smdp
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Small businesses in Santa Monica amongst hardest hit by Covid in the nation

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer



As the dust begins to settle around the economic carnage of Covid-19, it appears that small businesses are amongst the City's greatest casualties.

A study by accounting software service QuickBooks, identified Santa Monica as one of the US cities where small businesses revenues plummeted the most during the first year of the pandemic.

Their team calculated that the median small business in Santa Monica experienced a $26,000 revenue decrease from April 2020 through March 2021. This ranks Santa Monica as the 5th hardest hit city in the nation, in terms of small businesses, following Manhattan, Brooklyn, San Francisco and Honolulu.

Each of these urban areas share similar characteristics to Santa Monica, including a dense population, a huge tourism sector, a large commuter population and





Clara Harter

SEE **BUSINESSES** PAGE 6

RETAIL: Santa Monica's business community has been hard hit.

Santa Monica releases long awaited riot report



Matthew Hall

THEFT: The report says SMPD was unprepared for the criminal element.

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

A long-awaited after-action report on Santa Monica's response to the May 31 protests and riots is now available to the public and makes 44 recommendations to prevent future trouble while outlining the many ways local officials botched the response last year.

It's been nearly a year since large groups of people flooded Santa Monica to loot stores, and many questions remain unanswered. However, the report released Thursday details and analyzes what exactly transpired on May 31, 2020, and how the Santa Monica Police Department can better respond to similar incidents in the future.

The report uses firsthand accounts from 15 different SMPD representatives, including former Santa Monica Police Department Chief Cynthia Renaud, local residents who spoke during the various listening sessions, and others involved in the infamous day to paint a detailed picture of May 31, 2020.

Operational Plans, text messages, body-cam footage were also used to explore how the Department's internal dynamics, particularly at the command level, were strained in

SEE **RIOT** PAGE 5

Study: Residents left big metros during pandemic for family

MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

Cece Linder was living in a 770-square-foot apartment outside Washington, D.C., last spring when the area went into lockdown because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In May 2020, after a few months of both living and working in the small space, Linder decided to leave the capital area and move into the 2,000-square-foot beachside home she jointly owns with her parents in Cocoa Beach, Florida. Now she gets to see the sunrise over the water each morning before work.

"If I'm teleworking anyway, why not move to this other place that is more visually attractive, it's beachside, and someone can occasionally cook for me?" Linder said. "Though that didn't exactly work out. My mom has me cooking for them."

Linder was not alone in her thinking. According to a new study and data from the U.S. Census Bureau, she was one of thousands of people who migrated out of the nation's largest metropolitan areas and into smaller ones during the pandemic.

The study found that, like Linder, many of the migrants weren't driven by new jobs or weather — or even a fear of the virus — but a desire to be closer to family and a freedom to make it happen because of remote working. Although the pattern of people moving from larger to smaller cities has been going on for several years, the pandemic

SEE **RESIDENTS** PAGE 11



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The Re-View

By Merv Hecht

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Tar & Roses

After a fire and one long pandemic, Tar & Roses on 5th & Santa Monica Blvd. is back! There is seating on the sidewalk (the only good thing to come out of the pandemic) and very pleasant seating in the back patio.

This restaurant gets about the best reviews on the web of any restaurant in Santa Monica. Except for a few run-ins with the owner over seating disputes, I would have to agree that the food is not only excellent, but very special in its preparation.

The restaurant is especially well-known for special roasted vegetable preparations. The menu is diverse, the space is comfortable, and the service is excellent. Only the wine is lacking, but what else is new? Noticeably lacking are any of the medium-priced Rhône wines, and the less expensive wines from the South of France. And the corkage fee is $45, but that's getting more and more common. "Tar & Roses" refers to the taste of Barolo wines of the Piedmont district of Italy. They do have those available, if you can afford them. I brought one bottle of a wonderful Chateauneuf di Pape, and when that was gone, we ordered a bottle of Barolo from a well-known producer for $183, and it was a step down and probably would have been better with pasta.

The meal started with a delicious pate which was shared around the table.

Next came roasted pea pods. These were not to our taste. There were few peas to suck out of the roasted pods, and the pods were too stringy to eat. To the waiter's credit, he saw that we were not eating them and whisked them away, mentioning that they would not appear on our bill. That's class!

My partner had the duck breast and artichoke hearts. Both were properly cooked and enhanced with a good sauce. Our friends shared a bone-in ribeye, which I tasted. I was delighted to find that the meat was cooked to perfection and top quality. We also shared a small roasted beet which was very flavorful. Roasted vegetables are really the way to go these days.



Courtesy photo

STEAK: The delicious ribeye.

The only failure was my dish, squid ink fettuccine. It lacked any seafood flavor – or any other flavor for that matter. Bits of white squid could be seen but not tasted. My error: Don't order pasta when not dining in an Italian restaurant.

A chocolate dessert was wonderful and rich, but a bit overkill after that meal. Maybe something light for dessert would have been a better option.

Merv Hecht, like many Harvard Law School graduates, went into the wine business after law. In 1988, he began writing restaurant reviews and books. His latest book is "The Instant Wine Connoisseur" and it is available on Amazon. Or you might like his attempt at humor in "Great Cases I Lost." He currently works for several companies that source and distribute food and beverages, including wines, internationally. Please send your comments to: mervynhecht@yahoo.com.

BRIEFS

PASADENA

Historic Pasadena library closed due to seismic risk

The city of Pasadena's historic Central Library has been ordered closed pending further review due to seismic safety concerns.

The nearly century-old Mediterranean Revival-style building had just reopened for in-person services following a pandemic closure when the closure order was issued Monday, the city said in a statement.

A recent structural assessment revealed that most of the building is constructed with unreinforced masonry bearing walls that support concrete floors and walls.

So-called URM buildings are known to be a life-safety hazard because they can collapse in an earthquake.

"While Pasadena passed an ordinance in 1993 mandating all URM buildings to be retrofitted, vacated or demolished, no record has been found as to why Central Library was not identified and addressed as a URM building," the city said.

"This is devastating news for us all," said City Manager Steve Mermell. "Central Library is more than just a building; it's where generations of families have grown up, and an iconic building that completes our Civic Center as one of Pasadena's treasures."

Central Library was designed by architect Myron Hunt in 1924 and completed in 1927. The building was expanded in the mid-1960s and modified in the 1980s. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Pasadena's ornate domed City Hall, also completed in 1927, underwent a seismic retrofit more than a decade ago.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 282 CALLS ON MAY 5

Party Complaint 100blk Alta Ave 12:03 a.m.
Person With A Gun 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 12:09 a.m.
Loud Music 2500blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:38 a.m.
Construction Noise Stanford St / Arizona Ave 12:51 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 1:22 a.m.
Loud Music 500blk Wilshire Blvd 1:41 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1900blk Santa Monica Blvd 2:08 a.m.
Loud Music 1100blk Lincoln Blvd 2:43 a.m.
Malicious Mischief 1900blk Ocean Way 4:10 a.m.
Encampment 1100blk Palisades Park 4:45 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 1000blk Pacific St 5:27 a.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 2800blk 2nd St 6:33 a.m.
Red Zone Violation 1600blk 19th St 7:56 a.m.
Mark & Tag Abandoned Vehicle 1600blk 18th St 8:11 a.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 6th St / Wilshire Blvd 8:42 a.m.
Fraud Report 2100blk Ocean Ave 8:42 a.m.
Loitering 14th St / California Ave 8:47 a.m.
General Parking Problem 300blk Olympic Dr 9:03 a.m.
Petty Theft Now 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 9:05 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 4th St / Olympic Blvd W 9:09 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 4th St / Olympic Blvd E 9:23 a.m.
Burglary Report 1200blk 5th St 9:29 a.m.
Indecent Exposure 1400blk 6th St 9:38 a.m.
Panic Alarm 2100blk Wilshire Blvd 9:40 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1000blk 3rd St 9:43 a.m.
Person With A Gun 10th St / Wilshire Blvd 10:02 a.m.
Lewd Activity 3100blk Wilshire Blvd 10:04 a.m.
Fraud Report 100blk Fraser Ave 10:26 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1500blk 7th St 10:33 a.m.
Loud Music 2700blk Barnard Way 10:47 a.m.
Sexual Assault Ocean Ave / Arizona Ave 10:50 a.m.
Identity Theft Unknown 11:04 a.m.
Attempt Auto Theft Report 1300blk 14th St 11:07 a.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 1100blk Montana Ave 11:29 a.m.
Loud Music 1600blk Ocean Ave 11:38 a.m.
Burglary Report 1100blk 18th St 11:45 a.m.
Fraud Report 2400blk Virginia Ave 11:45 a.m.
Found Property 2200blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:57 a.m.
Battery Now 2000blk Main St 11:57 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 12:14 p.m.
Burglary Report 2200blk Colorado Ave 12:19 p.m.
Bike Theft Report 2100blk 20th St 1:18 p.m.
Burglary Report 1200blk 24th St 1:22 p.m.
Burglary Report 2200blk Colorado Ave 1:26 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1000blk Ocean Ave 1:31 p.m.
Fraud Report 2100blk Ocean Ave 1:34 p.m.
General Parking Problem 200blk Wilshire Blvd 1:39 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 800blk The Beach 1:52 p.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 1700blk 12th St 1:53 p.m.
Found Property 2400blk Main St 2:00 p.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon Report Main St / Marine St 2:10 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 200blk 17th St 2:23 p.m.
Family Disturbance 2600blk Virginia Ave 2:51 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1200blk 2nd St 2:52 p.m.
Strongarm Robbery Report 200blk Santa Monica Pier 2:59 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1100blk 7th St 3:22 p.m.
Threats Report/Investigations 1800blk Euclid St 3:27 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 24th St / Ocean Park Blvd 3:59 p.m.
Failure To Pay Parking Fee 2000blk Ocean Ave 4:02 p.m.
Battery 20th St / Santa Monica Blvd 4:11 p.m.
Hit And Run Felony Investigation Lincoln Blvd / Michigan Ave 4:28 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1100blk 7th St 4:28 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries 10th St / Marguerita Ave 4:30 p.m.
Found Property 1400blk Second St 4:35 p.m.
Loud Music 9th St / Broadway 4:45 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 1100blk Pacific Coast Hwy 5:14 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries Main St / Colorado Ave 5:21 p.m.
Found Person 2600blk Virginia Ave 5:22 p.m.
Battery Report 800blk 3rd St 5:34 p.m.
Missing Person 300blk Olympic Dr 5:41 p.m.
Panic Alarm 1700blk Ocean Park Blvd 5:50 p.m.
Malicious Mischief 26th St / Wilshire Blvd 6:25 p.m.
Loud Music 2000blk Ocean Ave 6:38 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 900blk 2nd St 6:45 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 300blk Santa Monica Blvd 7:05 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 2600blk Ocean Park Blvd 7:12 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1300blk 2nd St 7:14 p.m.
Sexual Assault 1200blk 16th St 7:14 p.m.
Public Intoxication 400blk Santa Monica Pier 7:27 p.m.
Encampment 2500blk The Beach 7:40 p.m.
Loud Music 2000blk Ocean Ave 7:56 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 2600blk Wilshire Blvd 8:05 p.m.
Family Disturbance 2500blk California Ave 8:25 p.m.
Handicap Zone Violation 1500blk 4th St 8:45 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 2nd St / Hill St 9:15 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1200blk 2nd St 9:26 p.m.
Loud Music 1500blk Berkeley St 9:32 p.m.
Loud Music 2000blk Ocean Ave 9:32 p.m.
Encampment 300blk Civic Center Dr 9:33 p.m.
Public Intoxication 4th St / Pico Blvd 9:41 p.m.
Loud Music 2200blk Colorado Ave 9:50 p.m.
Party Complaint 1300blk 19th St 9:57 p.m.
Strongarm Robbery Report 1600blk Ocean Ave 9:58 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1000blk Cedar St 10:33 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1500blk Ocean Ave 10:33 p.m.
Loud Music 2600blk Main St 10:43 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1400blk Ocean Ave 10:44 p.m.
Fight 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 10:50 p.m.
Party Complaint 1500blk 9th St 11:02 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1000blk 4th St 11:38 p.m.

CRIME WATCH BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Crime Watch is culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department. These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

LAPD INVESTIGATING ROBBERY AT SINNERS AND SAINTS BAKERY

The Los Angeles Police Department is looking for a suspect in a robbery at Sinners and Saints, a bakery located at 2547 Lincoln Boulevard.

It happened at 4:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 6.

The store owner said a guy jumped over her fence and threw a piece of cement through the window. The suspect took off with a cash register.

"We need to do something about the growing crime in the area," said store owner Elisa Testone. "It's hard because every day I'm at war with myself as a business owner. I don't know what to do."

Testone said the good news is that none of her employees were at the bakery when the incident occurred.

Testone has kept her bakery open throughout the pandemic – saying she has had incredible support from the community. "We only shut down four days during the riots. Besides that, we were able to stay open for the neighborhood."

Testone posted a comment on Facebook telling customers they are grateful for support and "CANT STEAL OUR VIBE... only our cash box. See you #instore or for #delivery"

Sinners and Saints is a bakery that offers divine treats produced with only the best ingredients, locally sourced whenever possible with regular and gluten-free options.

The store hours are 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Testone said her team is getting ready for Mothers Day.

This story was published as part of a partnership between the Venice Current and SMDP

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 41 CALLS ON MAY 5

EMS 1300blk 2nd St 12:16 a.m.
EMS 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 1:04 a.m.
EMS 1600blk Ocean Ave 7:24 a.m.
EMS 2900blk Pico Blvd 7:29 a.m.
Smoke Investigation Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd W 7:40 a.m.
Brush Fire 17th St / Olympic Blvd 7:42 a.m.
Assist Lafd 200blk N Ocean 7:57 a.m.
EMS 1200blk Euclid St 8:32 a.m.
EMS 800blk Cedar St 8:55 a.m.
EMS 1500blk 5th St 9:10 a.m.
EMS 1500blk 2nd St 9:52 a.m.
EMS 3200blk Wilshire Blvd 10:35 a.m.
Electrical Fire - No Fire Visible 500blk Colorado Ave 12:13 p.m.
EMS 2500blk 4th St 12:18 p.m.
EMS 2200blk 23rd St 12:35 p.m.
EMS Stanford St / Nebraska Ave 1:15 p.m.
EMS 2000blk Arizona Ave 1:24 p.m.
EMS 2900blk Arizona Ave 1:34 p.m.
EMS 2200blk Wilshire Blvd 1:36 p.m.
EMS 2000blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:38 p.m.
Structure Fire 800blk 4th St 2:48 p.m.
EMS 100blk Broadway 3:00 p.m.
EMS 2600blk Virginia Ave 3:20 p.m.
EMS 3100blk Lincoln Blvd 3:52 p.m.
EMS 1700blk Stewart St 4:14 p.m.
EMS Ocean Ave / Arizona Ave 4:28 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury Lincoln Blvd / Grant St 4:30 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury 10th St / Marguerita Ave 4:30 p.m.
EMS 900blk Wilshire Blvd 4:36 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 9th St 5:56 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 17th St 6:18 p.m.
EMS 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 7:04 p.m.
EMS Ocean Ave / Arizona Ave 7:38 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 700blk Idaho Ave 7:56 p.m.
EMS 4th St / Santa Monica Blvd 8:21 p.m.
EMS 2900blk Pico Blvd 8:37 p.m.
EMS 2900blk 2nd St 8:58 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Physical Rescue Interstate 10 / Centinela Ave 10:23 p.m.
EMS 2100blk Ocean Ave 11:21 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury Interstate 10 / 20th St 11:21 p.m.
EMS 400blk 21st St 11:27 p.m.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Firefighters Respond to Fatal Traffic Collision

On Wednesday evening May 5, at 10:24 p.m. Santa Monica Firefighters were dispatched to a report of a Traffic Collision on the eastbound Interstate 10 Freeway, east of the Centinela Ave. off ramp. Upon arrival, firefighters encountered a significant two vehicle collision with five victims, two of which required specialized rescue tools to extricate from the wreckage. Three patients were treated and transported to local hospitals by SMFD Paramedics with moderate to severe injuries. Tragically, one victim was killed in the collision.

A total of 23 Firefighters and Paramedics responded to the incident along with our partners from McCormick Ambulance. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) provided traffic control and is the lead agency on the investigation.

SUBMITTED BY CAPTAIN PATRICK NULTY.

Santa Monica Daily Press office (310) 458-7737

In GOP stronghold, Biden pushes for his infrastructure plan

JOSH BOAK AND JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

With a badly aging bridge as his backdrop, President Joe Biden stood in reliably Republican Louisiana on Thursday to pressure GOP lawmakers to support his $2.3 trillion infrastructure plan — and yet express a willingness to compromise on the corporate tax hikes he's recommending to pay the cost.

Biden leaned into the stagecraft of the presidency by choosing to speak in the city of Lake Charles, which has been battered by historic storms and is home to a 70-year-old bridge that is two decades past its designed lifespan.

Where to find the money for replacements and repairs here and elsewhere? The Democratic president, who wants to raise corporate taxes, challenged Republican dogma that low taxes for corporations and the wealthy fuel economic growth. But he also declared he was willing to make a deal and dared them to do the same.

"I'm willing to hear ideas from both sides," said Biden. "I'm ready to compromise. What I'm not ready to do is, I'm not ready to do nothing. I'm not ready to have another period where America has another Infrastructure Month and it doesn't change a damn thing."

Even as he engages with Republicans in Washington, Biden is trying to sell their voters on the idea that higher corporate taxes can provide $115 billion for roads and bridges and hundreds of billions of dollars more to upgrade America's electrical grid, make the water system safer, rebuild homes and jump-start the manufacturing of electric vehicles. To drive home the point, he also toured a water plant in New Orleans.

He's proposing to pay for his plan by undoing the 2017 tax cuts signed into law by President Donald Trump and raising the corporate tax rate from 21% to 28%. Biden contends his programs would bolster the middle class and make the country stronger than tax cuts for big companies and CEOs.

"You're entitled to be a millionaire, be a billionaire, just pay your fair share," said Biden. "I'm not looking to punish anyone. I'm sick and tired of corporate America not doing their fair share."

The White House has found little support from congressional Republicans, none of whom voted for the $1.9 trillion COVID-19 bill signed into law in March and who have, so far, uniformly opposed the infrastructure plan. But the West Wing has pointed to polling that suggests the plan is popular with GOP voters and notes that some Republican officials do back it.

"I find more support from Republican governors and mayors and Democratic governors and mayors around the country," Biden said, "because they've got to answer the question: Is life better in this town, this city, this state than it was before I got elected?"

To emphasize that point, Biden was introduced in Lake Charles, which still has blue tarps where roofs once were and plywood replacing glass in office buildings, by a Democratic governor, John Bel Edwards, and the city's Republican mayor, Nic Hunter. Hunter outlined his many political differences with the president before focusing on their common ground.

"I do believe we can agree on the dire need here in Lake Charles for an infrastructure plan that can build us a new bridge and I do believe we can agree on the dire need to support disaster relief in Southwest Louisiana," Hunter said. "Any member of Congress out there listening: Lake Charles needs help right now. And we are asking for it."

Louisiana has a long history of accepting federal money for storm recovery — most notably after Katrina and Rita in 2005. And the Army Corps of Engineers has been a staple in the state managing the Mississippi River levees and drain basins, demonstrating that the conservative lean of voters has been tempered by that established relationship with the federal treasury.

Republican lawmakers, however, are firmly sticking with low taxes as a pillar of their ideology and partisan identity.

Several GOP senators favor spending $568 billion on infrastructure over five years, a small fraction of what the Democratic president has proposed — a sign of how difficult a deal might be.

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said that Republicans would rather finance infrastructure through user fees such as tolls and gasoline taxes, though he declined to specify which fees he would back.

McConnell has also said that "100%" of his focus was "on stopping this new administration," echoing similarly obstructionist threats he made during President Barack Obama's term and underscoring the challenge Biden faces in trying to work across the aisle.

Biden brushed off that talk, noting that as vice president he was "able to get a lot done" with McConnell during the Obama era. And after landing in New Orleans ahead of his water plant tour, he spent time on the tarmac talking with Louisiana's two Republican senators, John Kennedy and Bill Cassidy. But the president's true audience has been Republican voters, not GOP lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

The administration is banking that its message on infrastructure could play in Louisiana, which last backed a Democratic presidential candidate in 1996. Louisiana has been barraged by 30 extreme weather events over the past decade that caused $50 billion worth of damage. Biden is seeking $50 billion to make infrastructure better able to withstand storms, winds and flooding.

Hurricanes battered Lake Charles, a city of 78,000 residents, twice last year over six weeks. Trump, whose administration's planned "Infrastructure Weeks" became noted for being anything but, had promised to fix the city's bridge were he to be reelected.

Rep. Steve Scalise, the Republican whip who represents portions of Louisiana, derided Biden's plan as a "budget-busting tax hike spending boondoggle masquerading as an infrastructure bill."

"Raising taxes that will force middle-class jobs overseas is not infrastructure," Scalise said. "Unionizing health care workers is not infrastructure."

There is general agreement among Democrats and Republicans in Washington about the need for infrastructure spending, but the GOP wants to define the term more narrowly, concentrating on roads, bridges, airports, transit and broadband rather than renewable energy and access to caregivers. They object to undoing the 2017 tax cuts and imposing higher taxes on corporations and the wealthy.

Lemire reported from New York.



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



Robert Lemle

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GOP seeks unity, even if that means embracing election lie

JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

There's a new buzzword among Republicans in Washington: unity.

The House GOP, led by Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, is moving toward stripping Rep. Liz Cheney of her leadership post for her frequent criticism of former President Donald Trump. The unusual step, they say, is necessary to unify a party whose base still reveres the former president four months after he incited a deadly riot at the U.S. Capitol.

"We all need to be working as one if we're able to win the majority," McCarthy said this week.

With Republicans close to reclaiming control of the House next year, the treatment of Cheney suggests GOP leaders will do almost anything to rally the party's base, even if that means sweeping the events of Jan. 6 under the rug and embracing — or refusing to confront — Trump's ongoing lie that he won the 2020 election, a campaign that he actually lost by a wide margin.

Those backing Cheney's ouster argue she has become a distraction by continuing to criticize Trump, who remains the dominating force in the party. They want to move forward, they say, and focus on policy ideas and providing a clear contrast with Democrats. But critics see the fight as a larger distraction.

"My unsolicited advice would be: Talk about the future and what you offer to Americans," said Alyssa Farah, the former Trump White House communications director. "I do worry that this is sort of showing that we're going to continue more the politics of personality as opposed to the politics of policy and deliverables to the American public."

While a message about being "sufficiently pro-Trump" may work in certain districts, she noted Republicans' focus on election interference depressed GOP turnout in Georgia, where the party lost two runoff elections in January that gave Democrats control of the Senate. And she warned that aligning the party with lies about voter fraud could turn off suburban voters and older voters in key swing districts.

"Those are the ones where you have to win over moderates and independents, and that message does not resonate with them, fundamentally," she said.

The GOP's leadership turmoil could pose some risks for Democrats as well. While many Democrats are only too happy to let Republicans fight among themselves, the drama could distract from President Joe Biden's effort to promote his massive infrastructure package, a push he took on the road Thursday with a visit to Louisiana.

Still, Republicans are making a clear political calculation. Trump remains deeply popular among GOP voters, and many continue to believe the lies he continues to spread about what happened in November. A CNN poll in late April found that 70% of Republicans believe that Biden did not legitimately win the election, even though dozens of local Republican election officials, state audits and even Trump's former attorney general have said there was no evidence of widespread fraud.

Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik, who has Trump's backing to serve as Cheney's replacement, said Thursday that she was "sending a clear message that we are one team. And that means working with the (former) President and working with all of our excellent Republican members of Congress," even as she parroted election conspiracies on former Trump strategist Steve Bannon's podcast.

Cheney, meanwhile, has framed her fight as one over the soul of a party long associated with her family name.

"The Republican Party is at a turning point, and Republicans must decide whether we are going to choose truth and fidelity to the Constitution," she wrote in a Washington Post op-ed Wednesday. "The question before us now is whether we will join Trump's crusade to delegitimize and undo the legal outcome of the 2020 election, with all the consequences that might have."

Cheney has been under fire since she joined nine other Republican House members in impeaching Trump for his role in sparking the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol. Trump's supporters stormed the building, trying to halt the certification of the vote.

McCarthy, who had originally defended Cheney against efforts to strip her title as House Republican Conference chair, has insisted his decision has nothing to do with Cheney's vote but is rather about her refusal to stop criticizing Trump in the weeks since.

"I have heard from members concerned about her ability to carry out her job as conference chair, to carry out the message," said McCarthy on Fox News.

But Arkansas Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson told CNN that the move was nonetheless "going to be perceived by the American body politic as an ouster because of one vote."

"I don't think this is healthy for our party — that perception. We've got to get back to talking about ideas and how to unify ourselves," he said.

Those seeking her ouster see it differently.

Indiana Rep. Jim Banks, the chair of the conservative Republican Study Committee who has long argued the party should focus on policy to win in 2022, sees Cheney as distracting from that goal.

"The reason that we are having an internal discussion about a change in leadership is because of the distraction from the single mission and goal that the vast majority has in winning back the majority," he said. "She's focused on her animosity toward President Trump. She's focused on Jan. 6 — the rest of us are focused on the midterms."

Banks pushed back on the idea that Cheney and others with different views were being purged from the party. In her leadership role, he said, Cheney is tasked with speaking on behalf of the conference. "But you're out of sync as the chief spokesperson of our

SEE **ELECTION** PAGE 11

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AWARD WINNER
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WINNER

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BRIEFS

LOS ANGELES

Passenger jet lands safely in LA after bird strikes engine

An Allegiant airliner returned safely to Los Angeles International Airport after the crew reported striking a bird Thursday morning, authorities said.

Allegiant Air Flight 314, an Airbus A319 that was headed to Utah, landed without incident at 7:44 a.m., said Ian Gregor, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman.

The jet experienced a bird strike to its No. 2 engine shortly after takeoff and returned to the airport for an inspection and an assessment, Allegiant spokeswoman Hilarie Grey said in an email.

"The aircraft landed safely and taxied to the gate under its own power, where passengers deplaned normally," she said.

Grey said she did not immediately have further information about damage to the aircraft.

A replacement jet was dispatched to take the passengers to Provo, Utah.

The hazards of aircraft bird strikes were demonstrated by the emergency landing of US Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River in 2009 after geese were ingested in both engines.

Since then, according to an FAA fact sheet, bird strike reporting increased to an average of more than 15,000 a year from 2015 through 2019. Less than 5% of strikes are damaging.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SIMI VALLEY

Goats return to Reagan Library to eat and create a firebreak

More than 350 goats are using their mouths to help protect The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum from wildfire danger.

The herd returned this week to eat brush around the institution's campus in the Southern California community of Simi Valley.

The goats create a firebreak between the natural vegetation and the facility, library spokeswoman Melissa Giller told the Ventura County Star.

Goats were credited with helping keep the library safe from a wildfire in 2019.

"During the huge fires a year and a half ago, many of the firefighters who were battling the fire that came within feet of the library said that it was the perimeter created by the goats that allowed them to fight the fire and stop it from getting onto our campus," Giller said.

This year there is not as much for the goats to eat because there has been little rain and little vegetation regrowth, said Capt. Robert Welsbie, a spokesman for the Ventura County Fire Department.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

RIOT

FROM PAGE 1

early 2020 in ways that negatively influenced the response to May 31.

"The Department's approach to planning and intelligence had been restructured in the months leading up to May 31 in ways that belied a significant commitment to their importance," according to the report's key findings, and turnover at the highest levels of the organization resulted in a leadership team whose members lacked tenure at their respective positions and were out of sync with the Chief.

Incomplete and conflicting information about the size and scale of likely activity on May 31, and lack of a structured way to effectively use and share information contributed to the SMPD under-reaction. The Chief being out of the City until the late morning of May 31, in conjunction with ambiguous delegation and lack of managerial cohesion, also undermined the quality of decision-making and adequacy of preparation on the night of May 30, according to the report. "By the time the Department began to recognize and contend with its serious shortfall in staffing, harmful delays in getting additional help were inevitable," said the report.

These, and other situational shortfalls resulted in a debacle and a standoff with protesters on Ocean Avenue that was addressed with tear gas and other less-lethal tools under circumstances that were confusing to members of the public and department officers, according to the report. The use of traditional large-scale deployment at Ocean Avenue also came at the cost of deploying resources to other areas of the City and forced the department into a reactive mode for hours, which rendered them incapable of addressing the volume and range of unlawful behavior that began to proliferate.

The report notes law enforcement agencies all over the country, including in other Los Angeles County locations, found themselves overmatched by the size, scale, and complexity of the unrest that followed George Floyd's death as it lists a total of 44 recommendations.

Recommendations range from the department regularly reviewing and updating its Mass Booking Procedures policy to officers being better versed in crowd control. Gennaco and the OIR team also suggested that the police department ensure its use of flashbangs, Pepperballs and tear gas aligns to department standards. According to a staff report, it's been recommended that Council direct staff to comply with all of the recommendations listed in the report.

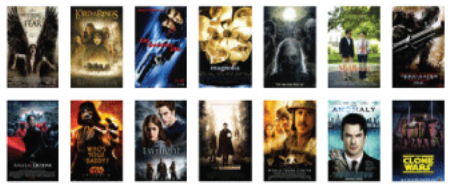
Council isn't set to take up discussion on the report until Tuesday, May 11, when it meets at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Sue Himmelrich said shortly after the report's release that OIR Group's independent analysis is an important milestone and Council remains steadfastly committed to learning from it.

"Going forward, the newly formed Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission will play a role working with the Police Department to ensure OIR Group's recommendations are implemented," Himmelrich added. "The Council also looks forward to understanding the changes our Police Department has already made in response to the events of May 31, 2020, what recommendations remain, and how we can support our officers in our continued commitment to provide public safety for all."

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[1] "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2020
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SAINT JOHN'S PHYSICIAN PARTNERS
PROVIDENCE

BUSINESSES

FROM PAGE 1

desirable commercial leases.

Essentially everything that attracts businesses to these cities under normal circumstances, set them up to fail during the pandemic.

"Many of the strengths that we've had historically did make us particularly vulnerable," said Deputy City Manager Anuj Gupta. "So the notion that small businesses in Santa Monica were especially hard hit from the impacts of the pandemic, as we see reflected in this data, is not surprising."

Santa Monica used to receive around 8.4 million visits from tourists annually, who in 2019 injected an estimated $2.2 billion into the local economy. In addition, over 91,200 workers commuted to the City on a daily basis.

This vibrant and bustling population drove up the price of many commercial leases. When these people disappeared, so did a lot of the revenue that allowed businesses to afford sky-high rents.

"You are paying for the privilege of being in Santa Monica, and that is a good thing in good times and a really hard thing in hard times," said Jessica Goldfarb, Owner of Limonaia gift shop.

Limonaia has been on Montana Ave. for over a decade and has been able to weather the Covid-19 storm because the building's landlord was willing to forgive rent. Numerous small businesses owners cited a flexible landlord is the main reason they did not close doors.

"Obviously things are improving, but they are not at a place where I could pay normal rent, so it's still very dicey," said Goldfarb, adding that similar to the 2008 financial crisis, it will likely take years for businesses to fully recover from the pandemic.

She fears that there is a second wave of small stores closures still to come, if landlords grow tired of lowering or forgiving rents before businesses are back on their feet.

Even for small businesses with flexible landlords, the conditions of the past year often precluded turning a profit.

Monzerrat Brunkhorst had to close down her Mid City coffee shop Cafe del Mundo in January and is planning to reopen in June.

Prior to the pandemic, she derived around half of her business from office workers. Their absence, coupled with residents who left the Mid City area and those who felt unsafe leaving their homes, sapped her customer base almost entirely dry.

"Small businesses, we don't have big reserves in the bank just to weather it out, especially in the restaurant industry you just sort of go day-to-day," said Brunkhorst. Eventually, it was costing the cafe more to keep its doors open than to go into temporary hibernation.

Longtime Main Street clothing retailer Suji also hit a crisis point in January. Main Street was especially devastated by the second outdoor dining shutdown, which caused retailers to lose most of their foot traffic.

Having experienced a disastrous fourth quarter in 2020, Owner Susan Amenta sent out cards to her customers in January announcing that the store would be closing down. She was met by an outpouring of community support and the store then experienced an excellent month of business, prompting Amenta to reverse her decision for the time being.

"We're just lucky to go month to month at this point," said Amenta. "I'm just going to see what happens if I can kind of bring those numbers up to the point where it's a viable business again."

Amenta, who also owns Textures sweater store on Montana Ave, said she was able to keep both businesses open through a combination of landlord support, customer loyalty, money she had in reserves, and PPP funding.

The flurry of grant money that became available during the pandemic was a saving grace for many businesses. At the same time it was challenging for small businesses to access, as they often needed to submit their applications the moment the online portal opened.

"I feel like the medium to large companies benefited the most because they have super savvy accounting systems and were on top of receiving their $8 million, while here I am asking for $20,000 just to survive at least three or four more months," said Brunkhorst.

The City of Santa Monica, which faced a $154 million budget deficit this fiscal year, has now managed to right its sinking fiscal ship to the point where it can send out lifeboats to struggling businesses. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the City has launched the SaMo Small Business Recovery Grant Program and is providing up to $10,000 in funding per business.

For some small businesses this could be a lifesaving resource, for others it is simply too late.

Clara@smdp.com



Clara Harter

CLOSED: Businesses that couldn't work with landlords were forced to close.

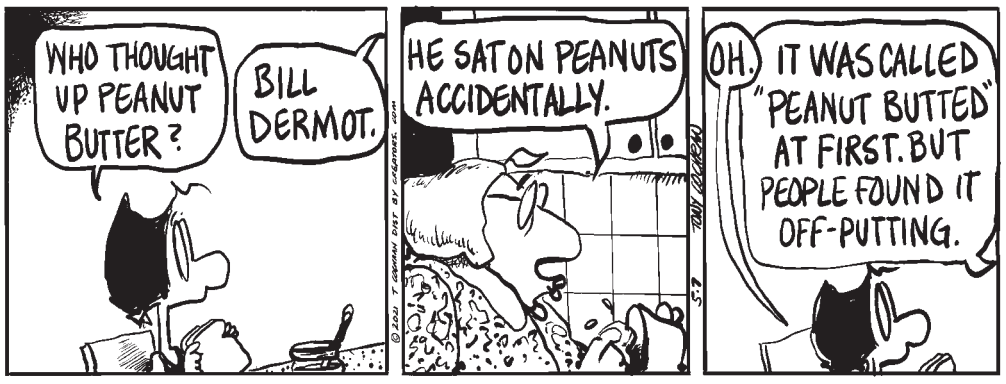



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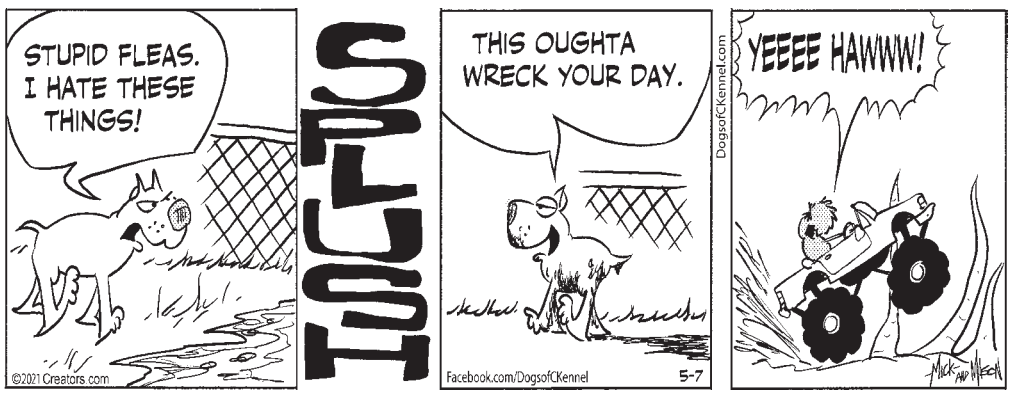
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



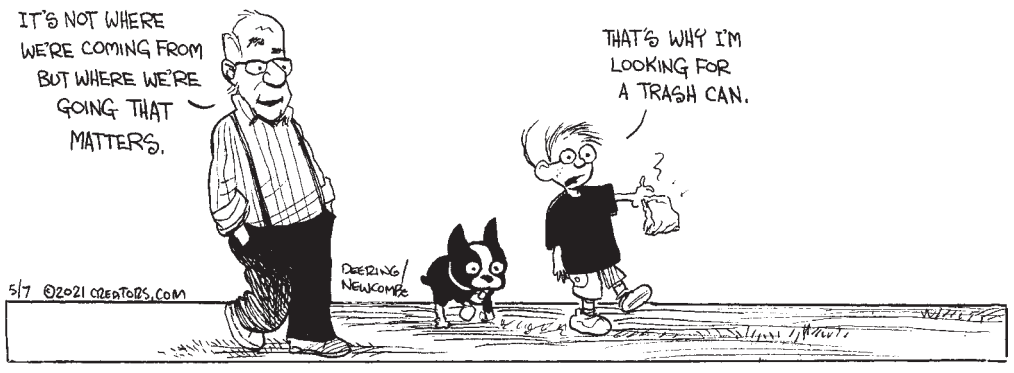
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



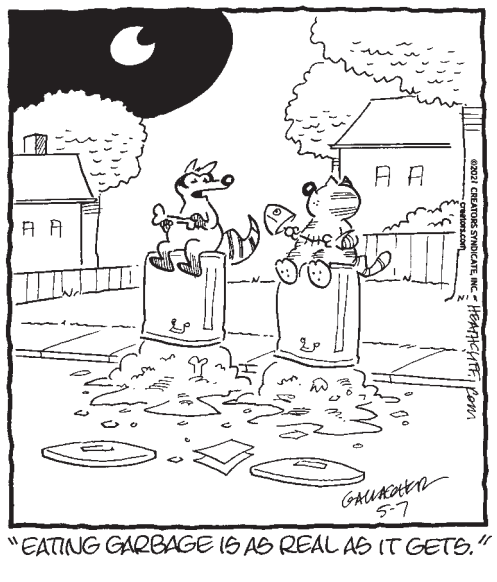
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"EATING GARBAGE IS AS REAL AS IT GETS."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 63.7°

FRIDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist high
Modest blend of S/SSE swell with minor bump in NW swell mix. Slow around the early AM high tide but wind looks to stay light as it drops through late-morning/midday.

SATURDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft Waist to chest high
Peaky but with chance for stronger SE/S wind. Modest S/SSE swell lingers and NW swell mix bumps up in size.

WEATHER

Friday: Cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly sunny, with a high near 65.
Friday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, increasing clouds, with a low around 56.
Saturday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 68.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2021/05/07	Fri	01:57 AM	1.08	L
2021/05/07	Fri	07:43 AM	4.16	H
2021/05/07	Fri	1:48 PM	0.40	L
2021/05/07	Fri	8:12 PM	5.00	H
2021/05/08	Sat	02:34 AM	0.62	L
2021/05/08	Sat	08:27 AM	4.08	H
2021/05/08	Sat	2:15 PM	0.70	L
2021/05/08	Sat	8:34 PM	5.21	H
2021/05/09	Sun	03:06 AM	0.24	L
2021/05/09	Sun	09:07 AM	3.96	H
2021/05/09	Sun	2:39 PM	1.01	L
2021/05/09	Sun	8:54 PM	5.38	H
2021/05/10	Mon	03:37 AM	-0.06	L
2021/05/10	Mon	09:44 AM	3.82	H
2021/05/10	Mon	3:01 PM	1.32	L
2021/05/10	Mon	9:15 PM	5.50	H
2021/05/11	Tue	04:08 AM	-0.27	L
2021/05/11	Tue	10:21 AM	3.65	H
2021/05/11	Tue	3:23 PM	1.61	L
2021/05/11	Tue	9:37 PM	5.56	H
2021/05/12	Wed	04:41 AM	-0.39	L

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 5/5
16 23 28 40 63
Power#: 1
Jackpot: 157 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 5/4
4 27 32 57 63
Mega#: 22
Jackpot: 370 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 5/5
6 11 17 27 39
Mega#: 19
Jackpot: 44 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 5/5
7 15 21 28 31

Daily 3
Draw Date: 5/5
EVENING: 6 1 9
Draw Date: 5/5
MIDDAY: 6 3 3

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 5/5
1st: 04 - Big Ben
2nd: 06 - Whirl Win
3rd: 12 - Lucky Charms
Race Time: 1:48.02

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (MAY 7)

In a way, following your bliss is the most responsible thing you can do. For one thing, it pays. Lucky financial moves will be the result of a stellar perspective, which comes from delving deeply into your delights. You'll work with your emotions to create circumstances that ultimately benefit many, a skill that rubs off on others. Virgo and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 3, 22, 18, 9 and 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When you're talking to someone you're trying to understand where they are coming from. You can picture their life outside the interaction with greater accuracy because of the excellent questions you ask.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You like to be the one giving, but if you don't let others help you, you deprive them of something meaningful. Part of generosity is being a gracious receiver of what people contribute to you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You don't have to be overly sensitive to every little internal distress signal or constantly let yourself off the hook. But do acknowledge when the hard work hurts. That acknowledgment is enough to avoid burnout.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). The rules are in place for a reason, but it's not always a good one. Today, you just may find that it's not a very solid or enforceable one either. If someone is going to make an exception, it will be for exceptional you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Emotional investment is like any other investment -- a risk. One thing you can count on is that, sooner or later, everyone gets hurt in love. If there's no hurt, it's not love. So the question is, who are you willing to hurt for?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). What you like will agree with you, make you look good, and inspire lots more of the good stuff. Who you love will love you back. What you do will matter. It's an all-around fantastic day.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Projects have a beginning, middle and an end, though that is not the best order of approach. Begin with the end in mind. If you don't have an end in mind yet, assist someone who does and you'll learn a lot.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Be extremely careful which collective you align with. Groups can be incredibly destructive and stupid or, under the right circumstances, highly intelligent and even brighter as an entity than the most intelligent person within the group.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Trying to connect with an emotionally distant person is like grasping the wind -- futile. The wind touches you; you do not touch it. But if you position yourself well, you can use its power to do any number of things.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). An old joke: Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana. So make like a fruit fly and get into the sweetness of the day. It's going to take a little work to get past the peel and a little humor to get past this horoscope.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Be like the honeybee. Send out scouts in every direction so that later you can concentrate all your efforts on only the direction where the flowers are open and inviting.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Even though you are affiliated with a group, you will act freely and independently, cooperating as it suits you and compromising when you deem it beneficial. The approach produces coordinated results everyone will be proud of.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

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

Newsday Crossword

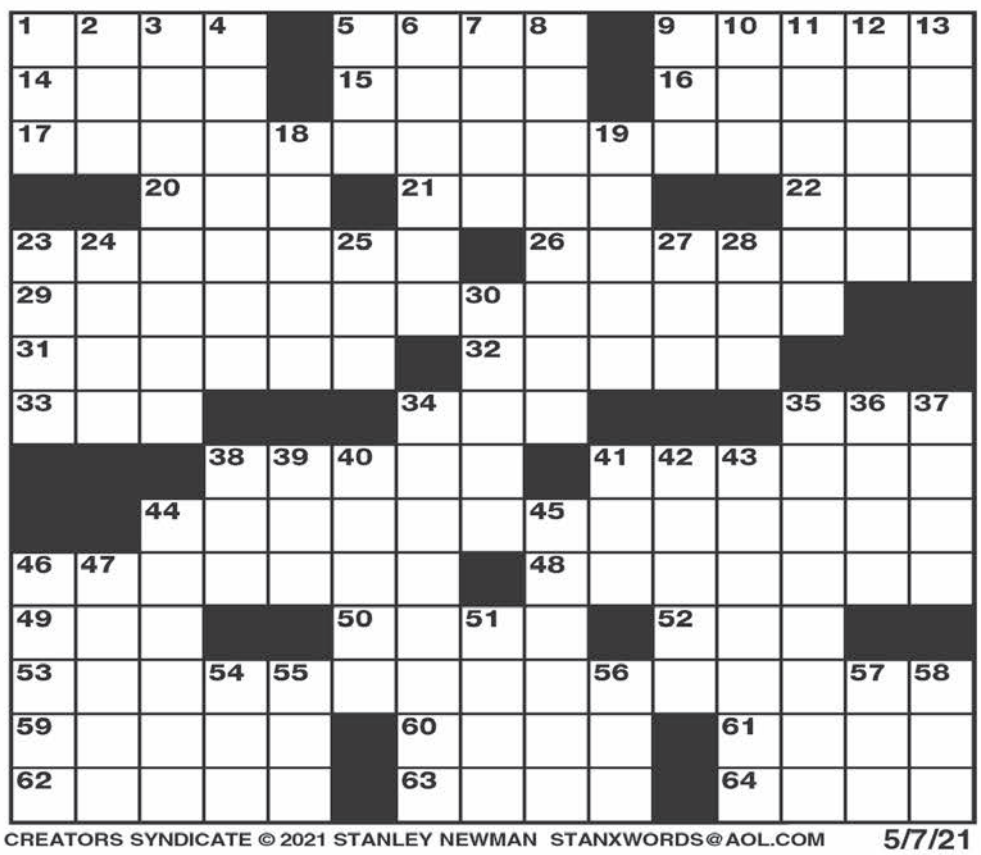
THE FOUR REASONS by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
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ACROSS

1 What fills some cookies
5 Laver contemporary
9 Nile dam city
14 Darn alternative
15 Email folder
16 *"¡Hasta ___!"*
17 Why to get the tweezers: To __ [Dec.-Mar.]
20 Prefix in seismology
21 Recent transportation secretary
22 Certain temp monitors
23 Throw out there
26 School SE of Duke
29 Why to get rich: To __ [Mar.-Jun.]
31 22 Mozart works
32 Well-versed
33 According to
34 Child safety advocate
35 Contraction candidate
38 Palo Alto automaker
41 Chintzy
44 Why to visit gmc.com: To __ [Jun.-Sep.]
46 Barbarous barber of Broadway
48 Check-fraud preventers
49 "Bingo!"
50 Detroit River's destination
52 Camp furnishing
53 Why to buy a painting: To __ [Sep.-Dec.]
59 Explanation introduction
60 Brand of brownies
61 Metallic Olympics equipment
62 Table neighbor of carbon
63 In perfect condition
64 Upgrade, perhaps

DOWN

1 DC memorial honoree
2 Feeling of fury
3 Screen message you'd rather not see
4 Sink accessory
5 Enzyme ending
6 Six-time Best Actress Oscar nominee (1976-2001)
7 Hodgepodge
8 Tex-Mex turnover
9 *Aladdin* prince
10 Great ball of fire
11 Kitchen cleaner
12 Facilitator
13 Colonizers of Iceland
18 String quartet member
19 English Enlightenment philosopher
23 Stone-in-water sound
24 Ready (for)
25 Family nickname
27 Thimbleful
28 Sticks in an arsenal
30 Bedevil
34 Finished basement, often
35 Camp clothing label
36 Free-wheeling
37 Rocky pinnacles
38 Anatomical pivot point
39 Billion-year period
40 Clay Olympic equipment
41 '60s revolutionary nickname
42 *Amadeus* star
43 Invest with authority
44 More efficient
45 Bart Simpson, since 1987
46 *Jungle Book* title
47 Frisbee brand
51 Crucifix initials
54 US auditing agency
55 Roadhouse
56 On a lucky streak
57 Went first
58 MGM mascot



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Binary Puzzle

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 22 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 5138

Astronomy

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

Altitude	Earth	Leo Minor	Russia
Beam	Europa	Lunar	Satellite
Big bang	Future	Manoeuvre	Solar
Centaur	Gases	Maps	Stars
Ceres	Haumea	Mass	Travel
China	Heat	Nadir	USA
Comet	Helium	Nebula	Venus
Cycle	Hubble	Neptune	Walk
Data	Inner	Outer	Wonder
Dimmed	Kuiper belt	Ozone	
Dust	Landing	Rocket	

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RESIDENTS

FROM PAGE 1

exacerbated that trend, said Peter Haslag of Vanderbilt University, who conducted the study on migrant motivations with Daniel Weagley of Georgia Tech. Their paper has not yet been published.

The data adds to understanding of how the pandemic has changed where and how Americans live. The moves were most common among those with higher incomes and more job flexibility. If the trends continue, it could have long-term implications for real estate markets, tax bases and the wealth inequality in cities, according to researchers.

"For us, the question is, is this a temporary blip or is it going to continue?" Haslag said. "If work-from-home really is going to be a factor in job and company decisions, and by allowing work and location to be separate decisions, people are going to be able to optimize their locations, if they have the right jobs."

The Census Bureau data shows that the New York metro area — which was hit early by the new coronavirus — declined by about 108,000 residents, or 0.5%. Roughly 216,000 residents moved out of the metropolitan area, but the natural increase from births and gains in international migration offset the departures. The New York metro area has experienced decelerated growth over the past several years, but last year's decline was a bigger bite of the Big Apple than in 2019, when it lost 60,000 residents.

The nation's next largest metro areas — Los Angeles and Chicago — also experienced greater population declines last year compared to the previous year: around 0.5% last year compared to 0.3% in 2019 for both metros. San Francisco also had a drop of around 0.5% last year compared to a 0.1% gain in 2019.

"I think some core urban counties like Manhattan, San Francisco and others may have taken a bigger brunt of pandemic-related out-movement, as well as lower immigration," said William Frey, a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. "Overall, it was a year of slow growth with selective movement out of some urban centers."

Smaller metros in the Sun Belt and West, several with large communities of vacation homes, saw the biggest population gains last year, mostly driven by migration. Led by the Florida retirement community The Villages, the metros seeing population increases between 3% and 4% included St. George, Utah; Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; Austin, Texas; and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Sun Belt megalopolises, such as Dallas, Houston and Phoenix, also grew last year, though not as much as their smaller cousins.

The Census Bureau data captured changes in states, metros and counties between July 1, 2019, and July 1, 2020. The last third of that time-frame overlapped with the first three months of the spread of the virus in the U.S. Population-change estimates are different from the 2020 census, a head count of every U.S. resident that determines how many congressional seats each state gets. Those numbers were released last week. Population changes are estimated using data on births, deaths and migration.

Haslag and Weagley estimate that 10% to 20% of the 300,000 interstate moves they studied between April 2020 and February 2021 were influenced by the pandemic. Their study used four years of long-distance moving data obtained from UniGroup, the parent company of United Van Lines and Mayflower Transit.

Job-related reasons for moving dropped from 46.6% of responses before the pandemic to 34.5% after the start of the pandemic in the U.S. in March 2020, while the desire to be closer to family jumped from 24.7% to 29.9%. The researchers theorized the jump for family reasons was due to people wanting to create social "bubbles" with family members, and the drop in job-related reasons was due to remote working and the decoupling of jobs from offices.

"It's not really about the infection rate when it comes to moving. It's about all the other things that came with the pandemic, whether it was to be closer to family or work from home," Haslag said. "That was really surprising to us."

Higher-income households moved less because of job loss or to take a new job than for other reasons such as lifestyle or the ability to work remotely. In fact, 75% of those who cited the ability to work remotely had annual households earnings of $100,000 or more. Lower-income households were more likely to move for financial reasons such as job loss or to move to a place with a lower cost of living, the researchers said.

David Mann and his wife, Lauren, had been wanting to move to the U.S. southeast from Dallas to be closer to family and friends for some time, but it was the pandemic that made it possible. Knowing they could work from home in their jobs in supply-chain consulting and merchandise planning, they made the leap and moved to Atlanta last summer.

"Working from home gave us the opportunity to move without having to look for new jobs," Mann said.

ELECTION

FROM PAGE 4

party, that's why a change is needed. ... The infighting and the distractions are not going to subside unless we make a change."

Still, Neil Newhouse, a longtime Republican pollster, said he doubted the current drama would have any impact on an election that's still 18 months away.

"While the GOP leadership controversy may be headlines on the national news and much talked about inside the Beltway, it is simply no more than a bump in the road for GOP efforts to win the majority in the '22 midterm elections," he said, adding: "This issue will be long forgotten by this time next year."

Joe Gruters, the chair of the Florida Republican Party, agreed.

"What happens in the leadership race I think is almost irrelevant to the rank-and-file members on the ground," he said. "I think people are concerned about what happens to them and their pocketbooks and less about who's carrying what flag and who has a title within the structure of the party overall."

Still, he made clear that Trump's views matter.

"Once the former president speaks on something like that, I would say most rank-and-file members agree with whatever he is saying. And the fact that he said it ... I think it's over."

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