp.com

“A computer can’t pick up on the nuances we see in an in-person conversation — what drives someone, what makes them laugh, what sparks a memory, how they speak about their life, their purpose, or even loss”

- Sarah Kolenik

“What started as a simple check-in often turned into long conversations, outings, and deeper friendships that clearly mattered just as much as the meal itself,” she said.

Hatayama’s perspective was shaped by marriage into an Asian family, where she observed firsthand a cultural emphasis on consistent connection and community for older adults. “It was striking to see the impact that kind of environment had — not just emotionally, but on longevity and overall quality of life,” she said.

Both founders describe their company’s mission through the lens of *ikigai*, a Japanese concept referring to the intersection of what

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EVENTS THIS WEEK APR.9 - APR.16

MALIBU

Thursday, April 09, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Designworks, A BMW Company 1601 Olympic Boulevard
Santa Monica.

Celebrating 100 Years of Route 66

Community Collective presents a special evening in Santa Monica marking 100 years of Route 66 and exploring what comes next for mobility. In partnership with BMW Designworks, Santa Monica Travel & Tourism, and Metropolis, this curated gathering brings together leaders in design, technology, and city innovation to examine how electrification, micromobility, and human centered design are reshaping movement and urban experience. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/celebrating-100-years-of-route-66/18519892/2026-04-09T17>

Saturday, April 11, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Santa Monica Pier 200 Santa Monica Pier, Ste A Santa Monica.

Wellness & Waves Returns to Santa Monica Pier, Free Sat. Morning Fitness

The Santa Monica Pier Corporation invites the community to move, stretch, and recharge by the ocean as Wellness & Waves returns for its 2026 season. Taking place every Saturday from April 4 through October 17, 2026, from 8 to 10 a.m., this free, all-ages wellness series transforms the iconic Santa Monica Pier into an open-air fitness destination at the most iconic outdoor setting in Southern California. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/wellness-waves-returns-to-santa-monica-pier-free-sat-morning-fitness/18475500/2026-04-11T08>

Thursday, April 09, 9:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Marelle at Sandbourne Santa Monica 1740 Ocean Ave.

Late Night Happy Hour at Marelle - Night Cap Menu

Marelle will be launching a late-night happy hour menu called 'Night Cap' starting Monday, April 6th. Guests can order from this menu exclusively at Marelle, bar and bar lounge only. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/late-night-happy-hour-at-marelle-night-cap-menu/18409321/2026-04-09T21>

Friday April 10, 8:00 p.m.

The Venice West 1717 Lincoln Blvd, Venice.

Bee Gees Fever

Bee Gees Fever is back at The Venice West on April 10th! Grab your dancing shoes and your friends and we will see you there! BEE GEES FEVER dazzles with it's 7-piece LIVE band, BIG, high energy, FUN, professionally produced VEGAS-STYLE show featuring brilliant costumes and a catalog with 3 decades of The Brothers Gibb songs including surprise hits written by The Bee Gees made famous by other artists (Islands In The Stream, Grease, Emotion, More Than A Woman, Shadow Dancing, Everlasting Love, Thicker Than Water...and more). Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/bee-gees-fever/18395432/2026-04-10T20>

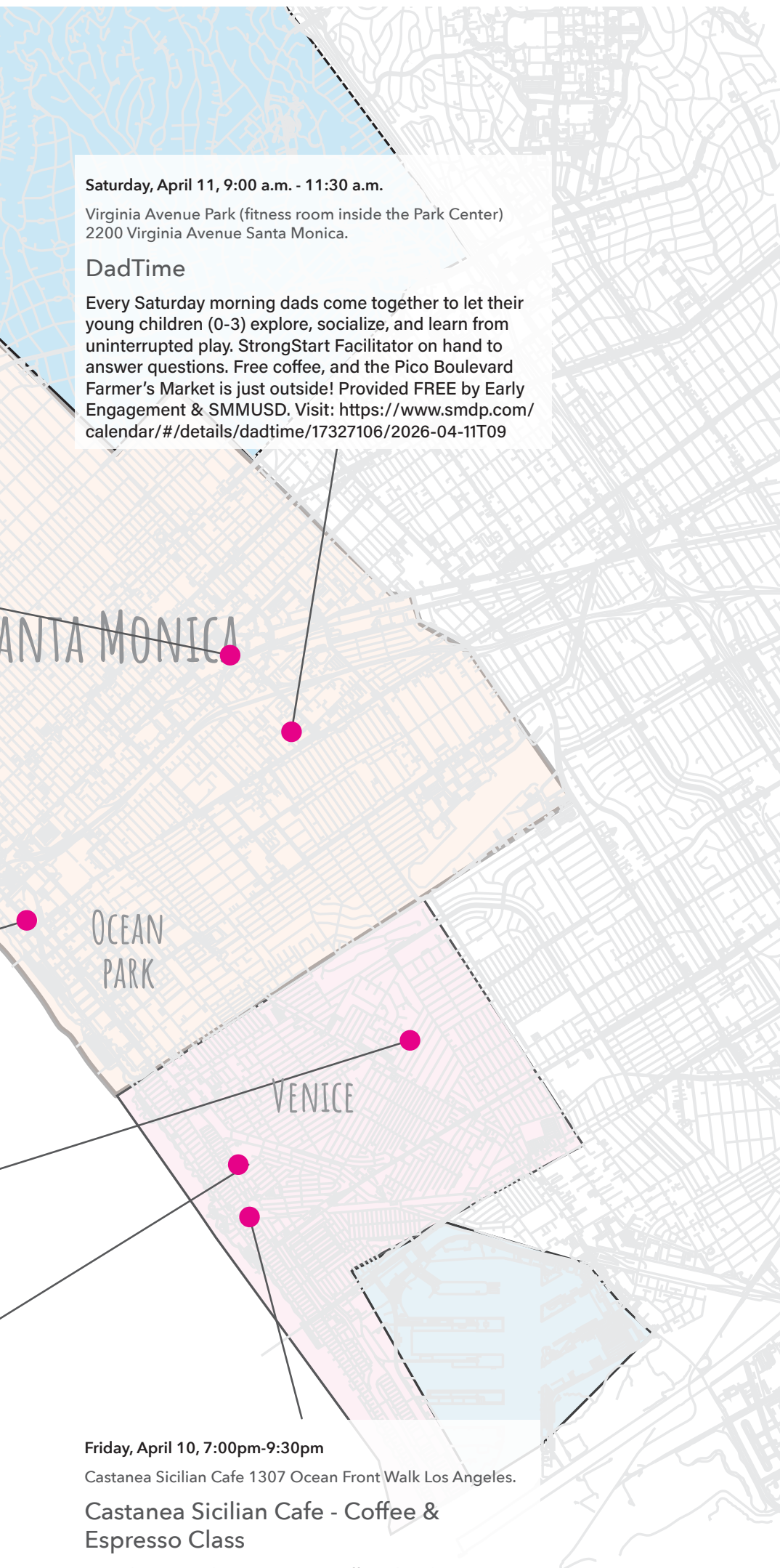
Sunday, April 12, 2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Circular Library 1221 Abbot Kinney Boulevard Venice.

Craft Café & Supply Swap with Peo Vee

Join Peo Vee for our monthly Craft Café & Supply Swap! Every second Sunday at Circular Library, we invite upcyclers and sustainable crafting enthusiasts to gather, swap supplies, and create together. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/craft-caf-supply-swap-with-peo-vee/17776352/2026-04-12T14>

Check out
more events at:
[smdp.com/events](https://www.smdp.com/events)



Saturday, April 11, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Virginia Avenue Park (fitness room inside the Park Center)
2200 Virginia Avenue Santa Monica.

DadTime

Every Saturday morning dads come together to let their young children (0-3) explore, socialize, and learn from uninterrupted play. StrongStart Facilitator on hand to answer questions. Free coffee, and the Pico Boulevard Farmer's Market is just outside! Provided FREE by Early Engagement & SMMUSD. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/dadtime/17327106/2026-04-11T09>

Friday, April 10, 7:00pm-9:30pm

Castanea Sicilian Cafe 1307 Ocean Front Walk Los Angeles.

Castanea Sicilian Cafe - Coffee & Espresso Class

Experience a unique Espresso Coffee Class in Los Angeles, Venice Beach and dive into the world of specialty coffee. In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn how to pull the perfect espresso, steam milk correctly, and prepare classic coffee drinks like cappuccino and latte just like a professional barista. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/castanea-sicilian-cafe-coffee-espresso-class/18526609/2026-04-10T19>



THURSDAY | APRIL 9

OAKWOOD ROOTS FARMERS AND WELLNESS MARKET

11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. 685 Westminster Ave Venice. Oakwood Roots Venice Farmers' and Wellness Market is a hub for local foods, wellness classes, and holistic healing. We are dedicated to fostering a strong community, supporting local businesses, and advocating for sustainable practices. Join us in creating a healthier and more connected neighborhood. This is part of a larger effort to revitalize the abandoned parking lots across the street from the park into a community hub, in partnership with Community Corporation of Santa Monica and Hoopbus. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/oakwood-roots-farmers-and-wellness-market/14548473/2026-04-09T11>

RUBBER BAND RACECARS

4:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard Los Angeles. Rubber Band Racecars Create racecars using popsicle sticks, rubber bands, and other materials! Recommended for ages 0-13. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/rubber-band-racecars/18525994/2026-04-09T16>

HAMA SUSHI - MUSIC OPEN MIC (THURSDAYS)

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. 352 Westminster Ave Venice. Thursday nights in Venice! Open Mic at Hama Sushi. Exciting things are happening at Hama Sushi! Open Mic every Thursday 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. Come on down to Hama. The world is waiting! - 04/09/2026. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/hama-sushi-music-open-mic-thursdays-18526607/2026-04-09T18>

NEW HEAL THE BAY VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Heal the Bay Aquarium 1600 Ocean Front Walk Santa Monica. Protect what you love! Volunteer with Heal the Bay. Take the first step in protecting our oceans, coastal waters, and watersheds with Heal the Bay! Join us for our Volunteer Orientation and discover how you can get directly involved in Heal the Bay's work. Learn about our volunteer programs, meet like-minded environmental advocates, and be the first to hear about upcoming events and opportunities. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/new-heal-the-bay-volunteer-orientation/18406896/2026-04-09T18>

FRIDAY | APRIL 10

BIG FEELINGS WEEKEND AT CAYTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Cayton Children's Museum 395 Santa Monica Place, #374 Santa Monica. Each month, Cayton Children's Museum dedicates a full weekend to one shared emotional theme. April is all about Caring for our planet — a weekend that aims to teach children about the importance of respecting the natural world around us. Museum activities will focus on the beauty and wonders of nature, animals, and community spaces! All activities are included with admission and membership. Through interactive art, building challenges, experiments, storytelling, and collaborative play,

children explore our natural world, with parents and caregivers invited to participate alongside. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/big-feelings-weekend-at-cayton-childrens-museum/18487820/2026-04-10T08>

BRUNCH FRIDAYS WITH LIVE MUSIC IN OUR GARDEN PATIO!

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Tiato Kitchen & Venue 2700 Colorado Ave Santa Monica. Our newly launched Brunch Fridays just got vibey-er! Every week enjoy great eats, summer libations, and a featured music artist on our beautiful garden patio! So come toast to summer with our uniquely crafted brunch menu including our Turmeric Spiced Cloud Egg dish, Smoked Gouda Scramble with Smashed Ube, Vietnamese French Toast, along with Mama An classics such as Famous Garlic Noodles, Shaken Beef, and Seafood Egg Fried Rice! And of course, it wouldn't be brunch without bottomless mimosas & summer punch bowls, so grab your brunch crew and enjoy the fair along the beautiful backdrop of AI fresco dining. RESERVE NOW. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/brunch-fridays-with-live-music-in-our-garden-patio-14639006/2026-04-10T11>

BUNDY TRIANGLE NIGHT MARKET

5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Bundy Triangle 1500 S Bundy Drive Los Angeles. Cayton Children's Museum will offer free, weekly hands-on activities for children and families at the Bundy Triangle Night Market in Sawtelle every Friday from March 27 through the end of October, the museum announced. The programming, offered in partnership with Los Angeles City Councilwoman Traci Park, will run from 5 to 8 p.m. each Friday at the Bundy Triangle, a public space at Ohio Avenue and Bundy Drive. The broader night market, presented by Raw Inspiration, runs from 5 to 9 p.m. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/bundy-triangle-night-market/18490079/2026-04-10T17>

FOOD, CULTURE, CLIMATE

6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Miles Playhouse, Reed Park, 1130 Lincoln Blvd, Santa Monica. Learn and discuss how food justice can help build a more just and regenerative future! Join us for an engaging evening to explore the intersections of food, culture, and climate with environmental educator Isaias Hernandez, founder of QueerBrownVegan. Isaias will delve into key food justice topics including community land stewardship and local food systems. He will reflect on how land functions as a living archive of ecology and culture, shaping the ways we understand and interact with the environments around us. Drawing from inspiring stories across Los Angeles, he will highlight how communities are reconnecting with the land through practices like community gardening and composting. Gather with community members, experience one of our thriving community gardens, learn about food justice, hear about local community-led sustainability efforts, and share your thoughts and ideas! We can't wait to see you there! Reserve your spot: RSVP HERE Full details and RSVP at FOOD, CULTURE, CLIMATE. Visit: <https://sustain.ucla.edu/event/food-culture-climate-exploring-food-justice-with-isaias-hernandez/>





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INFO & TICKETS



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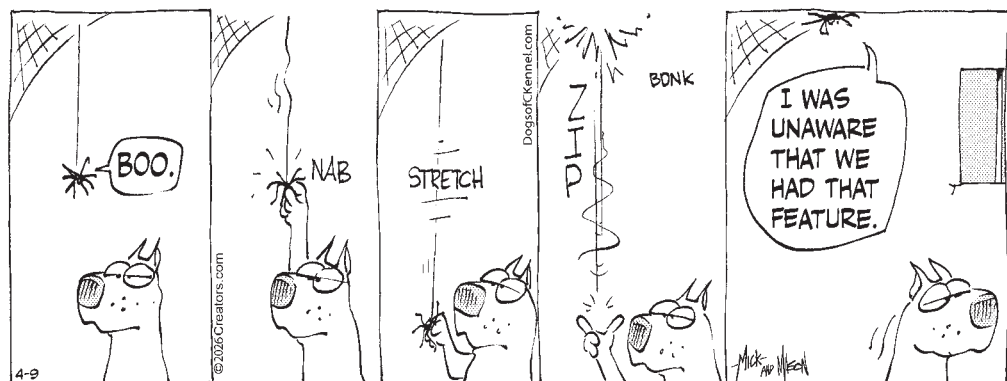
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



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

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Road safety

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

- | | | | |
|--------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| Abide | Exceed | Mall | Snow |
| Arrow | Exit | Men at work | Step |
| Avoid | Frost | Neon | Stop |
| Bike | Fuel | Obey | Taxis |
| Brake | Gate | One way | Three point turn |
| Buses | Go back | Open | Toll |
| Cabs | Gravel | Radio | Traffic |
| Calm | Kerb | Rain | Vans |
| Cars | Knock | Ramp | View |
| Closed | Laws | Relax | Walk |
| Curves | Left | Rescue | West |
| Danger | Limit | Scooter | |
| Death | Low | Slip | |
| Dogs | clearance | | |

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 9)

It's your Year of the Streamlined Endeavors when your efficiency and alignment with goals makes for multileveled success. Working in a group of like minds and diverse talents, you'll build something big and meaningful. More highlights: Your passion becomes a job. A series of fascinating encounters makes you consider writing your memoirs. You'll be a consummate host, and you'll also be received by wonderful hosts. Cancer and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 46, 50, 42 and 8.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Today is a groove. Your life is music. Your interactions are rhythmic and right in the time signature of the world. You contribute, create it, walk and dance in the tones that feel like home - sometimes classical, then pop, then jazz... mostly indie.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll be attracted to true confidence, which presents itself in a low-key way. A credible person won't try very hard to convince you of anything. They don't need to, because there are plenty of people who have already bought in, and there will be plenty more to come.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Being great at business doesn't make someone great at relationships. Athletic skill doesn't guarantee emotional maturity. Domains have different rules, different muscles... but certain basic principles apply universally. With consistency, patience and delayed gratification, much will come together for you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There's something you want to fix, and suddenly it feels like the problem can't wait. Starting is the hardest part, but then you'll make quick work of it. You'll be direct, stating what you want, giving clear instructions and getting it done.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). What is trust? It's just a prediction. Trust is essentially the belief that someone's future behavior will resemble their past behavior. You'll give your trust today because you think you now know what a person is likely to do.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Relationships bring out your creativity, and that's why people find you so fetching. You don't just show up hoping to fill the role; you show up with the burgeoning creative energy to make it your own.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It is someone's actual job to search for extraterrestrials in a scientific way. You may relate to them today as you search intently for a distant affirmation. In both cases, the probability lines up: It's out there. Hold on to hope.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). When thinking about what to do gets boring, it will be refreshing to think about what you're not doing. Today, your noes are more powerful than your yeses, because they open up your time and energy. "No" is a liberation.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The thought appears: "Maybe I should try that again." Alas, whatever you left behind was probably left behind for a reason. Try to remember what it was. Assess what has changed since then.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When things settle, they settle into balance. They settle into loveliness. But you have to be able to see it. The most beautiful thing there is to observe that today will occur naturally. Instead of seeking beauty, you find it by observing all as it is.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Healthy relationships need both connection and space. Sometimes the work is getting closer. Sometimes the work is stepping back a little. You're the one who can sense which adjustment would feel better right now.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Many will get the information today, though few will apply it. This will give you an advantage, as it's in your nature to try things. You'll make the time, create the scenario and go for it. Action, not education, creates change.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Newsday Crossword

HANGING GARDENS by Winston Emmons
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

- 1 Late '90s handheld device
- 4 Ending for opt
- 7 Works on walls
- 10 Road fork lookalike
- 13 *Mer*, essentially
- 14 Band booking
- 15 On a tether
- 17 Order around
- 19 Fancy glasses' grooves
- 20 Farm vehicle
- 21 AFL merger partner
- 22 Imitation indicator
- 23 *Capital ibérica*
- 24 Pop up again
- 26 "Heliophilic" jazz alias
- 28 High fashion label
- 29 Quaint cross word
- 32 Far from relaxed
- 34 Govt. security
- 37 Good spirits
- 39 "See other side," for short
- 40 France's Oscar
- 41 Word near Nice on maps
- 42 Discomfit
- 44 UV Index monitor
- 45 Call partner
- 47 *Princess Bride* star
- 49 Winter road hazard
- 52 Prolific patentee
- 56 Rhythmic bounce
- 57 15-year orbiter
- 58 Fighting fleet
- 59 Draw well

DOWN

- 1 Shade of gray
- 2 Self-questioning comment
- 3 Eerie glows
- 4 Most of the oceans' crust
- 5 Wanderer
- 6 Word before group or gap
- 7 *Peaky Blinders* gang leader
- 8 Pause for more film
- 9 Sorority letter
- 10 Part of many bridal bouquets
- 11 Gossip spreader
- 12 Handheld lawn gadget
- 16 Initial instruction
- 18 On-air alerts
- 21 Microbrewery product
- 25 Sloped snow shedder
- 27 Morning TV host
- 29 Email option
- 30 "I see now"

- 31 Chamomile or Peppermint
- 33 Recent ranch arrival
- 35 Call on
- 36 Significant time
- 38 Mythical Greek princess
- 43 Certify
- 46 Seoul food
- 48 ___ Valley, CA
- 49 High fashion label
- 50 Bending readily
- 51 Gave a shout-out to
- 53 Shakes on, say
- 54 Concert hall
- 55 "Sleep" starter
- 60 ___ INSIDE
- 61 Book flap blurb

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

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

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

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9		10	11	12		
13				14				15				16				
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41								42				43			44	
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49	50							51				52		53	54	55
56								57				58				
59								60				61				
62												63			64	
65								66				67			68	

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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

HOMELESS

FROM PAGE 1

compassion is there. The money is there. What's missing is a system that really works — and leadership willing to do the work to build one."

The announcement comes as a Los Angeles Times investigation confirmed the 40% return-to-street figure for Inside Safe participants — a rate that has climbed every year since the program launched in December 2022. According to Raman's campaign, participants are staying in motel rooms an average of 362 days at a cost exceeding \$80,000 per room per year.

Raman framed the problem not as a failure of resources or compassion but of management and accountability. "No one is in charge right now at City Hall," she said, "but it doesn't have to be this way."

A RECORD UNDER FIRE

Bass declared a homelessness state of emergency on her first day in office, Dec. 12, 2022, and lifted it in November 2025. Inside Safe, launched nine days later, became the centerpiece of her strategy, sending outreach teams to encampments and moving residents into hotel and motel rooms while case managers worked to place them in permanent housing.

Through late 2025, the program had served roughly 5,800 people across more than 100 encampment operations citywide at a cumulative cost exceeding \$300 million. Approximately 1,243 of those participants moved into permanent housing.

The city's annual point-in-time homeless count showed two consecutive years of decline — a first since counting began in 2005 — with the total falling from a peak of 46,260 in 2023 to 43,699 in 2025. Unsheltered homelessness dropped 17.5% over two years, and chronic homelessness fell roughly 22%.

But the 2025 figure remains 23% above the pre-pandemic 2019 count of 36,165, and a RAND Corporation study warned the official count may underestimate the unsheltered population by as much as 32%.

Scrutiny of the program has been mounting. A court-ordered audit by Alvarez & Marsal, released in March 2025, examined \$2.3 billion in city homelessness spending and found auditors could not determine how much was actually spent and that the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority failed to verify whether invoiced services were delivered. A fraud investigation uncovered one service provider whose food inventory consisted almost entirely of instant ramen noodles despite receiving \$110 per person per day. Human Rights Watch published a 300-page report in 2024 calling Inside Safe "unsustainably expensive" and documenting property destruction during encampment clearances.

Motel costs have run approximately \$3,300 per person per month. Bass herself acknowledged the model is "not financially sustainable."

City Controller Kenneth Mejia announced his own Inside Safe audit in 2024 but was blocked by the City Attorney's office — a move a federal judge called "ridiculous."

RAMAN'S PLAN

Raman's platform organizes around three pillars: invest in what works, fix what doesn't, and deliver measurable results.

On accountability, Raman said she would fully staff a Bureau of Homelessness Oversight — a body the City Council established a year ago under her leadership that has yet to

hire a single employee — and implement performance-based budgeting for every program in the homelessness budget. She also pledged to publish a real-time public dashboard tracking shelter beds, housing placements, encampments and spending, and to manage the city's transition away from LAHSA.

On shelter and housing, Raman argued that Los Angeles is operating well below the capacity needed. The city has roughly one-third of the shelter beds it needs, she said, with 61% of unhoused Angelenos sleeping outside, including more than 1,000 children. By contrast, she noted, New York City — which has a larger homeless population — keeps 97% of its homeless residents indoors because it has built adequate shelter capacity.

As mayor, Raman said she would significantly expand investment in Time Limited Subsidies, a short-term rental voucher program she described as far less expensive than Inside Safe with better outcomes. Her campaign argues that for the same \$85,000 annual cost of a single Inside Safe motel room, the city could rent three apartments and provide intensive wraparound services. She also pledged to create more safe temporary housing for families, develop a strategy for the more than 6,500 people living in cars and RVs, and audit every stalled homeless housing project.

On mental health and substance use, Raman's plan calls for deploying street medicine teams citywide to deliver care directly in encampments, on sidewalks and in shelters. She cited data showing that only 4% of people across the county shelter system are currently receiving mental health care — 882 active clients across more than 20,000 countywide interim housing beds. She also said she would establish a citywide unarmed crisis response system for mental health and substance use calls.

A DISTRICT RECORD AS FOUNDATION

Raman pointed to her track record in her own City Council district, where she said encampments were cleared because people got housed rather than moved from location to location. She said shelter bed occupancy in her district rose from 80% to 94%, and that all new permanent supportive housing in the district now exceeds 90% occupancy.

"Angelenos have done their part," she said. "They voted. They taxed themselves to respond to this crisis with care and resources. City Hall let them down. I will treat this crisis with the urgency and focus it demands."

The full platform is available at nithyaforthecity.com.

There are 14 candidates running for the LA Mayor's race in the upcoming June election with reality star Spencer Pratt the only individual to poll in the double digits.

Pratt argues that Los Angeles' homelessness crisis stems not from insufficient funding but from misspent billions by what he calls the "Homeless Industrial Complex," which has prioritized bureaucratic process over tangible results. His proposed "Treatment and Recovery First" framework would shift resources toward mental health care, drug treatment, and stabilization services, require treatment participation as a condition of city-funded assistance, and tie housing access to demonstrated sobriety and stability. The plan would impose strict performance-based contracting, terminate failed programs, and enforce existing shelter and public-space laws to restore safety in parks, sidewalks, and neighborhoods.

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AROUND TOWN

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this is it. Come solo or bring a friend! Mondays, 1440 Lincoln Blvd. <https://lezinque.com/community/mahjong-mondays-venice-04-13-26>

Annual Soundwaves Concert Series - House on Fire: Enjoy the piano-centered multi-instrumental trio of Andrew Anderson, Wells Leng, and Richard An, and the Feedback Wave Riders: guitarist Michael Jon Fink's improvising group with guitarists Alan S. Tofighi and Primoz Sukic and saxophonists Ulrich Kreiger and Vinny Golia. Tuesday, April 14, 7:30p.m., 12424 Wilshire Blvd. soundwavesnewmusic.com

Weekly Western Wednesdays Line Dancing at Santa Monica Place: No prior dance experience is required, and attendees are encouraged to bring enthusiasm and comfortable shoes. FREE. Every Wednesday through April 29, 6 - 8 p.m., 395 Santa Monica Place, Center Plaza.

SMC Planetarium Offers Deep Space Series Throughout April: Enjoy live-hosted shows on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons throughout April, featuring its weekly "Night Sky Show" alongside three "Deep Space Deep Dive" programs exploring nebulae, the Milky Way, and galaxies. Each roughly 40-minute show is followed by a Q&A with Planetarium Lecturer Sarah Vincent. Friday evening shows begin at 6 p.m. with "The Night Sky Show," followed at 7 p.m. by a feature program. Children under 3 are not permitted at Friday evening shows. Sunday Family Matinée shows begin at 1 p.m., with the feature program at 2 p.m. smdp.edu/planetarium

ONGOING: Museum of Illusions; The CUBE VR; Splatter Studio; Arts, Culture & Creativity Month (April); Wellness & Waves (through 10/17)

WHAT TO EAT & DRINK?

Pasjoli and Seline Chef Dave Beran Earns James Beard Semi-Finals Nomination for Best California Chef: Rooting for the chef who has been nominated before for his excellent Michelin-recognized Main St. restaurants. <https://www.latimes.com/food/story/2026-03-31/la-finalists-james-beard-awards-2026-lifetime-achievement-nancy-silverton>

Multiple SaMo Bakeries Listed in Top 20 Chocolate Chip Cookie in LA: Petitgrain lands at #6 and Cookie Good grabs the #20 spot in The Infatuation list. For Petitgrain, they rave about how "Each one is roughly the size of our face, with quarter-sized chunks of chocolate and a noticeable crispness throughout. It's exactly the kind of Cookie Monster (a noted crunchy cookie enjoyer) would reach for first." 1209 Wilshire Blvd. <https://www.theinfatuation.com/los-angeles/guides/best-chocolate-chip-cookies-la>

Crudo e Nudo 5th Anniversary Guest Chef & Winemaker Series: Chef/Owner Brian Bornemann is bringing together his dear chef and winemaker friends for a series of delicious takeovers at his acclaimed sustainable seafood restaurant and biodynamic wine bar along Santa Monica's vibrant and beachy Main Street. Some of California's best chefs and winemakers are partnering up for fun seafood-driven specials and perfect pairings. It's all about celebrating great fish, great wine and community, which means party vibes and no prix-fixe menus. April 13-19, 12 - 9p.m., 2724 Main St. resy.com/cities/santa-monica-ca/venues/crudo-e-nudo

FIG Bordeaux Dinner Experience: Join a monthly wine series with Ian Blackburn, founder of Learn About Wine. Experience an elegant, sommelier-led evening at FIG featuring a three-course dinner paired with a selection of Bordeaux wines. Thursday, April 16, 6:30 p.m., 101 Wilshire Blvd. <https://www.figsantamonica.com/happenings/>

Chelsea Restaurant Winemaker Dinner: Enjoy an evening under the stars on their patios with a five-course dinner with winemaker of Sea Creatures Wine. Thursday, April 16, 7p.m., 2460 Wilshire Blvd. <https://resy.com/cities/santa-monica-ca/venues/chelsea/events/winemaker-dinner-with-sea-creatures-wine-2026-04-16>

Further Afield: BagelFest: BagelFest was created in 2019 to celebrate the people, craft, and culture behind great bagels. What started as a small gathering of bagel obsessives has grown into the world's premier bagel festival, bringing together top makers, industry leaders, and thousands of fans to taste, learn, and crown the best bagels in the world. Sunday, April 12, Wilshire Blvd Temple, 3663 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles bagelfest.com

More Further Afield: Make Food Not Waste Pop-Up Dinner Series: The series is bringing together some of LA's leading chefs and restaurants — Heather Sperling of Botanica, Aaron Lindell of Quarter Sheets, and Fátima Juárez of Komal (a 2026 James Beard Emerging Chef Finalist!) — with top NYC chefs and restaurants — Telly Justice of HAGS, Mike Fadem of Ops, and Jeremiah Stone and Fabián von Hauske Valtierra of Wildair — for three special collaboration dinners in LA in April. <https://resy.com/cities/los-angeles-ca/venues/make-food-not-waste-dining-series>

Looking Ahead: SaMo International Jazz Festival (5/1-9); Venice Beach Cinco de Mayo Parade (5/2); Netflix Is A Joke Fest (5/4-10); EEEEEATSCON (5/16-17); Montana Ave. Annual Sidewalk Sale & Wellness Walk (5/16); MAINopoly Taste of Main Street (5/24); U.S. Women's Open Golf Championship (6/2-5);

If there's something you think is worth highlighting, you can reach out directly to me at sean@smdp.com. Let me know if you have any feedback on Around Town: Gallery Openings, Pet Fairs, and Bagel Fest!

A photograph of a woman in blue scrubs, likely a physical therapist or caregiver, smiling and assisting an elderly man. The man is wearing a light-colored sweater and glasses, and is holding a green dumbbell with his right arm raised. The woman has her hands on the man's arm, providing support. The background is a bright, slightly blurred indoor setting.

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Better is a
state-of-the-art gym to
build a stronger brain.

The FitBrainSM gym at Saint John's is pioneering treatments in brain fitness by using innovative technology to gamify physical and cognitive tasks, improving mind-body connection and helping to prevent or slow down the effects of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Sessions at the FitBrain gym are tailored to each patient's individual goals and have been shown to positively impact processing speed and executive functions, as well as enhance balance and mood. It's just one of the many ways we treat you for the better.

Everything for the
Better.™