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Santa Monica Daily Press



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CORONAVIRUS DEATHS thru 4/29

SANTA MONICA

9

LA COUNTY

1,111

CALIFORNIA

1,982

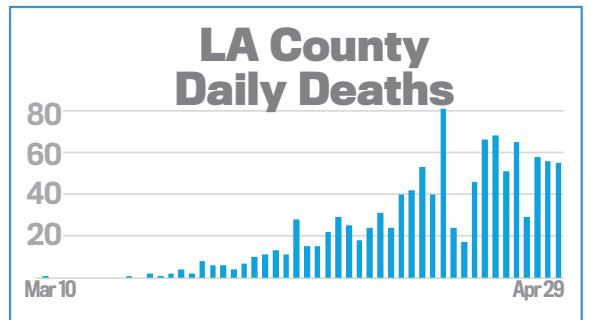
USA

61,655

WORLDWIDE

228,029

SMDP Graphic - Data from Johns Hopkins, WHO, LA County Public Health



Residents call for Santa Monica to restrict car traffic on neighborhood streets



Matthew Hall

BIKES: Residents are taking to bicycles and walking in the pandemic.

MADELEINE PAUKER

SMDP Staff Writer

As other cities across California open up their streets for recreation and exercise during the coronavirus shutdown, Santa Monica is dragging its feet.

Mobility advocates have been calling on the city to join other cities, including Pasadena, San Diego, Oakland and San Francisco, in restricting car traffic on some neighborhood streets to provide more space for pedestrians and cyclists to practice physical distancing. Officials in many of

those cities have put a particular emphasis on converting streets in less affluent neighborhoods, where residents often lack private outdoor space and parks.

Some Santa Monica residents hope the city, which has prioritized improving access and safety for cyclists and pedestrians, will take a similar approach.

More than 70% of Santa Monicans rent their homes, which rarely come with backyards. With beaches and gyms closed, the city's parks and sidewalks have been in

SEE TRAFFIC PAGE 11

Wine Auction fundraiser goes online to support Santa Monica schools

BRENNON DIXSON

SMDP Staff Writer

The Santa Monica Education Foundation's annual Santa Monica Wine Auction has raised funds for local public schools for four years while also providing local residents with an excuse to enjoy gala food and wine tasting with dozens of their fellow community members.

Despite the impacts of Covid-19 and California's safer-at-home orders, the local fundraiser is still scheduled to occur this Sunday at 7 p.m., but it will feature an entirely new format, according to Ann Conkle.

In previous iterations, guests would arrive at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows and



Courtesy photo

WINE: The annual fundraiser to support local schools is now online.

enjoy food tastings, wine and a silent auction around the fig tree. At 7 p.m., they'd head inside for the live auction and a short presentation.

"Clearly, we can't do that this year even though our event has

SEE ONLINE AUCTION PAGE 6

Renters will have 12 months to repay unpaid rent under new city of Santa Monica order

MADELEINE PAUKER

SMDP Staff Writer

The city of Santa Monica extended its moratorium on residential and commercial evictions to June 30, city officials

announced Thursday.

The order also extends from six to twelve months the time tenants have to pay rent they were unable to pay. City spokesperson Constance Farrell said the city extended the moratorium and deadline in

response to the deep economic impacts of COVID-19 and public health projections that indicate people will be required to remain at home.

SEE RENTERS PAGE 6

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DAILY FIRE LOG

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 32 CALLS ON APR. 29

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 236 CALLS ON APR. 29

EMS 1500blk Harvard St 1:32 a.m.
EMS 1200blk 6th St 2:30 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 5th St 8:20 a.m.
EMS 1600blk Dewey St 8:31 a.m.
EMS 2300blk Ocean Park Blvd 9:37 a.m.
EMS 1900blk Wilshire Blvd 10:01 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 15th St 10:11 a.m.
EMS 1500blk 15th St 10:29 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 2600blk Broadway 10:35 a.m.
EMS 1100blk 4th St 10:42 a.m.
Transformer Fire 2000blk Santa Monica Blvd 10:46 a.m.
Wires Down 1000blk Pico Blvd 11:21 a.m.
EMS 1700blk Ocean Ave 11:32 a.m.
Structure Fire 2900blk Arizona Ave 12:05 p.m.
EMS 1300blk 17th St 12:52 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 800blk Colorado Ave 12:59 p.m.
EMS 500blk Olympic Blvd W 1:24 p.m.

EMS 300blk Olympic Dr 3:15 p.m.
Trash/Dumpster Fire 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 3:43 p.m.
EMS Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd W 5:18 p.m.
Flooded Condition 2nd St / California Ave 6:16 p.m.
Smoke Investigation 2000blk Pico Blvd 6:57 p.m.
EMS 5th St / Olympic Blvd W 7:22 p.m.
EMS 300blk 25th St 7:35 p.m.
Elevator Rescue 200blk Montana Ave 7:42 p.m.
EMS 400blk Ocean Ave 8:14 p.m.
EMS 19th St / Santa Monica Blvd 8:28 p.m.
EMS 1000blk San Vicente Blvd 10:42 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 100blk Wilshire Blvd 10:55 p.m.
EMS 900blk Pico Blvd 11:03 p.m.
EMS 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 11:23 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 300blk Santa Monica Pl 11:41 p.m.

Malicious Mischief Just Occurred 2000blk Main St 12:35 a.m.
Burglary Just Occurred 1400blk 3rd Street Prom 2:19 a.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1600blk Santa Monica Blvd 6:18 a.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1400blk 24th St 6:20 a.m.
Grand Theft Report 500blk 12th St 7:56 a.m.
Panic Alarm 1600blk Main St 7:58 a.m.
Person With A Gun 3rd Street Prom / Arizona Ave 7:59 a.m.
Encampment Dorchester Ave / Virginia Ave 8:01 a.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Lincoln / Commonwealth 8:41 a.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Pacific Coast Hwy / Entrada 8:49 a.m.
Person With A Gun 21st St / Pico Blvd 8:55 a.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 2700blk Lincoln Blvd 9:11 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 28th St / Pico Blvd 9:21 a.m.
Found Property 5th St / Hollister Ave 9:32 a.m.
Identity Theft 500blk Colorado Ave 9:39 a.m.
Public Intoxication 1900blk Wilshire Blvd 9:58 a.m.
Fight 500blk Olympic Blvd W 10:03 a.m.
Auto Burglary Report 500blk Broadway 10:46 a.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1900blk Ocean Ave 10:59 a.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 1400blk 6th St 11:01 a.m.
Burglary Just Occurred 300blk Euclid St 11:08 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 2300blk Ocean Park Blvd 11:14 a.m.
Auto Burglary Report 400blk Hill St 11:20 a.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop Cloverfield Blvd / Pico Blvd 11:22 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 2400blk Cloverfield Blvd 11:44 a.m.
Traffic Control Request - Level 1 2900blk Arizona Ave 12:06 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 800blk 10th St 12:22 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 300blk Olympic Dr 12:29 p.m.
Urinating/Defecating In Public 2100blk Wilshire Blvd 12:33 p.m.
Violation Of Temporary No Parking Signs 1100blk 7th St 12:34 p.m.
Indecent Exposure Now 1600blk Main St 12:35 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1700blk Lincoln Blvd 12:41 p.m.
Fraud Report 1000blk 21st St 12:42 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 3100blk Lincoln Blvd 12:43 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1400blk Broadway 12:49 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 3100blk 4th St 1:04 p.m.
Person Down 500blk Olympic Blvd W 1:25 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 900blk 7th St 1:25 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 900blk 2nd St 1:33 p.m.

72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1300blk 17th St 1:49 p.m.
Stalking Suspect There Now 4th St / Strand St 1:51 p.m.
Identity Theft 700blk Broadway 1:52 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 1900blk Wilshire Blvd 2:17 p.m.
Drunk Driving Investigation Lincoln Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 2:18 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 20th St / Pearl St 2:22 p.m.
Assault Just Occurred 1700blk 9th St 2:37 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed Lincoln Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 2:39 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 1100blk San Vicente Blvd 2:40 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 1100blk San Vicente Blvd 2:53 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 500blk 21st St 2:55 p.m.
Found Person 1100blk 9th St 3:14 p.m.
Vehicle Blocking Driveway 1900blk Washington Ave 3:17 p.m.
Handicap Zone Violation 2700blk Kansas Ave 3:22 p.m.
Encampment 1000blk Pico Blvd 3:42 p.m.
Lewd Activity 1500blk 16th St 3:43 p.m.
Attempt Auto Theft Report 2600blk Arizona Ave 3:48 p.m.
Loud Music 7th St / Ashland Ave 4:26 p.m.
Vehicle Blocking Driveway 900blk 20th St 4:33 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 11th St / Alta Ave 5:00 p.m.
Animal Related Incident Ocean Ave / Strand St 5:02 p.m.
Petty Theft Just Occurred 2500blk Santa Monica Blvd 5:10 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 800blk Ocean Ave 5:39 p.m.
Lost Property 4th St / Pico Blvd 5:48 p.m.
Found Property 1400blk 2nd St 5:54 p.m.
Violation Of Restraining Order Report 300blk Marine St 6:03 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred Stewart St / Pico Blvd 6:11 p.m.
Assault Just Occurred 2700blk Neilson Way 6:16 p.m.
Identity Theft 900blk 10th St 6:27 p.m.
Traffic Control Request - Level 1 200blk Santa Monica Pier 6:35 p.m.
Battery Just Occurred 2900blk Virginia Ave 6:38 p.m.
Traffic Hazard Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd W 6:41 p.m.
Critical Missing Person 300blk Olympic Dr 7:02 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 600blk San Vicente Blvd 7:06 p.m.
Theft Suspect In Custody 1600blk Cloverfield Blvd 7:43 p.m.
Traffic Hazard 400blk Washington Ave 7:53 p.m.
Drinking In Public 5th St / Wilshire Blvd 7:53 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 1100blk 17th St 8:47 p.m.
Encampment 1200blk 9th St 8:51 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 600blk Strand St 9:01 p.m.
Prowler 600blk 16th St 10:20 p.m.
Loud Music 2300blk 28th St 11:26 p.m.

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CITY OF SANTA MONICA

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

SANTA MONICA

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MEETING

VIA TELECONFERENCE

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 Issued by Governor Gavin Newsom

DATE/TIME:

Monday, May 4, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

In an effort to reduce the risk of spreading Coronavirus (COVID-19), members of the Architectural Review Board and City Staff will participate via teleconference. The public may join the teleconference via <https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/auvtvpwq> or by dialing in at 1-415-466-7000 (PIN: 2522900 #).

PROPERTIES:

- 20ARB-0060: 1319-1323 Third Street Promenade: Sign Program
- 20ARB-0023: 501 Wilshire Boulevard: Restaurant
- 20ARB-0029: 1104 Wilshire Boulevard: Sign
- 20ARB-0066: 1415 5th Street: Mixed-Use
- 20ARB-0067: 1437 5th Street: Mixed-Use

PRELIMINARY REVIEW(S):

- 1404-1408 Third Street Promenade: Commercial

More information is available online at <https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Architectural-Review-Board/> or at (310) 458-8341 (en espanol tambien).
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Those wishing to give public comment must make that request via email to planningcomment@smgov.net. Written information received prior to 12 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be distributed to the Architectural Review Board prior to the meeting and posted online. Written information received after 12 p.m. May 4 will be read aloud at the meeting subject to time constraints.
For disability-related accommodations, please contact 310-458-8701 or TTY 310-450-8696
a minimum of 72 hours in advance. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Santa Monica College's Fall 2020 Semester will be Online

Santa Monica College (SMC) will be offering nearly 3,000 classes and its extensive student support services online for the Fall 2020 semester, SMC Superintendent/President Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery announced in an email to students and the college community today. This follows an April 8 announcement that the summer session—as well as SMC's graduation ceremony on June 16—will also be held in a virtual environment, to keep the college community safe during the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester (which starts August 31) and for the Summer inter-session (beginning June 22) began on Monday, April 27. The nearly 3,000 Fall 2020 classes and 840-plus Summer classes may be viewed at smc.edu/classes. Based on the scheduled enrollment date students receive, continuing students can begin to register in late April, and new students can sign up for classes in early May. A limited number of courses that are not easily offered in a fully online environment might be offered via a hybrid option, if health and safety requirements permit.

SMC's main campus at 1900 Pico Blvd. and five satellite campuses also remain closed to the public until further notice. Classes at SMC Emeritus—the college's program for older adults—and those delivered through Community Education and the noncredit program will also take place online, wherever possible.

This decision was announced by Superintendent/President Jeffery following a recommendation made by the SMC Emergency Operations Team, which has been monitoring developments related to COVID-19, based mainly on two factors: a vaccine for the novel coronavirus will likely not be widely available until 2021; and it will be nearly impossible for SMC—the college's campuses are all “open-access”—to identify, monitor, and distinguish between possible COVID-19 and typical flu cases in the fall.

“Your instructors and counselors are learning new skills, software, and tools so that they can give you the best possible academic experience,” Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery wrote in her email to SMC students. Jeffery gave a quick recap of the extensive resources available to enrolled students: mental/physical health counseling and 24/7 emotional support through The SMC Center for Wellness and Wellbeing; a free, ongoing Chromebook laptop lending program (over 200 students have received laptops); a weekly, drive-thru pop-up food pantry and a home-delivery Meal Project through the SMC Foundation for vulnerable students who otherwise have limited or no access to freshly prepared, healthy meals; and the most extensive one-on-one student support network available at a California community college.

“We are especially grateful in this current moment for the 170+ career and academic counselors, including psychologists, who are supporting SMC instructors in ensuring that [students] get the support [they] deserve,” Jeffery wrote.

SMC students can choose from more than 90 fields of study ranging from the liberal arts to STEM; the college also offers over 180 career education degrees and certificates – in emerging and traditional areas like Accounting, Film Production, Journalism, Cloud Computing, Early Childhood Education, and many more – that prepare students for a competitive entry into the workforce.

Santa Monica College's Nursing and Respiratory Therapy programs have donated ventilators and respirators to hospitals fighting the coronavirus, through the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The college—through curriculum review, online professional development, and more—is seeking to maintain high standards of quality and equity in the online environment. For past and current information on SMC's response to COVID-19, visit smc.edu/coronavirus.

GRACE SMITH, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

COSTA MESA

AP Source: Chargers hiring Hamilton as quarterbacks coach

The Los Angeles Chargers are hiring Pep Hamilton as quarterbacks coach, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke Thursday on condition of anonymity because the deal, first reported by The Athletic, has not been officially announced by the team.

Hamilton was head coach of the XFL's DC Defenders before the league ended its season after five weeks due to the coronavirus pandemic. The XFL announced a couple of weeks later that it was suspending operations. Prior to joining the XFL, Hamilton was Michigan's assistant head coach and passing game coordinator in 2017-18.

Hamilton's last NFL job was in Cleveland as assistant head coach and quarterbacks coach in 2016. He was also Indianapolis' offensive coordinator for three seasons (2013-15) along with previous stints with the New York Jets, San Francisco, Chicago and at Stanford.

He moves into the spot previously occupied by Shane Steichen, who was promoted to offensive coordinator. The Chargers will have a new quarterback for the first time in 14 seasons after Philip Rivers signed with Indianapolis. Tyrod Taylor is in the driver's seat but Los Angeles also drafted Justin Herbert with the sixth overall pick in last week's draft.

The Chargers announced they have exercised their fifth-year option on Mike Williams. The wide receiver – who was the seventh overall pick in the 2017 draft – posted his first 1,000-yard season last year with 49 receptions for 1,001 yards.

Williams had seven straight games with a reception of at least 39 yards, which tied with Denver's Anthony Miller in 1994 for the longest such streak since 1948. He averaged 20.4 yards per catch, which led the league.

JOE REEDY AP, SPORTS WRITER

California governor orders Orange County beaches to close

AMY TAXIN

Associated Press

Maureen Osborne is torn by the state's decision to close the sweeping, scenic beach just a 10-minute walk from her home.

She hasn't gone there much since the coronavirus outbreak because the neighborhood has become crowded with visitors who park their cars to walk down to the shore — but wishes she could.

“It is what it is,” said the 62-year-old, who now carries a mask with her as a precaution when she goes out. “If people are sensible and do what they're supposed to with the social distancing — but not everybody is.”

California Gov. Gavin Newsom announced his decision Thursday to close beaches in Orange County after seeing photos of thousands of beachgoers clustered on the sands during a heat wave last weekend.

The move was backed by those concerned about the virus's spread and reviled by others. It spurred questions for many living in beach communities who rely on the shoreline for exercise and open space.

Scientists said beaches could contribute to the transmission of the virus because they draw people to congregate in large numbers at a time when virtually all other large group activities — ranging from school to concerts to sporting events — have been shut down.

“The main reason for not going to the beach is just simply you don't want to go to places where people are congregating. It's hard to go to the beach and not congregate,” said Ali Nouri, president of the Federation of American Scientists.

“You don't want to put yourself in a situation where you are exposing yourself, for minutes or hours, to people who may potentially be breathing out — even if they're not coughing or sneezing — but people who might be breathing out virus.”

The virus is transmitted through tiny droplets that are light and don't fall to the ground quickly but carry through the air. A strong wind on the coast could push these droplets even further, Nouri said.

Complicating the issue is that the virus can be transmitted by people who don't have symptoms, he said.

Viruses can live in the ocean, but it isn't known whether the coronavirus would remain infectious. Most likely, it would be diluted to the point where it is not a concern,

Nouri said.

Chad Nelsen, chief executive of the Surfrider Foundation, said there's a study under way to determine whether the virus remains infectious in sewage, though beachgoers shouldn't be in the water anyway in the case of a spill.

As a result, the main risk to beachgoers is their fellow beachgoer, he said.

“The primary concern for contagion is physical distancing at the beach or in the water,” Nelsen said.

Some California counties have adopted measures to try to address the issue. Ventura County allows walking and jogging at the beach, but residents can't sit on the sand and linger. Los Angeles County closed beaches altogether.

“We actually don't have anything to suggest that just because you're outside means that if you're in close contact with other people this virus won't spread,” Los Angeles County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer said.

The beach is more than a fun day in the sun for those who live along Huntington Beach's shoreline of crashing waves dotted with surfers — it's a lifestyle.

Osborne said she usually walks with friends on weekends and stops for a bite. She also likes to park along Pacific Coast Highway and take in the views while working in her car.

She hasn't been able to do either since the viral outbreak, and rarely even goes to the beach to avoid having to walk through congested streets to get there since the city shut down beach parking lots in a bid to discourage beach crowds.

Ryan Selewicz, 28, lives right on the sand in Newport Beach. People in his neighborhood don't have yards — the homes are wedged between the road and the beach, where people go to watch the sunset and walk their dogs.

He said he doesn't know what a beach closure would look like because his patio faces the ocean.

“I don't really know where people are going to be expected to go now to get out of their house and have their outside time,” he said. “Most people would probably consider that the front of their house.”

Associated Press writers John Antozak in Los Angeles and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

Coronavirus (COVID -19) Hotline

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Your column here

By Victor Fresco

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THE CARELESSNESS OR NEGLIGENCE OF OTHERS.



Robert Lemle

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LEMLE LAW GROUP, PC

Recently, pro-development group Santa Monica Forward sent a letter to our City Council suggesting what they would like the City to do in response to our budget crisis.

Reading it we were reminded of Naomi Klein's seminal work, *The Shock Doctrine*, wherein Ms. Klein posits that crises are often used as tools by those with power to push through agendas they had long sought but were unable to achieve through democratic means. A crisis provides the disruption and turmoil powerful interests need to accomplish long sought but unpopular goals.

Santa Monica Forward demonstrates a perfect example of this as they attempt to gut our city's development standards by using our current crisis as an excuse to dispense with long-established zoning regulations and other community protections.

Their proposals can be summed up in two problematic thoughts: Build more. Tax more.

Here is why these are bad ideas:

- Development revenues, even in times of hyper-development here in Santa Monica, have not offset increased costs in city services, staff, pension obligations or other essential services. Over the past 25 years residents increasingly have shouldered the burden of additional property and sales taxes and fees – to support our schools, affordable housing, water and sanitation, parking and more. And the more the City has built, the more residents' share of taxes has increased. There is no reason to believe, other than wanting it to be so, that more development will lead to solving our City's current financial problems;

- New development, as a part of the approval process, must do more than promise future revenues; it must also properly analyze all of the true costs to the City once projects are built, including the additional city and essential services to support those projects, and the related impacts on our environment. Without knowing both sides of the equation, benefits AND costs, revenue projections alone are meaningless;

- We now have the highest sales taxes in the State. Residents and businesses struggling to survive are not able to shoulder more. It's the City's obligation to demonstrate sound fiscal responsibility, starting with a zero-based budget that upholds essential services like police and fire, sanitation, water, streets, libraries, and homeless resources, and then proposes fair cuts to non-essential services in a public and transparent process;

- A paradigm shift is underway as to key assumptions the City has used to drive its planning process. Instead of trying to build massive amounts of new housing in Santa Monica for a commuting workforce, City planners should acknowledge that current telecommuting throughout different industries may be changing the workplace significantly, generating major benefits for employees,

employers and the planet (a better work/life balance with fewer hours commuting, equal or greater worker productivity, and much reduced vehicle emissions.) This could force urban cities throughout the state to think differently about where to place new housing and density. It is certainly too soon to blindly call for increased development;

- Another key planning assumption that needs to be analyzed is the realistic amount of sustainable retail and restaurant businesses in the coming years, given a possible shift to telecommuting, increasing online sales, and new social distancing requirements for restaurants that very well may force many of them out of business. Planning requirements for ground-floor retail in every new development may not work now;

- The pandemic also has shown us that because of social distancing, residents need MORE open space and park space, as well as buildings designed with more open space, not less space and greater density;

- Sustainable building requirements, especially incentivizing adaptive reuse of existing buildings like the former Papermate site, are far superior to destroying existing buildings to accommodate large new buildings that use raw materials and generate lasting and greater occupancy impacts, including water, electricity, sewage, traffic gridlock and pollution. A planning maxim is "the greenest building is the one already built."

Even before the current, massive projected fiscal shortfalls resulting from this ongoing pandemic, Santa Monica was grappling with growing budget problems and projected deficits due to declining revenues from key sources the City relied upon, including reduced hotel occupancy bed taxes, and reduced retail spending sales taxes and fees, coupled with growing and unsustainable pension fund requirements. The way for Santa Monica to truly move forward is to get a handle on the spending side of the equation, by taking a scrupulous look at the increased staffing our city carries compared to similarly sized Southern California cities.

This crisis should not be used as an excuse to push through even more development and greater density, and to do it with even less neighborhood input. Santa Monica's character must NOT be for sale to the highest bidder to build greater density buildings that are unsustainable, and that end up burdening our city and our environmental resources, inevitably leading to greater taxes for residents.

Residents are the heart of our city. They don't lobby Council for money or personal gain or for their own pet projects. Residents use their voices to tell you what the city cannot lose and what matters, never more so than in the current, strange new world order. We hope they have a seat at the table.

Santa Monica Daily Press

1640 5th Street, Suite 218
Santa Monica, CA 90401
OFFICE (310) 458-PRESS (7737)
FAX (310) 576-9913

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PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

PARTNER
Todd James
todd@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Matthew Hall
matt@smdp.com

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Jenny Rice
jenny@smdp.com

OPERATIONS MANAGER
Cindy Moreno
cindy@smdp.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
Rose Mann
rose@smdp.com

STAFF WRITERS
Madeleine Pauker
madeleine@smdp.com
Brennon Dixon
brennon@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Charles Andrews,
Cynthia Citron,
Jack Neworth,
David Pisarra,
Sarah A. Spitz

PRODUCTION
Esteban Inchaustegui
production@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Achling Holliday
ross@smdp.com
Keith Wyatt
ross@smdp.com



Joe Biden picks vetting team as he searches for running mate

ALEXANDRA JAFFE
Associated Press

Joe Biden announced Thursday the four co-chairs of his vice presidential vetting team, starting the search for his running mate in earnest.

Former Connecticut Sen. Chris Dodd, Delaware Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and Apple executive and longtime Biden aide Cynthia Hogan will serve as co-chairs on the committee.

They'll work with vetting teams led by former White House counsel Bob Bauer, campaign general counsel Dana Remus and former homeland security adviser Lisa Monaco to evaluate Biden's options and collect information on each candidate to help him make his decision.

"Selecting a vice presidential candidate is one of the most important decisions in a presidential campaign and no one knows this more than Joe Biden," Biden campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon said in a statement. "These four co-chairs reflect the strength and diversity of our party, and will

provide tremendous insight and expertise to what will be a rigorous selection and vetting process."

Biden, a former vice president himself, has committed to picking a woman and has told donors his team is thinking about naming his running mate far in advance of the August Democratic convention.

Biden has offered some hints about his thinking. He frequently says he's looking for someone who's "simpatico with where I want to take the country." He's also said he can easily name 12 to 15 women who meet his criteria but would likely seriously consider from six to 11 candidates. Biden has given no indication of whether he'll look to the Senate, where he spent six terms, to governors or elsewhere.

Those believed to be potential picks include some of Biden's former primary opponents, such as Sens. Kamala Harris of California and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, as well as some women outside Washington, including Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and former Georgia gubernatorial candidate Stacey Abrams.



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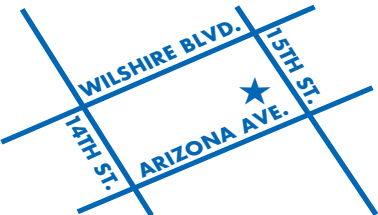
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Local

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RENTERS

FROM PAGE 1

Tenants and landlords criticized the city earlier this month for setting the deadline for repayment at six months when the city of Los Angeles had given renters 12 months to make up rent.

"The city is constantly monitoring the emergency situation and updating our local orders to provide the most sensible and meaningful response," said Interim City Manager Lane Dilg. "The extensions of the moratorium period and the time to pay the unpaid rents, are intended to provide some relief to our residents and small businesses, restaurants, stores and offices, in light of the uncertainties we face as to when the safe-at-home orders will be lifted, and when we can all go back to work."

In the version of the moratorium the city enacted last month, renters and businesses had to provide their landlords with documentation showing that coronavirus has affected their earnings.

But under the order Dilg signed Thursday, tenants may simply describe in written notice to their landlords how they have lost income or experienced an increase in expenses due to COVID-19.

A form that can be used by tenants to provide the required notice of their inability to pay rent due to COVID-19 is available on the city's website.

Landlords must notify tenants of the moratorium and may not require tenants to enter into payment plans for delayed rent, although tenants must repay any unpaid rent 12 months after the city lifts its emergency orders, Farrell said.

The order also clarifies that the ban on commercial evictions does not apply to multi-national companies, publicly traded companies and companies that employ more

than 500 employees.

Three new cases of coronavirus were confirmed in Santa Monica Thursday, bringing the total number of cases in the city to 159. The number of cases has increased by just 10% over the last week after increasing 44% the week before.

As of Wednesday night, nine Santa Monica residents and 12 people residing in two nursing homes in the city had died from COVID-19, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. It is unknown how many individuals who died in the nursing homes lived in the city and therefore are included in its death toll.

L.A. Mayor Eric Garcetti announced Wednesday night that all residents, including those without symptoms, could be tested for free at the city's testing sites.

But L.A. County Health Services Director Christina Ghaly said Thursday that the county is not recommending that asymptomatic people be tested at the county's testing sites, except for essential workers, people older than 65 and people with chronic health conditions.

The county is also testing all residents and staff at nursing homes and other congregate living facilities, regardless of symptoms.

Ghaly said asymptomatic people should continue to stay home as much as possible, practice physical distancing and wear face coverings. If asymptomatic people get tested and test negative, it could make them behave as though they won't contract coronavirus in the future, she said.

"I understand that testing can provide individuals with a sense of security ... but want to I caution everyone to holding on too tightly to that security, because medically, it is fleeting," Ghaly said. "A negative test for an asymptomatic person does not mean you can go back to life as normal."

madeleine@smdp.com

ONLINE AUCTION

FROM PAGE 1

been scheduled for awhile now, so we had a decision about what to do," Conkle said. "And with last year's event raising \$333,000 for the kids, we decided we wanted to move forward with what we could do at this point," which is an online event.

"The kids are going to still need programs next year," Conkle added, "so we are having a live online event Sunday night at 7 p.m. that's going to be about 45 minutes long and live-streamed via YouTube."

All community members are invited to attend and relish the live auction, surprise videos and more that's in store, Conkle said.

Officials said bidding has already begun in the online silent auction portion of the event at SMwineauction.org. Residents can also register for the upcoming live auction as well, according to officials. The auction recently added more items to be sold so Conkle

believes there are more than 190 items of wine, gift cards and more to be sold.

In total, the four previous wine auctions have raised \$992,000 for local public schools, and the money raised directly funds arts programs, classroom aides, STEM and student health and wellness programs in Santa Monica public schools next year, Conkle added, before detailing how Many local businesses are sponsoring the event through the Education Foundation's Corporate Heroes program.

"Usually this event has a ticket and we can only fit 400 people at the Fairmont," Conkle said. "But this year because it's online, anybody can come. There's no cost to attend, so we really hope that a lot of people tune in on Sunday."

To learn more about the Ed Foundation, visit the website smedfoundation.org.

brennon@smdp.com

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Adoptable Pet of the Week



Martin Hernandez

PET: The Adoptable Pet of the Week is available from the Santa Monica Animal Shelter.

Mia

Hi, I'm Mia! I'm a three-year-old Pitbull mix. My friends at the shelter tell me I have that certain "it" factor to be the next big thing! I'm outgoing, love walks, playtime, giving kisses, and showing affection. To maintain my star-quality, I'll need some work remaining well-adjusted while being alone. Driven to join the ranks "A"-lister's, I'll thrive in a home with an adult family that is patient, has experience with big dogs, and can spend most of their time with me. If you're looking for a new family member who is adoring and fun, this upcoming Hollywood leading lady is the one for you! Mia ID# A059460, is available for adoption at the Santa Monica Animal Shelter located at 1640 9th Street, Santa Monica CA, 90404. The shelter is closed to the public and adoptions are by appointment only by calling the shelter at (310) 458-8595, Tuesday through Saturday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. For a full list of their adoptable animals, visit petharbor.com.

PET TIP OF THE WEEK: DOG RUNNING

During the COVID-19 Stay At Home Order, opportunities for exercise are limited. One way to get good exercise is by running with your dog!

Before starting a dog running program, your dog should be medically cleared by a veterinarian. Running is an intense exercise that includes sun exposure and heat. Some dogs have breed specific breathing limitations and other challenges that increases their risk of heat exhaustion and

heat stroke.

Pick an environment with few distractions and maintain 6 feet of social distancing. Avoid introducing your dogs to other dogs, and Santa Monica closures which include the beach, bike paths, Ocean Front Park, and Palisades Park.

When you are ready to run, be patient, use training cues and rewards like praise and treats. Know how to effectively use your dog walking equipment to secure your dog and manage their behavior. Keep your dog directly at your side so that they may stay engaged and at your pace. Your dog must have basic skills in socialization, on-leash, and respond to cues and redirection. Reactivity that is not easily managed can cause your dog to get away, and jeopardize your safety and the public.

Bring water to keep your dog hydrated. Use paw wax to protect your dog's paws from hot surfaces. Look for signs of distress that may require immediate veterinary attention like excessive panting, drooling, breathing difficulty, unusual agitation, lack of coordination, dizziness, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Have fun! Stay positive! Praise and reward yourselves for staying committed to your bond and health!

Pet of the Week is provided by Carmen Molinari, a long-time volunteer at the Santa Monica Animal Shelter and founder and CEO of Love At First Sit, a pet care and dog training company in Santa Monica. Learn about her, pet tips, and Love At First Sit services at loveatfirstsit.net



Laughing Matters

Jack Neworth

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Good Deeds in Bad Times

Decades ago I wrote and staged an original play at the Church in Ocean Park. "It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's ... Irving," took place in Miami Beach at a welfare assisted living facility where feisty WWII Polish immigrant, Irving Zupermann, resided.

Often gruff with snappy one-liners, Irv was misdiagnosed with Alzheimer's primarily because ... he insisted he was a "superhero." You see, in 1937 teenage Irv was a legendary strongman in the Warsaw Circus and was interviewed by an American writer. In 1938 Superman comic books made a fortune, however, as Irv laments, "I got bupkes." (Yiddish for "nothing.")

The Church was the only venue interested, plus they allowed my beautiful Miami Beach set to stay up for the entire 6-week run. Actually, Minister James Conn enjoyed temporarily giving his Sunday sermons with a Miami backdrop.

Since then, I've followed dozens of important social justice causes the interfaith congregation Church has promoted. Now they've recently delivered a good deed to my friend, Darya Jones, who, due to Covid-19, found herself homeless.

Though she was an ideal tenant where she rented a room in a house, the elderly owner was so anxious about the virus she reluctantly asked Darya to move. Empathetic, Darya didn't put up a fuss but couldn't find another place that quickly.

Having volunteered at the Church for nine years, she reached out to Minister Janet McKeithen. Due to the virus, Sunday services are on the Internet so the Church building is vacant. Minister McKeithen gladly offered Darya an office as a makeshift bedroom. If this sounds daunting, Darya has faced infinitely worse.

Darya was born in Moscow in 1990, three months premature and yet miraculously survived pneumonia 6 times, in an orphanage without hot water or antibiotics! Thankfully she was adopted by Santa Monica humanitarian, Lee Jones, who brought her home. Doctors soon discovered Darya needed glasses and hearing aids.

Darya began school but being Russian with glasses and hearing aids, sadly, she was a frequent target for bullying. Smart as a whip and grateful for her new life, young Darya tried to ignore it.

Fortunately, she attended Santa Monica's Edison Language Academy and became proficient in Spanish and developed interest in other cultures. Also fortunate, she began a close friendship with a brave classmate, Coleman, who fiercely protected her. (And was befriended by Coleman's mother, Cynthia who ultimately introduced me to Darya.)

Darya went to New Roads School, graduating in 2009 and then Loyola Marymount where she got B.A. in Theology and Peace Studies. In 2011 she began attending and volunteering at the Church in Ocean Park.

Despite all her hardships Darya's remarkably serene, thoroughly authentic and without an ounce of guile. She's also a hard worker and managed to keep her job at a take out Starbucks despite layoffs. And she's also saved money and is seeking a modestly priced room to rent in a nice house or guest house, hopefully close to her work at Stewart and Pico.

Childhood hardships can make a person stronger or they can be haunted by them. For most people there's probably a mix, hopefully with the good outweighing the negative. For Darya surviving her life's many burdens, instead of making her bitter have made her better.

For example, in today's highly polarized environment, if someone disagrees with her on something she holds dear, she's genuinely interested in why they think that way rather than judging them. (I, on the other hand, when I hear "inject disinfectants" go full bore John McEnroe's, "You can't be serious!")

Darya has many passions including music, movies, being a part-time dog walker, reading and writing. In fact, she's so witty I've warned her that if her line is funnier than mine, it's fair game.

Speaking of "fair," Darya is a remarkably fair person. In the meantime, in 2021 there is a distinct possibility she could be accepted to Harvard's School of Divinity, or as she describes it, "A dream come true."

On the subject of dreams, after my play at the Church, I was contacted by a theater director from New York. I instantly had visions of Broadway but it turned out he was only born in New York and his theater was in a Northridge mini mall between a Carpeteria and a Winchell's Donuts.

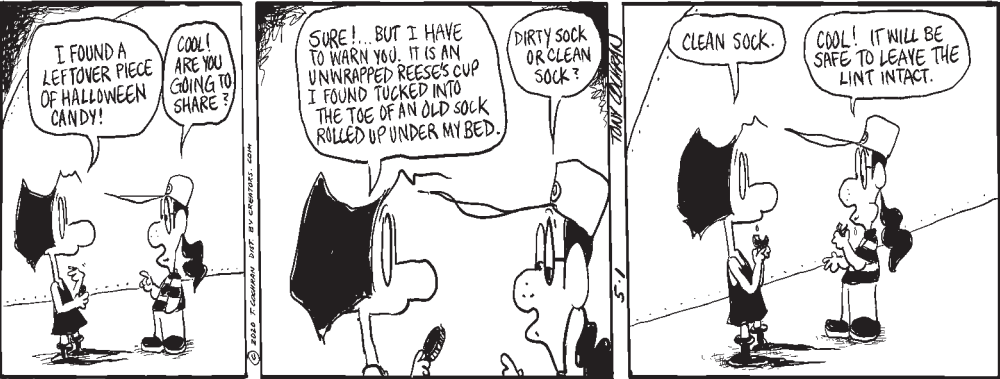
So it wasn't Broadway or off Broadway. (Actually it was more "off" Northridge.) The man who won the part of Irv was the President of Cal State Northridge who wanted to be an actor so badly he resigned to play Zupermann. He was okay but I subtly encouraged him to "keep your day job."

Years later I rewrote the play into a screenplay that was ultimately optioned by award-winning actor Ed Asner, which was a happy ending. I hope for an even better one for Darya.

The Church in Ocean Park is at: <https://www.ciop-4justice.org>, Darya is at: darya.jones.22@gmail.com, and Jack is at: jackdailypress@aol.com

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



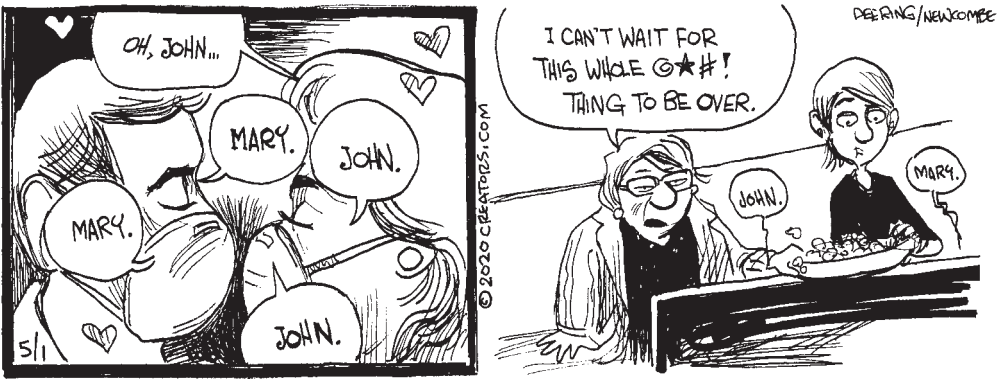
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



SURF REPORT

SURF FORECASTS

BEACHES are closed because of Covid-19. Please stay Home.

WEATHER

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 76.
Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 60.
Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 74.
Saturday Night: Clear, with a low around 60.
Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 74.
Sunday Night: Clear, with a low around 59.
Monday: Sunny, with a high near 73.

Date	Day of the Week	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2020/05/01	Fri	04:07 AM	4.33	H
2020/05/01	Fri	11:41 AM	-0.14	L
2020/05/01	Fri	6:44 PM	3.92	H
2020/05/01	Fri	11:56 PM	2.28	L
2020/05/02	Sat	05:30 AM	4.46	H
2020/05/02	Sat	12:29 PM	-0.25	L
2020/05/02	Sat	7:12 PM	4.44	H
2020/05/03	Sun	12:54 AM	1.50	L
2020/05/03	Sun	06:38 AM	4.64	H
2020/05/03	Sun	1:11 PM	-0.26	L
2020/05/03	Sun	7:42 PM	5.00	H
2020/05/04	Mon	01:44 AM	0.66	L
2020/05/04	Mon	8:13 PM	5.55	H
2020/05/05	Tue	02:32 AM	-0.12	L
2020/05/05	Tue	08:32 AM	4.79	H
2020/05/05	Tue	2:26 PM	0.10	L
2020/05/05	Tue	8:45 PM	6.03	H
2020/05/06	Wed	03:19 AM	-0.77	L

DAILY LOTTERY

 Draw Date: 04/29 2 20 49 61 67 Power#: 20 Jackpot: 51 M	 Draw Date: 04/29 6 9 20 22 38
 Draw Date: 04/28 13 19 53 54 63 Mega#: 17 Jackpot: 200 M	 Draw Date: 04/29 Evening: 8 5 8 Draw Date: 04/29 Midday: 8 0 8
 Draw Date: 04/29 2 9 15 34 46 Mega#: 25 Jackpot: 24 M	 Draw Date: 04/28 1st: 9 - WINNING SPIRIT 2nd: 7 - EUREKA 3rd: 8 - GORGEOUS GEORGE RACE TIME: 1:48.13

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

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DO YOU HAVE COMMUNITY NEWS?

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TODAY’S BIRTHDAY (MAY 01)

You’re in the driver’s seat of your dream this year, and you’ll have co-pilots who get on and off, depending on where they are headed with their own ambitions. There will be beautiful instances of timing when providing and receiving help is gloriously easy. Feasts and festivities of fall will be epic. Scorpio and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 33, 28, 1 and 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). As an adult, you have a lot of choice about who you’re around. Though it doesn’t always seem that way. That’s why, with new people, the standards should be high. Cheerfulness is a must.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You get pleasure from novelty in small measurements. You seek a situation that feels fresh, but not so new that it disorients or destabilizes. It’s also what you want to create for others.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You appreciate when others trust you enough to be vulnerable. You also appreciate when they respect you enough not to flood the conversation with big emotion at the wrong time.

You’re strong. You need the same.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Pick your guitar and fill your fruit jar. The work will get done, eventually. In the meantime, having a good time is as productive, if not more, than your workaday tasks.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You’ll be as magnificent as the purpose you choose, so set goals that empower you. This is no time to put yourself in a position where you’re likely to be giving and giving without the promise of a return.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). This is garbage day for emotional baggage. There’s much to take advantage of once you’ve freed yourself of the waste. All you have to

do is direct yourself to drop it at the curb.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You’ll mentally dance through precarious lines of reason and whimsical patterns of thought, making balletic leaps into possibilities you hadn’t considered before.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You’ll stumble across a piece of loaded information. Should you discuss it or sit on it a moment? There’s more power in keeping it to yourself until you know exactly how to file it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Restlessness is an energy that’s hard to fight. The desire to take action feels urgent and will override the usual criteria checklist you run your decisions through.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). A little bit of risk goes a long way today, especially of the financial variety. Dollars and adrenaline go hand in hand. Decide ahead of time how much you’re willing to lose.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You’ll sprinkle in the extra spice that keeps things interesting. This is not just about cooking. Familiar things get forgotten. Fascinating things get remembered. Nothing can be fascinating and familiar at the same time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It’s an impassioned day when your heart will lead and your head will convince you to follow. Serving your feelings matters more to you than serving other practical interests.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S SUDOKU

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

Newsday Crossword

MAYDAY by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

- 1 Any of 1.9 million Israelis
- 5 Chain for breakfast
- 9 Garden tool
- 14 What a thesaurus ain’t
- 15 Cobbled together
- 16 Mildew remover brand
- 17 Regular S&L opening
- 18 Big cheese
- 19 Rankle
- 20 Gets together
- 22 “No fighting!”
- 23 Ecclesiastes follower
- 26 Joker battler
- 28 One billion years
- 29 Fly prey
- 30 Fly softly hit
- 31 Renewable fuel
- 34 Evinces artistry
- 39 Warm and comforting
- 40 Court appointee before Elena
- 41 Cloud computing giant
- 44 Bad tidings
- 45 Felt or heard
- 46 Resort east of London
- 50 Took a drive
- 51 Breakaway Serbian
- 54 Knocked over
- 55 Muse of history
- 57 Hamster cousin
- 58 Waited no longer
- 59 Motorwagen maker (1885)
- 60 Aphrodite’s boy

- 61 They often hit the dance floor
- 62 Source of wisdom
- 63 Tchaikovsky turndown

DOWN

- 1 First of all
- 2 “Fried” side
- 3 1 Down, to Noah
- 4 Hit a low
- 5 Cast doubt upon
- 6 *Selma* production company
- 7 Rapturous writing
- 8 US mint since 1952
- 9 Symbol of strength
- 10 Instrument with hammers
- 11 Camry competitor
- 12 Priest’s subordinate
- 13 Magnitude
- 21 Sit up suddenly
- 22 Sounds of big bells
- 24 Made a false move
- 25 “HERE, PIG!”
- 26 Pelleted projectiles
- 27 Abbr. for a choice or change
- 31 Photon, for instance
- 32 Estimate officially
- 33 Gourmet cooker

- 35 Cut for cords
- 36 Loathsome
- 37 Bard’s “Shame on you!”
- 38 Quick-cooling rage
- 41 Book after 23 Across
- 42 Sudden improvement
- 43 Undergo alteration
- 45 Day break
- 47 Exercise accessory
- 48 Takes seriously
- 49 Vouching for
- 52 Natural soother
- 53 Day break
- 55 First network to broadcast in color (1951)
- 56 Pasturage

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20				21					22					
		23					24	25						
26	27						28					29		
30						31				32	33			
34					35							36	37	38
			39							40				
41	42	43			44				45					
46			47	48				49						
50								51					52	53
54						55	56					57		
58						59						60		
61						62						63		

Binary Puzzle

Each cell should contain a zero or a one. No more than two similar numbers below or next to each other are allowed. Each row and each column is unique and contains as many zeros as ones.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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



"The City of Bell spectacle is what happens to communities without their own old-fashioned, diligent news coverage." - Terry Francke, Journalist

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 25 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 4736

The nursery

A	P	G	A	R	S	C	O	R	E	C	O	L	I	C
D	A	S	W	M	B	O	T	T	L	E	B	I	B	S
A	O	Q	U	I	E	T	U	E	W	V	S	B	R	T
D	S	M	A	R	P	C	S	E	M	A	N	I	E	T
D	M	M	I	L	K	E	I	T	I	E	O	R	A	F
Y	D	R	A	C	S	G	S	A	D	L	I	T	S	R
F	Y	P	P	A	H	I	S	N	W	P	T	H	T	I
U	I	N	F	T	T	F	Y	I	I	G	C	U	P	E
S	F	E	O	G	A	T	O	C	F	W	E	I	M	N
S	T	S	I	H	B	S	T	C	E	R	N	O	O	D
Y	U	R	L	C	E	U	R	A	N	F	N	B	L	S
E	L	U	E	E	R	L	N	V	A	I	O	I	E	L
W	M	N	A	E	E	E	P	N	T	R	C	R	W	O
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Bath	Friends	Midwife	Soap
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TRAFFIC

FROM PAGE 1

high demand and physical distancing has become difficult to maintain.

Carter Rubin, a Santa Monica resident and transportation strategist for the National Resources Defense Council, said the city could put up barricades, traffic cones or signs that would either prevent drivers from entering certain neighborhood streets or remind them to drive slowly.

“This can work without overburdening staff with enforcement,” he said. “It has to be a light touch on the city’s part ... which also gives you the option to take it out if it’s not working.”

The network of “slow streets” would need to be dispersed around the city — especially in areas with a high concentration of apartment dwellers and fewer parks — to prevent people from treating them as a destination, Rubin said.

“If you do enough blocks around the city, people won’t have to travel to get to one,” he said. “It will help people do the walking they’re already doing, but give them enough space so they’re not too close together on the sidewalk.”

But local officials have resisted calls to open up neighborhood streets to pedestrians and cyclists.

Steven White, a Santa Monica resident who works for a transit software company, has been taking daily walks for exercise during the pandemic and frequently has to dart into the street to avoid coming close to other pedestrians on the narrow sidewalk. He has also noticed families using the streets to play sports and games because there are fewer drivers in his neighborhood.

But when a driver does come along, they drive much faster than they normally would because of the lack of traffic during the shutdown, White said. The Santa Monica Police Department issued 81% more speeding tickets in March, said Lt. Joseph Cortez.

Concerned about the lack of safe outdoor space for residents, White emailed the city in early April to ask if transportation staff could put up signs, barriers or make street lights flash red to indicate that drivers should slow down on or avoid certain neighborhood streets.

The plan could be executed in a way that wouldn’t cut off access for emergency and delivery vehicles, White said.

“In my neighborhood, I’d

put a single barrier on every street that says local traffic only,” he said. “Nobody has to stand there turning people away — people can drive down the street if they want or need to — but having a barrier does discourage use and make you more aware as a driver.”

White received a reply from SMPD saying his suggestions would “add to driver frustration in an already stressful time.” He doesn’t know if his email ever reached the transportation division.

“I was frustrated about the lack of concern in the response from (SMPD) where it was all about drivers,” he said. “Most of the people who live here aren’t driving right now — they’re trying to walk in their neighborhoods. What about their frustration?”

Cynthia Rose, director of cyclist coalition Santa Monica Spoke, said she asked City Council in early April to authorize the city’s transportation division to create a network of slow streets using input from residents and neighborhood organizations.

“Understandably, (City Council) was very distracted in the midst of this crisis, but other cities have been moving in this direction for quite some time,” Rose said. “We need people to get out, get fresh air and be healthy, and the longer this goes on the more important that is.”

While city officials have considered the idea, they worry that converting some streets for recreational use would draw visitors from across the region.

“Closing streets for pedestrian access is appealing while our beach remains closed,” said city spokesperson Constance Farrell. “During Safer at Home orders, this could inadvertently increase Santa Monica’s attractiveness as a regional destination. We can’t risk a situation like we saw in other Southern California cities last weekend.”

Rose said she thinks officials in Santa Monica and Los Angeles, which is working on a slow streets plan, are wary of restricting traffic only in certain areas and believe recreational streets must be spread throughout Los Angeles County.

“Santa Monica, understandably, is afraid to be the first or the only place for safe streets in L.A.,” Rose said. “People are desperate and will be drawn to those areas unless they are dispersed equitably in all neighborhoods.”

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Miscellaneous

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