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Volume 18 Issue 151

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Bird introduces new, more durable scooter for purchase

MADELEINE PAUKER
Daily Press Staff Writer

Bird Rides Inc. introduced Wednesday a new electric scooter model in Santa Monica and Los Angeles that riders can buy outright.

The Bird One, which is available in black, white and rose for $1,299, is more durable than the five models Bird has previously deployed. The Bird One's battery is double the size of any scooter on the market and has a 30-mile range, according to a press release. It also comes with anti-theft features, such as GPS and a digital lock.

The model is available to rent locally and the company will soon offer it in other North American cities.

This is the second model Bird has designed in-house. The Bird Zero, which launched last year, has lasted more than 10 months on the street on average, said CEO and founder Travis VanderZanden.

The lifespan of each scooter is critical to the company's profitability. Earlier models from Xiaomi and Ninebot, Segway's parent company, broke down

SEE **SCOOTER** PAGE 7

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive returns Saturday

ANGEL CARRERAS
Daily Press Staff Writer

Once you send off that sweet Hallmark card to Meemaw for Mother's Day, make sure to set out some non-perishable foods by your own mailbox — it's for a good cause and it'll change lives.

The 27th annual National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive occurs this weekend, Saturday, May 11. The event sees the United States Postal Services letter carriers collect food donations that help support their local community.

Stamp Out Hunger is the largest single-day food drive in the nation, collecting roughly 75 million pounds of food nationwide last year for those in need. Locally, 130,000 pounds of food were donated. Since its inception, the program has collected over 1.5 billion pounds of food in total.

And yes, that's 'billion' with a 'b.'

"The mission is to literally stamp out hunger," Justin Landrum, USPS letter carrier and union representative said. Landrum has been with the post office for 14 years and says the food drive event is a personal one for him.

"The food goes to good causes

SEE **FOOD DRIVE** PAGE 11

Proposed tobacco ban sparks fiery debate in Beverly Hills

JOHN ROGERS
Associated Press

A fiery debate is breaking out across Beverly Hills as people at tony hair salons, gas stations and stores weigh in on whether the city of the rich and famous should become the first in the U.S. to outlaw the sale of tobacco products everywhere except a few cigar lounges.

The City Council decided Tuesday night to make some

SEE **TOBACCO** PAGE 6









Juanita Moore

COMICS: Comic book lovers of all ages had a Marvel-ous time celebrating Free Comic Book Day at the Santa Monica Public Library on Saturday. Attendees made superhero slime, doodled with a Droid, and made some cool comic book crafts.


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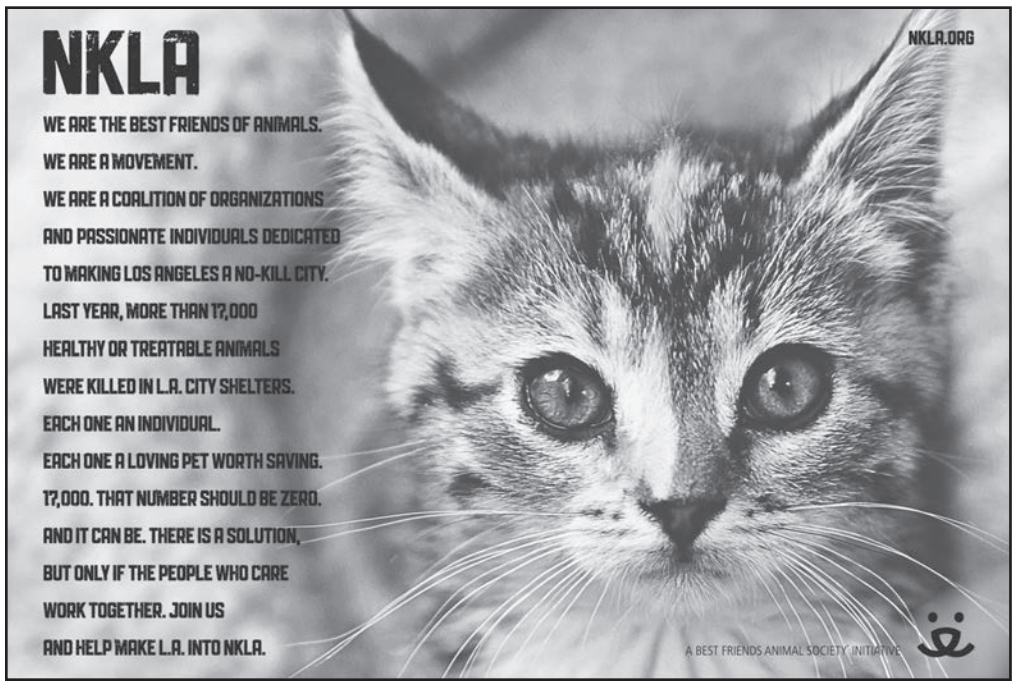
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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Thursday, May 9

Chrysalis: Social Media and the Job Search

Learn how to maximize social media to enhance your marketability and obtain employment. Fairview Branch Library 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Pilates Class

Develop core strength and coordination, this class draws traditional Pilates exercises with breath and correct alignment. Including resistance to body weight training and core isolation. Helping the body to increase movement to joints and tone the abdominal muscles. Pico Branch Library 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Santa Monica Rent Control Regular Board Meeting

The Rent Control Board meets to conduct business associated with the Rent Control Charter Amendment and Regulations. City Hall Council Chamber 7 p.m.

Friday, May 10

Mat Pilates

Learn the techniques of Pilates, a system of controlled exercises that engage the mind and condition the total body. Please bring a yoga or Pilates mat. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 3 - 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 11

MainStay Gallery: Grand Opening Party

MainStay Gallery is the newest addition to the Santa Monica and Venice Beach arts community. Join organizers for their grand opening and debut collection featuring the work of fine art photographer Michael Scott Adams, internationally featured muralist and painter Ivotopia, and the textile sculpture of Emmy nominated costume designer Swinda Reichelt. RSVP preferable (RSVP@MainStayGallery.com). 2443 Main Street, 7 - 10 p.m.

Landlord workshop, "Pet Policies-Know the Facts"

This workshop will be focusing on the latest pet policies, statistics, and pet-friendly practices. Landlords will also be provided an overview of LA's current rental trends, new construction and more on the Westside. Apartments.com Retail Store: 1020 Wilshire Blvd, 10 - 11 a.m.

Sunday, May 12

Hatmaking with Leslie Robinson

Join Milliner Leslie Robinson for this introductory Hat Making class. You will learn the fundamentals of blocking, shaping and trimming a hat, beginning with an unformed base. Choose from a wool felt, natural straw or Japanese twisted toyo (woven shellacked rice paper) base. Make a cloche, fedora or wide-brimmed hat. Returning students welcome - we'll cover more advanced techniques. Cost: $60 + $30 cash material fee payable to instructor. 2 - 5 p.m. 1450 Ocean. Register online at https://apm.activecommunities.com/santamonicarecreation/Activity_Search/73004

Gallery Opening and Performance

And then there is California: opening reception and performance by frankendee and Chloe Levaillant. Opening reception with the artists 12 - 5 p.m. Performances 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. 'And then there is California.' is curated by Beck+Col and features work by Santiago Acero, Alia Ali, Diego Barrientos, Kira Doutt, Philipp Farra, lydon frank, Hanieh Khatibi, Serena Himmelfarb, Chloe Levaillant, Alicia Piller and Kelly Wall. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH. Reservations available online at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/and-then-there-is-california-opening-performance-by-frankendee-and-chloe-levaillant-tickets-61472158882

Monday, May 13

The Social Services Commission Special Meeting

The Social Services Commission works to preserve and enhance the quality of life for all Santa Monica residents through research, outreach, and advocacy. The Commission advises City Council and City staff on identifying needs, setting priorities, planning programs, and analyzing fiscal impacts on social services. Ken Edwards Center, 7 p.m.

Landmarks Commission Meeting

Regular meeting of the Santa Monica Landmarks Commission. The Commission normally meets on the second Monday of every month in the City Council Chamber. City Hall. 7 p.m.

For help submitting an event, contact us at
310-458-7737 or submit to events@smdp.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Mission Miracle Kicks Off May 9 To Help Those Recovering From Substance Use Disorders

Local residents, businesses and community groups are invited to help individuals recovering from substance abuse disorders by participating in Mission Miracle that officially kicks off Thursday, May 9. Mission Miracle is a new year-round community based campaign that collects donated items to support and beautify CLARE|MATRIX recovery centers. Mission Miracle will launch at 9 a.m. on May 9 at the CLARE|MATRIX Prevention Center, located at 1002 Pico Blvd.

People seeking addiction treatment often come to CLARE|MATRIX with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. CLARE|MATRIX is constantly in need of personal care items and basic clothing for men and women in treatment. In response to this need, Mission Miracle is now welcoming the community to donate items that will support these individuals in recovery. Items in most demand include toiletries, first aid kits, socks, shoes and clothing.

To celebrate Mission Miracle's launch, the Glamour Project, a nonprofit that takes glamour photos of those who've suffered loss, will visit the nearby CLARE|MATRIX Women's Treatment Center (at 844 Pico Blvd. in Santa Monica) at 10 a.m. to provide makeovers and glamour photos of women residing at the center. Then at 11 a.m., Hav a Sol, a nonprofit that provides footwear to the homeless and at-risk youth, will visit the CLARE|MATRIX Prevention Center to donate shoes to men and women in treatment.

Also through Mission Miracle, spaces can be adopted at a CLARE|MATRIX recovery center. By adopting a space, donors can help redesign an indoor or outdoor environment meant for reflection and relaxation for those receiving treatment. Adopted space locations include the Men's Treatment Center, Women's Treatment Center, Pregnant and Postpartum Women's Program, and Opioid Treatment Program.

For more information on how to participate in Mission Miracle throughout the year, please contact Jennifer Maduko at (310) 314-6200 x 3427 or jmaduko@clarematrix.org, or register online at clarematrix.org/missionmiracle.

CLARE|MATRIX has been at the forefront of addiction treatment in the community for more than 85 years. They pair evidence-based practices with innovative methods to provide compassionate and caring treatment in residential and outpatient settings.

SUBMITTED BY PAULETTE THORNTON, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Citywide

District Visual Arts Students Showcase Work at Art Show

Visual art produced by talented Santa Monica-Malibu Unified students will be showcased at the district's annual art show planned for Wednesday, May 15, at Santa Monica Art Studios from 5-8 p.m. The art show is open to parents, students and the community, with a requested donation of $10 to support visual arts throughout the district.

Some 350 works of art will be displayed by secondary students attending John Adams Middle School, Lincoln Middle School, SMASH Middle School, Olympic High School, Malibu Middle and High School and Santa Monica High School. Art will include: Drawings, paintings, printmaking, photography, film / video, sculpting and ceramics.

"We are so proud of our art students, teachers and staff, for the hard work and vision required to create and install such a phenomenal exhibit," Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati said. "This is a great opportunity to highlight the district's visual arts curriculum and celebrate the accomplishments of talented student artists and teachers."

This year, the Kiwanis Club of Santa Monica will be awarding nine $250 scholarships totaling $2,250 to juniors and seniors in drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, pottery, digital design, film, video and digital photography. The artwork will be adjudicated by outstanding visual art professionals. Honorable mention ribbons will be given for other outstanding work.

"Visual arts, as well as performing arts, is an incredible mainstay in Santa Monica-Malibu, and with good reason – we have so many talented student artists and instructors," SMMUSD Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator Tom Whaley said. "Our students truly exemplify talent and creativity and we are grateful to have this event highlight their achievements."

Entertainment for the art show will be provided by the Santa Monica High Jazz Combo and Bowl Kitchen will have food and beverages available for purchase.

Art Show poster, designed by Sebastian Alcock, an 11th grade student in Shawn Saunders' Digital Design class at Samohi.

SUBMITTED BY GAIL PINSKER

Pico Blvd.

Over 100 Children and Parents Find Delight in STEM at Annual SMC Festival

Over 100 schoolchildren from Santa Monica and the Westside of Los Angeles took part in the free 2nd Annual Santa Monica College (SMC) STEM Festival, organized in celebration of Earth Week from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 4 at the college's main campus in Santa Monica, Calif. It was a day of discovering that learning about things like the principles of gravity and the non-Newtonian properties of Oobleck can be fun. And parents who showed up joined their children in a day of taking delight in learning.

Organized by the student-run SMC Chemistry Club–which recently earned the highest honors from the American Chemical Society for the second straight year–the free community festival was also co-sponsored by the Associated Students of Santa Monica College. A total of 59 student and faculty volunteers–from various STEM departments, Music, and the SMC Drescher Planetarium included–presented activity after activity designed to help participants learn about STEM in an engaging way. Live demos and experiments featuring the extraction of genomic DNA from strawberries, a coding activity, a hydrogen fuel cell demo, and many more were highlighted at the festival.

"The day turned out exactly the way I hoped it would…there was never a lull, our volunteers were busy presenting their activities and our visitors never had to wait long to participate," said Dr. Jennifer Hsieh, SMC Associate Professor of Chemistry, who is also a faculty advisor to the SMC Chemistry Club. "Every person I spoke with expressed how much they loved the event and…that's the most rewarding thing I could hear!"

The 1st Annual SMC STEM Festival held in April 2018 was cited prominently among the several activities which earned the SMC Chemistry Club the "Outstanding" award from the American Chemical Society, which is the world's largest scientific society. Last year, roughly 80 schoolchildren participated.

To stay connected with the SMC Chemistry Club, 'like' it on Facebook ("facebook.com/chemistryclubsmc") or follow on Instagram: @smc.chemclub. The clubs meets every Tuesday in Science 155 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Email inquiries may also be sent to chemclubofsmc@gmail.com.

For more information about SMC's highly regarded STEM Program – encompassing distinctive, hands-on academic instruction and student, support/tutoring, as well as a gateway to research and internship opportunities at JPL, NASA, UCLA, and more–visit smc.edu/STEM.

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Noteworthy

By Charles Andrews
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

An Embarrassment of Riches



I moved to LA from dear Albuquerque nearly 40 years ago, for the music, and other arts stuff. I think I made the right decision.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:

PLACIDO DOMINGO in "El Gato Montés"/"The Wildcat" (some quibbles but a home run, totally entertaining with outstanding voices, a captivating story line with bandits, bullfighters and a beauty, lots of dead bodies, beguiling zarzuela choreography from a colorfully costumed chorus and with our legendary LA Opera chief Placido Domingo taking the lead in one of his favorite operas that he first performed at 17 in Mexico City then again right here in '94, now more a powerful baritone but the man can sing and he sure can act and nobody else at 78 is even up there, his 151st role), Sat, next Thurs, 7:30 p.m., also May 19, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, DTLA, $31-$286.

RECOMMENDED:

TONIGHT! - 18TH STREET ART CENTER INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING GALA (happy 30th anniversary to a local arts treasure and by the way they could use some money so truck on over to La Résidence de France in Beverly Hills, home of the French Consul General in LA, for a garden party honoring alumnae artists Suzanne Lacy and Candice Lin and curator Rita Gonzales, with music by SM's own LEVEN KALI & THE MOON who literally grew up at 18th Street), Thurs 7 p.m., BH, $500 and up.

TONIGHT! - ART GARFUNKEL (not the songwriter but the S&G high parts, "Bridge Over Troubled Water," and, some pretty good solo stuff), 8 p.m., Saban Theater, BH, $67-$134.

STEVEN LUGERNER'S SLUGish Ensemble (Sam First at LAX has live jazz five nights a week, this week let's go with a NoCal band with an intriguing name — UCSC banana slugs, maybe? — which "utilizes traditional acoustic instruments to create layers of pocketed-grooves and melodies that blur the lines between pop, rhythm & blues, jazz improvisation and minimalism"), Fri 8 p.m., 9:30 p.m., Sam First, LAX, $20 + drink.

ORCHESTRA SANTA MONICA PIANO TRIO (Mozart, Dvorak, Piazzolla, what a town we live in, with so much great live music in our library, for free), Sat 2 p.m., Main Library, SM, free.

LA PHIL - DUDAMEL (conducts Mozart, Violin Concerto No. 1 and the majestic "Jupiter," Symphony No. 41), Fri 11 a.m., Sat, Sun 2 p.m., Walt Disney Hall, DTLA, $74-$209.

FLORENCE + THE MACHINE (I like'em but it's a lot of bread and a lot of miles), Sun, Mon, 7 p.m., Santa Barbara Bowl, $65-$145.

Some LA PHIL - DUDAMEL (plus Youth Orchestra of LA, Mozart-Bach-Mendelssohn +), Sun 7 p.m., First Congregational Church of LA, free, tickets available on-site the day of the concert.

PATTI LaBELLE, CHARLIE WILSON, Stephanie Mills (OK, Uncle Charlie is no slouch even though his biggest moment was The Gap Band like about 75 years ago, Stephanie Mills goes way back to "The Wiz" and had five number one singles and a Grammy, but — go to scratch Patti LaBelle off your bucket list because she is right up there if you are going to name half a dozen of the best female soul-R&B vocalists ever — ever), Sun 7:30, The Forum, Inglewood, $53-$228.

PLACIDO DOMINGO, Ailyn Pérez (the legendary tenor-baritone-impresario of our LA Opera performs a rare evening of songs, arias and duets, with orchestra accompaniment, up close and personal with star soprano Perez, at the acoustically terrific Broad main stage, so, save your nickels you fans of the magnificent human voice), Tues 7:30 p.m., $429.

CARILLON TRUMPET QUARTET (another in the priceless Soundwaves series of excellent provocative music put together by Jeff Schwartz, if you're not going to these, and most of you aren't, you are missing out on a unique local treasure, or maybe you only like your music nice like Chopin or easy like Vivaldi? — chicken!), Wed 7:30 p.m., Main Library, DTSM, free, I say, free.

THE TEDESCHI TRUCKS BAND (blues shouter Susan Tedeschi had a recognized career on her own before meeting and marrying Derek Trucks and they did a smart thing, merged their two bands and brought the kids along on tour, I first found Trucks, nephew of Allman Brothers Band drummer Butch Trucks, on a youtube video playing a jaw-dropping "Layla"... at age 13!, mimicking perfectly the slide part that the great Duane Allman played on "Derek — get it? — and the Dominoes" stunning eponymous album, at 20 he joined the legendary AllBros Band and guess what? — he's even better now than he was at 13), next Thurs, 8 p.m., The Orpheum Theatre, DTLA, $35-$106 includes download of new album.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: JOHN HAMMOND, McCabe's, SM, 5/17; LA PHIL, DUDAMEL - LANG LANG, BEETHOVEN, Disney Hall, DTLA, May 17, 19; DENGUE FEVER, Marina Beach, May 18; BEVERLY HILLS ART SHOW, May 18, 19; HUBERT LAWS QUINTET, May 18, ALAN PASQUA TRIO, May 24, JOHN BEASLEY'S MONK'ESTRA SEPTET, May 25, Jazz Bakery, Moss Theater, SM; Mavis & Friends: Celebrating 80 Years of MAVIS STAPLES, Theatre at Ace Hotel, DTLA, May 22; LA PHIL, DUDAMEL - HAYDN, BEETHOVEN Masses, Disney Hall, DTLA, May 25, 26; LITTLE FEAT, Saban Theater, BH, May 25; KOTO & SHAKUHACHI: Japanese Traditional Music Concert, Fairview Branch Library, SM, May 25; SANTA MONICA

SEE **NOTEWORTHY** PAGE 11

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Play Time

By Cynthia Citron

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Descending the Long Gravel Road

In a bewildering, long-winded, stream of consciousness train of thought peppered with non sequiturs, playwright and actor Abbott Alexander delivers a 90-minute monologue that will leave you noggle-swoggled and mind-boggled, to say the least.

The play is "The Long Gravel Road'", a reference to the road that Alexander descends each day (it's actually his driveway) to retrieve his morning newspaper. In the pre-dawn hours of what promises to be a lovely day, he muses aloud on the various events of his life and tells of them through the words spoken or written by once-famous authors, most of whom you've never heard of.

He is obviously enamored of the poems of Robert Frost, quoting from "the road less traveled," and of Aurora, the Greek "Goddess of Time." He also interrupts his soliloquy occasionally to moo, explaining that when he moos "it's for the elephants, too."

He also enjoys Mark Twain, as he goes about physically staging an imaginary fight between Twain's celebrated jumping frog of Calaveras County and a frog that Robert Frost apparently secreted irretrievably in some obscure poem so that I couldn't find it. In any case, Alexander refers to the episode as "Twain and Frost's Mashup of Frogs."

He talks about people as being "the worms of God — God's bait" and then exclaims later, "If God's a bird, I'm no bait!"

He also reveals that he served in the Peace Corps, which he likens to the Foreign Legion, and goes on to ask "Tennis, anyone?" and follows up by asking "Tennyson, anyone?"

All the while he is accompanied on the barren stage by thumping drums and whistles and other surprising loud noises created by composer and music director Garrett Parks (whose name immediately identifies him as the son of actors Betty Garrett and Larry Parks.) Alexander also provides music of a sort by making diddly-boom sounds and other weird clicking and huffing noises with his tongue and teeth, occasionally breaking off to provide uncanny dance movements with his legs and feet.

As he recalls taking his son to school he makes the sound of clopping horses and announces that it is the fourth day in Genesis.

He imitates the gestures of a mime and invents silly puzzles like "Who invented the first sponge?" and supplies the answer: "Absorba the Greek!"

He sings chants of the American Indians and describes catacombs as "bunkbeds in the earth." He confesses to "searching for one thought that never arrives" and adds,

"My inner warrior loses all my battles."

And finally, at the end, he bunches his body into the shape of a very old man and with his hands reaching forward to hold onto the handles of an imaginary walker, he clicks the sounds that a walker makes and slowly moves across the stage to the exit.

In summing up a viewer's possible reaction to this very complicated play, it might be appropriate to quote a comment by the aforementioned Robert Frost:

"A civilized society is one which tolerates eccentricity to the point of doubtful sanity."

"The Long Gravel Road" will run every Saturday night at 8 through June 1 at Theatre West, 3333 Cahuenga Blvd. West, Los Angeles. To reserve tickets, call the box office at (323) 851-7977 or reserve online at www.theatrewest.org

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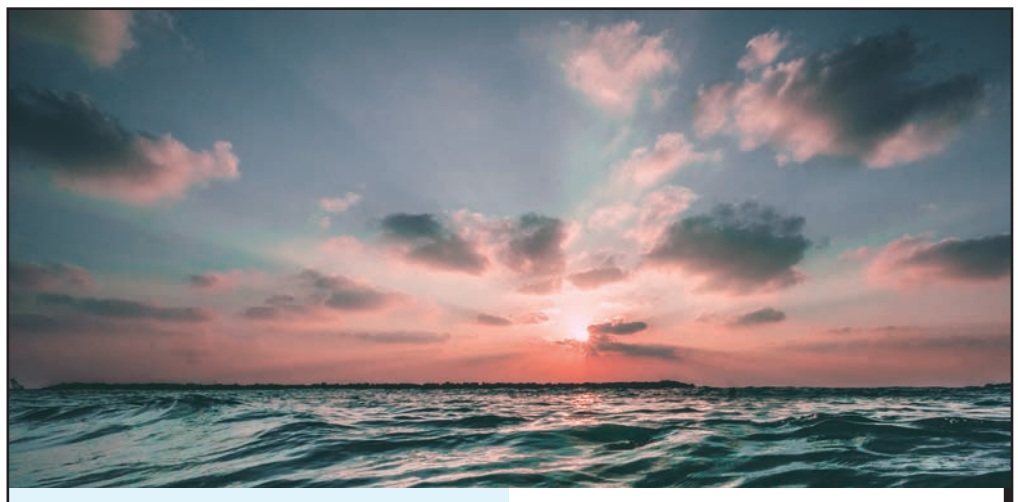
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- Tom & Allison Schmidt, Owners

TOBACCO

FROM PAGE 1

changes to the proposal, such as allowing guests in the city's luxury hotels to acquire cigarettes through their concierge or room service. Members indicated they plan to pass the amended measure May 21.

Abstainers have said yes to the idea, and the sooner the better, while smokers protested, no way.

"It's a ridiculous idea," hair stylist Giuseppe Franco shouted soon after lighting up a Marlboro Light on a breezeway just outside the upscale hair salon that bears his name.

"First off, let's be honest. Smoking is bad. I don't let my daughter smoke," he said during a sometimes profane tirade delivered between puffs.

"But it's going to hurt my friends," he said, pointing out that a 24-hour Rite Aid pharmacy down the street does big business in cigarettes that go for about $8 a pack.

So does the Union 76 gas station a couple blocks away, where the cashier says they sell about 50 packs a day at $12 apiece.

California is among at least 25 states that outlaw smoking in workplaces, restaurants and bars. It also has one of the highest cigarette taxes in the country — nearly $3 a pack.

Beverly Hills already restricts the sale of menthol cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products.

But the proposed ordinance would go much further, banning all tobacco products from grocery stores, pharmacies, hotels and gas stations in the city of 34,000 people between West Hollywood and Los Angeles.

"My celebrity clients smoke," Franco fumed.

Like most Beverly Hills business people, he won't name them, but he did pull out a copy of the hotel magazine Concierge featuring a photo of him with his buddy Arnold Schwarzenegger, a cigar aficionado.

Cigar smokers most likely won't have to sacrifice if the ordinance is adopted. A city staff report recommends exempting three tony cigar lounges in Beverly Hills.

Still, the folks at one of them, Nazareth's Fine Cigars, weren't happy.

"They're going to chase the tourists out of here," said retired businessman John Davis as he relaxed in a comfortable lounge chair, cigar in hand.

The decision came after the five-member council heard two hours of sometimes emotional but always polite testimony from scores of people on both sides of the issue.

Owners of gas stations and other small businesses said the ban could force them to lay-off people. Health advocates said while they regretted that possibility people's health was more important.

Scott McGuff, a regional manager for Rite Aide said the Beverly Hills pharmacy draws many customers from nearby luxury hotels who pick up both cigarettes and other items and it will lose them without the cigarettes.

"It's going to affect layoffs, that's how big of a deal it is for me," he said.

While council members sympathized they said that the public's health is too important for Beverly Hills not to take action.

"We are charged with providing for the public health and that's really what this conversation is about, said Councilman Julian Gold.

These days, many people visit Beverly Hills from Asia and Europe, where smoking is commonplace, Davis said earlier from the cigar lounge. Sure, if the ordinance is passed, they'll still stroll Rodeo Drive with its high-end stores like Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Cartier, and try to pick out Larry King and other celebrities making their way to Nate 'N Al's deli for breakfast.

But they'll head to West Hollywood to buy their smokes because cigarette sales would even be banned in famous places like the Beverly Wilshire, the hotel where Julia Roberts' character stayed in "Pretty Woman," the movie that made her a star.

Not everyone in Beverly Hills is a wealthy celebrity, of course. While the median price of a home is more than $2 million and the median annual income is more than $103,000, about 9 percent of the population actually falls below the poverty line, according to the U.S. Census.

The gas stations, pharmacies and other places offering modest jobs and cigarettes are tucked into corners just off Rodeo Drive and other fashionable streets. Only 28 sell tobacco products, according to the city staff report.

The city report cites the hazards of smoking and the desire of Beverly Hills to be a healthy city as reasons for the ban on tobacco sales.

For non-smokers Oscar Melendez and Cezar Diaz, that's reason enough to support it.

"I can pick up cigarette smoke from 30 feet away," Melendez said, noting that secondhand smoke is bad for everyone and that it drifts from the sidewalk by his valet parking stand into nearby restaurants.

At the fashionable Sarah Pacini clothing store, it gets so bad that Diaz, the manager, says he sometimes has to close the door and ask smokers not to stand on the sidewalk out front.

Most, he said, respond politely.

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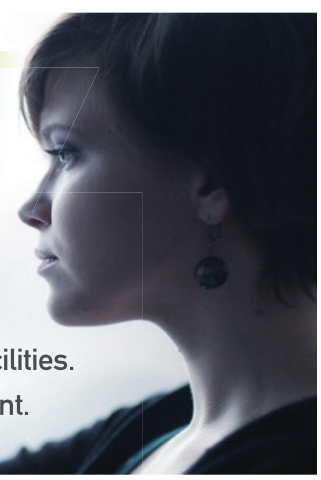


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THE CLEAN SOBER NETWORK

Where's the pot? California tracking system unlikely to know

MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

When California voters broadly legalized marijuana, they were promised that a vast computer platform would closely monitor products moving through the new market. But 16 months after sales kicked in, the system known as track-and-trace isn't doing much of either.

As of last month, just nine retail outlets were entering data into the network established under an estimated $60 million state contract, even though 627 shops are licensed to sell pot in California.

The rate of participation is similarly slim for other sectors in the emerging industry.

Only 93 of more than 1,000 licensed manufacturing companies producing extracts, oils and other products were documenting their activities in the network in April. And of the nearly 4,000 licensed growers, only about 7 percent, or 254, are using the high-tech system, according to a review of state data.

How are state officials watching over the nation's largest legal pot market ? For now, it's essentially a paper trail.

Most California companies are required to document their business on paper sales invoices and shipping manifests. But experts say that can be a doorway for criminal traffic.

With paper records, regulators are relying on an honor system, said Patrick Vo, CEO of BioTrackTHC, which provides seed-to-sale cannabis tracking in eight states, including New York and Illinois.

Without a digital crumb trail in place, "there are so many areas where things can go wrong," Vo said. "Things can be intentionally altered."

Track-and-trace sometimes is referred to as seed-to-sale to reflect the goal of tracking marijuana plants every step, from the time they are planted until products are purchased by consumers. The goal is to keep illegal cannabis from store shelves while making sure legally produced products don't drift into the underground market.

According to state law, the tracking system is required to provide "data points for the different stages of commercial activity, including, but not limited to, cultivation, harvest, processing, distribution, inventory and sale." It's also intended to help the state keep track of taxes.

But for now, California's electronic monitoring system is seeing just fragments of the legal market — not the rigorous seed-to-sale oversight envisioned when voters approved Proposition 64, the law that opened the way for broad legal sales.

Alex Traverso, a spokesman for the state Bureau of Cannabis Control, said the agency was unaware of any enforcement cases triggered by fraudulent or altered paper records. To date, it has received more than 50,000 manifests.

According to the state, the California tracking network created by Florida-based Franwell Inc. has been functional since Jan. 2, 2018, the day after broad legal sales began.

So why are so few licensees using it? In short, time and bureaucracy.

It goes back to state regulators' decision to first issue only temporary cannabis licenses, as California faced a tight legal deadline to begin sales on Jan. 1, 2018.

It wasn't possible to train thousands of temporary license holders to use the tracking system "without causing significant disruption" to the new, regulated marijuana market, said Rebecca Foree, spokeswoman for the state Department of Food and Agriculture.

Instead, the state decided only annual licenseholders would use the track-and-trace system. But the first annual license wasn't issued until November, and only a relatively small number have been issued since.

Meanwhile, scores of temporary licenses have expired, leaving companies in a kind of legal limbo, technically unable to do business in the state market.

Even when the tracking system comes into widespread use, it will provide only a partial look into statewide growing and sales since California's illegal pot industry continues to thrive.

Other states also have had problems instituting their seed-to-sale systems.

New tracking software in Washington state was delayed in 2017 after regulators switched vendors. Last year, a Franwell-designed system temporarily bogged down in Maryland, in some cases preventing sales, after a new feature was added. Pennsylvania's software has caused problems for cultivators trying to record shipments.

Green Bits, which provides business software for pot shops that can sync with state tracking systems, has over 100 clients in California. So far, only one is using the state tracking system, though two others are expected to start soon.

Charlie Wilson, the company's chief revenue officer, said the slow rollout could be attributed in part to the daunting size of the job.

With the coming of legal sales in 2018, California began attempting to transform its longstanding illegal and medicinal marijuana markets into a unified, multibillion-dollar industry. Several agencies are involved in licensing and regulation.

For an industry that operated for decades with scant regulation, it's a big transition.

"It's not just tracking an edible brownie — but the specific plant that went into the creation

SEE **MARIJUANA** PAGE 11

SCOOTER

FROM PAGE 1

frequently. Bird lost money on each scooter and is now planning to transition its fleet to in-house models.

"Bird One builds on the benefits and learnings of Bird Zero and is forecasted to last in the sharing environment for well over a year," VanderZanden said. "Given the excitement and demand for our next generation e-scooter, we are also making a limited supply of Bird Ones available to own."

The $1,299 scooter comes with a one-year warranty and repairs from Bird's contract mechanics. Riders who pre-order a scooter now can expect it to be delivered this summer.

Bird, which launched in Santa Monica almost two years ago, is one of four scooter companies authorized to operate within city limits under the City of Santa Monica's shared mobility pilot program.

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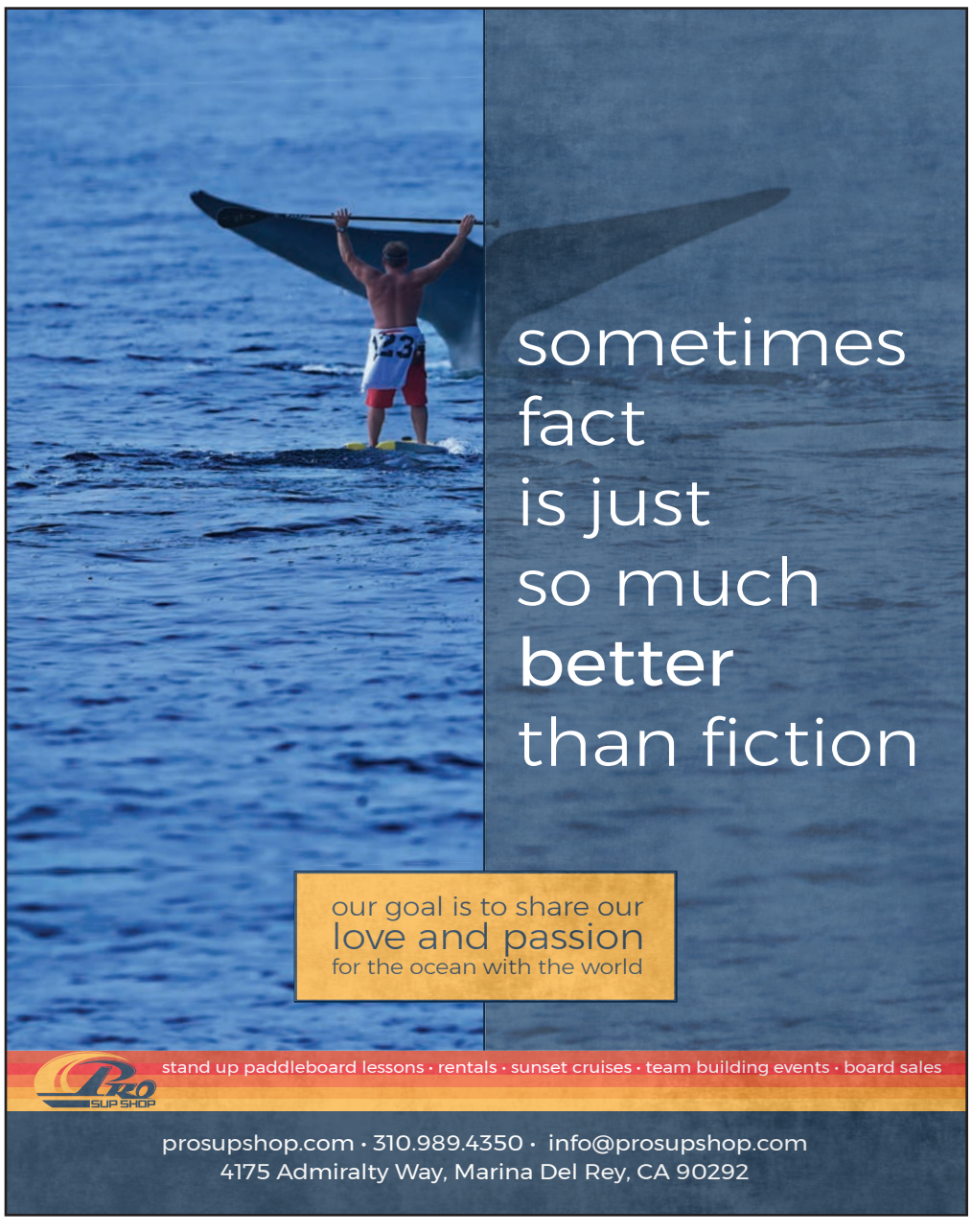
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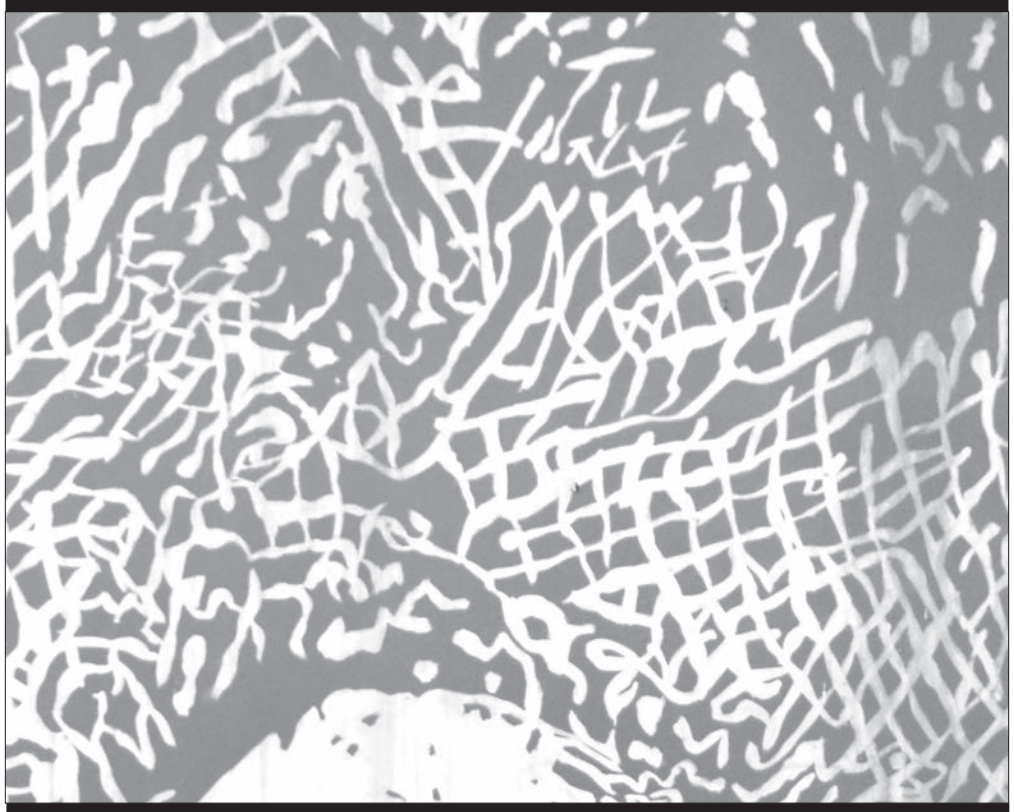
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DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 311 CALLS ON MAY 7

Auto burglary 1400blk 25th St 1:49 a.m.
Battery 1400blk Ocean Ave 1:51 a.m.
Grand theft auto 1400blk 25th St 3:01 a.m.
Theft of recyclables 1400blk 7th St 3:57 a.m.
Battery 1400blk 7th St 4:04 a.m.
Grand theft 200blk Palisades Beach Rd 6:52 a.m.
Burglary 2900blk Colorado Ave 6:58 a.m.
Trespassing 700blk Wilshire Blvd 7:00 a.m.
Trespassing 2000blk Wilshire Blvd 7:01 a.m.
Encampment 1600blk the beach 7:18 a.m.
Encampment 1200blk the beach 7:22 a.m.
Encampment 1400blk Ocean Front Walk 7:22 a.m.
Encampment 1200blk Ocean Front Walk 7:22 a.m.
Construction noise 2100blk Wilshire Blvd 7:26 a.m.
Auto burglary 1700blk Cedar St 7:47 a.m.
Encampment 3000blk 2nd St 7:47 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1100blkk 3rd St 7:48 a.m.
Burglary 2900blk Colorado Ave 7:50 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 7:59 a.m.
Battery 3rd Street Prom / Broadway 8 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 1600blk Broadway 11:13 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 1900blk La Mesa Dr 11:15 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 3000blk 18th St 11:18 a.m.
Fraud 1900blk Cloverfield Blvd 11:25 a.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries 10th St / Santa Monica Blvd 11:26 a.m.
Fraud 300blk Olympic Dr 11:30 a.m.
Encampment 1600blk 19th St 11:48 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 1700blk Wellesley Dr 11:59 a.m.
Vehicle blocking driveway 100blk Wadsworth Ave 12:31 p.m.
Vehicle parked on sidewalk 900blk 17th St 12:36 p.m.
Burglary 1000blk Ocean Ave 1:26 p.m.
Petty theft 2700blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:27 p.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 1900blk 20th St 1:34 p.m.
Grand theft auto 200blk Ashland Ave 2:57 p.m.
Defrauding innkeeper 2000blk Lincoln Blvd 3:44 p.m.
Abandoned vehicle 2600blk Centinela Ave 3:47 p.m.
Urinating/defecating in public 200blk Pico Blvd 4:13 p.m.
Hit and run 1500blk 2nd St 4:18 p.m.
Drinking in public 1300blk 9th St 4:25 p.m.
Auto burglary 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 4:38 p.m.
Petty theft 1400blk 3rd Street Prom 4:50 p.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 2400blk Oak St 4:55 p.m.
Auto burglary 1700blk Cedar St 5:01 p.m.
Petty theft 1800blk Wilshire Blvd 5:03 p.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries 4th St / Colorado Ave 5:12 p.m.
Hit and run 1900blk Santa Monica Blvd 5:12 p.m.
Defrauding innkeeper 2000blk Lincoln Blvd 5:17 p.m.
Domestic violence Lincoln Blvd / Ocean Park Blvd 5:18 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1300blk Centinela Ave 5:18 p.m.
Indecent exposure 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 5:42 p.m.
Battery 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 5:44 p.m.
Oversize vehicle violation 800blk 5th St 6:01 p.m.
Petty theft 2900blk main St 6:09 p.m.
Speeding 5th St / Colorado Ave 6:32 p.m.
Stolen vehicle recovered 1400blk 26th St 6:37 p.m.
Indecent exposure 200blk Santa Monica Pier 6:42 p.m.
Theft suspect in custody 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 6:50 p.m.
Fight 300blk Colorado Ave 6:50 p.m.
Burglary 1000blk Ocean Ave 6:51 p.m.
Vandalism 300blk Colorado Ave 7:13 p.m.
Battery 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 8:14 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 2400blk 20th St 8:15 p.m.
Auto burglary 1700blk Cedar St 8:31 p.m.
Auto burglary 2400blk 18th St 9:11 p.m.
Traffic collision with injuries 1700blk Ocean Park Blvd 9:32 p.m.
Shots fired 2000blk Virginia Ave 10:04 p.m.
Vandalism Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd E 10:21 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold 1900blk Pico Blvd 11:58 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 35 CALLS ON MAY 7

Emergency Medical Service 1300blk 15th St 1:03 a.m.
EMS 800blk 2nd St 1:53 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 15th St 2:10 a.m.
EMS 2100blk Ocean Ave 4 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 7th St 4:08 a.m.
EMS 00blk Village Pkwy 4:19 a.m.
EMS 1200blk Yale St 5:06 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 6th St 7:12 a.m.
Automatic alarm 1500blk Ocean Ave 7:36 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 15th St 8:00 a.m.
EMS 2300blk Pearl St 8:30 a.m.
Automatic alarm 600blk Broadway 9:42 a.m.
Automatic alarm 2800blk Neilson Way 9:53 a.m.
Automatic alarm 1400blk 5th St 10:09 a.m.
EMS 2600blk Main St 10:19 a.m.
EMS 11th St / Michigan Ave 10:57 a.m.
Structure fire 1000blk 11th St 11:15 a.m.
EMS 2000blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:42 a.m.
EMS 1100blk 7th St 11:50 a.m.
EMS 700blk Hill St 12:24 p.m.
EMS 1800blk Stewart St 12:55 p.m.
Automatic alarm 2400blk Virginia Ave 1:50 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 9th St 2:06 p.m.
Elevator rescue 1400blk 4th St 2:34 p.m.
EMS 1700blk 18th St 2:57 p.m.
EMS 00blk Village Pkwy 3:13 p.m.
EMS 1700blk Cloverfield Blvd 3:42 p.m.
EMS 400blk California Ave 4:25 p.m.
EMS 2000blk Santa Monica Blvd 4:30 p.m.
EMS 2200blk Colorado Ave 4:58 p.m.
EMS 1800blk 9th St 8:45 p.m.
EMS 1600blk Ocean Park Blvd 9:32 p.m.
EMS 500blk Palisades Beach Rd 9:51 p.m.
EMS 1100blk 7th St 9:59 p.m.
EMS 800blk 2nd St 10:53 p.m.

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL calottery
Draw Date: 05/04
6 16 23 30 61
Power#: 2
Jackpot: $215 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 05/07
3 6 34 54 63
Mega#: 19
Jackpot: $295 M

SuperLOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 05/04
4 5 33 38 43
Mega#: 15
Jackpot: $42 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 05/07
15 29 33 34 37

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 05/08
Midday: 4 2 7

Draw Date: 05/07
Evening: 9 3 2

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 05/07
1st: 09 - WINNING SPIRIT
2nd: 11 - MONEY BAGS
3rd: 07 - EUREKA
RACE TIME: 1:43.71

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SURF REPORT

SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 63.7°

THURSDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 1-2 ft + ankle to knee high occ. 3 ft
SSW/S swell fades for exposures. Trace NW swell. Winds are on watch.

FRIDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3 ft knee to waist high
New long period SSW swell shows at exposures. Largest in northern half of region.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

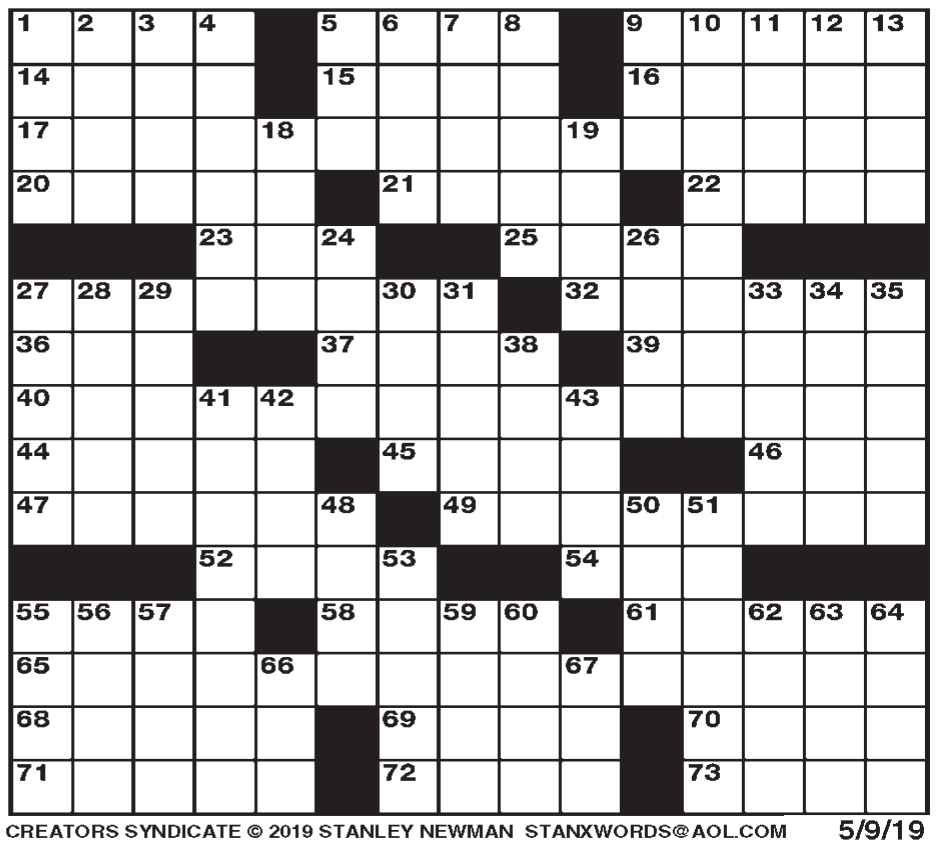
		9				5		7
	6		5			9	3	
2			9			6	1	
			4	2		7	5	
1	2		3		9		6	8
	5	4		7	1			
	1	8			2			5
	4	2			3		7	
3		6				1		

Newsday Crossword

3-5-7's by Greg Johnson
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Barcelona-born surrealist
5 Thunderer of Norse myth
9 Choreographer de Mille
14 Dark clouds, to some
15 Lacking manners
16 Oktoberfest toast
17 Route to LAX
20 Search thoroughly
21 Pennsylvania lake city
22 French waters
23 Contraction in Hamlet's soliloquy
25 Sound off
27 Minor progress
32 Symbol for messiness
36 Dashboard dial, for short
37 Electron's surroundings
39 Beau
40 Alma mater for many astronauts
44 Escort from the door
45 URL opener
46 Military mail letters
47 Skirmish
49 Tanker stops
52 Excessive promotion
54 __ Lanka
55 Refined coal
58 Nights prior
61 "The game is yours"
65 Focus of a *Peanuts* Halloween
68 "Yellow Submarine" singer
69 Completes
70 Large group
71 With 72 Across, unfinished business
72 See 71 Across
73 Hubble Telescope builder

DOWN
1 Forest growth
2 Apple product line
3 Apt rhyme for "casino"
4 At one's post
5 *Uno + due*
6 Extremely popular
7 Bouquet
8 Upgrade, as machinery
9 Hoodlum
10 Olympus inhabitant
11 "__ word from our sponsor"
12 Genesis twin
13 Underworld river
18 Flower van Gogh painted
19 Enjoy the benefits of
24 Luminary
26 Ankara cash
27 Engage in self-praise
28 Parting word
29 Causes to yawn
30 Inscribe, as art
31 Literary figures
33 Makeup mishap
34 Beguile
35 Varies widely
38 Nautical officer
41 Sushi fare
42 Sole
43 Audit team
48 Blunted weapon
50 Overly proper
51 Under-the-hood reservoir
53 Give the slip to
55 PC shortcut key
56 Mississippi feeder
57 Apt rhyme for "casino"
59 School on the Thames
60 Zoomed
62 Southern-fried fare
63 Video game avatars
64 Singer from Donegal
66 Sushi fare
67 Destroyer designation



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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (May 9)

Your involvement in a project increases, and the next three months show you happily under the influence of the "IKEA effect," placing a high value on and deriving great satisfaction from the things you partially created. As far as relationships go, you'll make someone's life beautiful, karma that comes full circle. Sagittarius and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 20, 4, 44, 7 and 1.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Before you worry, argue, decide on an approach or anything else, take a step back. Lighten up, and ask yourself, "What's the very least I can do?" Because that might be just the light touch that's enough to fix the problem.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Your friends have opinions. Colleagues are happy to share what they know. The experts will certainly weigh in if you ask them to (or, more likely, pay them to). But no outside opinion is the absolute answer. That will come from you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The sense of safety you establish around you can be felt by others, and it's an attractive environment. So you can expect that people will come into your realm, get comfortable there and settle in to stay a while.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Everyone wants to believe in the miracle cure, but if it were as good as the advertisement, everyone would already know about it, and many of the world's problems would be solved. Save your money.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). People pick up what you're putting down, buy what you're selling, take what you're giving, laugh at your jokes and generally say yes to you. Why? They like you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). When you have something good, you want to share it. The other thing you need to do is protect it. You can share and protect at the same time once you decide this is what you need to do.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Having excellent organizational systems will make you so much more productive than people who don't have such structures in place. Start asking questions like "How can I do the menial things faster, cheaper or simpler?"

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Let no one rush you along. It works out great when you relax and move at your own usual pace, if not considerably slower than that. Time will be your ally, mentor and financial advisor.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Doing the right thing can bring unexpected consequences just like doing the wrong thing can. The difference is you can manage the consequences of doing the right thing with your head held high.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). At the end of this day, everyone recalls the parts that were joyful, scary, angry or epic. Use this. Strike an emotional chord to create a desired impact and influence.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Some of what you encounter is quite amazing. There are always a few different ways to look at it. Once you land on a way that works for you, hold steady to this point of view.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Though no one is trying to stand in the way of your happiness as they fulfill their own agenda, they'll unwittingly create an obstacle in your path to it. You'll need to go around that and keep moving.

Mars Favors Math

Convenience is a mighty appealing selling point, but of course, it almost always costs more. Find out how much more. Is it a little or a lot? And will you be stronger and richer for taking the inconvenient route? All things to investigate under this auspicious trine of Mars and Jupiter. Fortune favors those who do the math.

ASTROLOGICAL QUESTION

"I'm a Sagittarius, and I am getting married next month to a Leo. I dated my Leo fiance for three years before we decided to get married, and I have always gotten along with his family. However, now things are getting weird. I'm actually pretty mad. His dad has gotten all entwined in our rehearsal dinner plans. It's not at all what I imagined. He's paying for the dinner, but I hate the venue he chose and would rather pay for it myself than go through with this disappointing choice. It's really tainting my whole wedding experience. I mean, shouldn't this be what we want?"Congrats on your impending nuptials! Two fire signs together will have one adventure after another together. This wedding thing can be looked at as an adventure, too. When you let go of the small stuff (and your problem with the venue most definitely falls into this category), your wedding, and your life, will take on an easy, breezy feel. Sagittarians are luckier when they ride the adventure and appreciate other people's choices. This is one night of your life, and it's really about families coming together. Get into the spirit of that, and let the rest go

CELEBRITY PROFILES

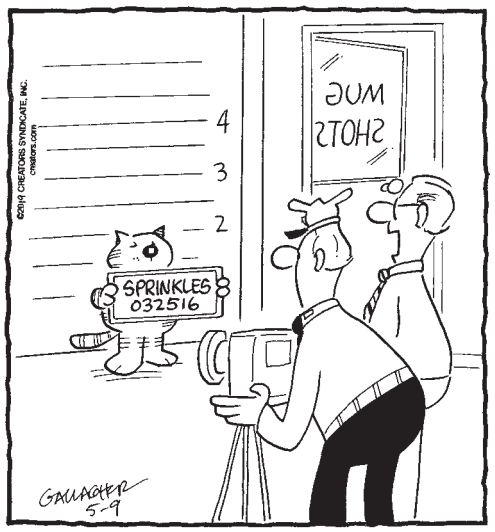
After a lifetime of touring, it's fitting that the legendary piano man Billy Joel would be the artist to set the record of playing the highest number of consecutive shows at Madison Square Garden. Joel, a father with two young daughters at home, was born when the sun was in Taurus (tenacity and golden voices) and both Saturn and Pluto were in Leo (children and show business). Write Holiday Mathis at HolidayMathis@gmail.com.

WORD UP!

Blossom
verb [blos-uhm]
to flourish; develop: a writer of commercial jingles who blossomed out into an important composer.

Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



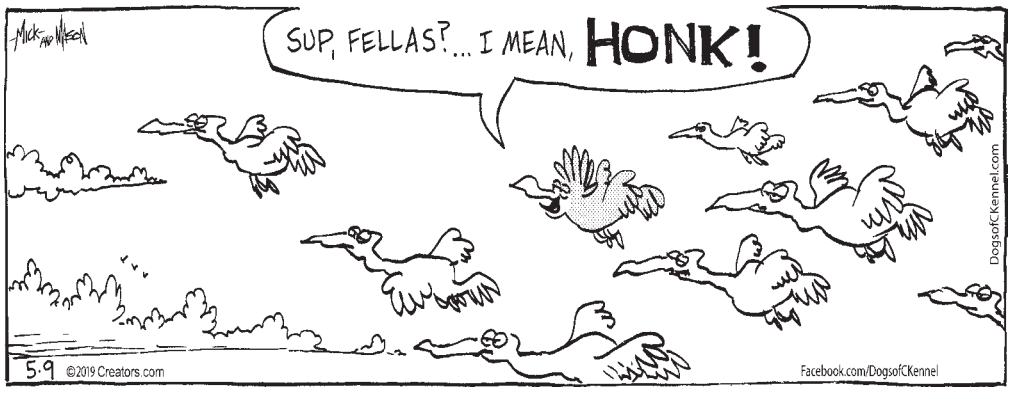
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



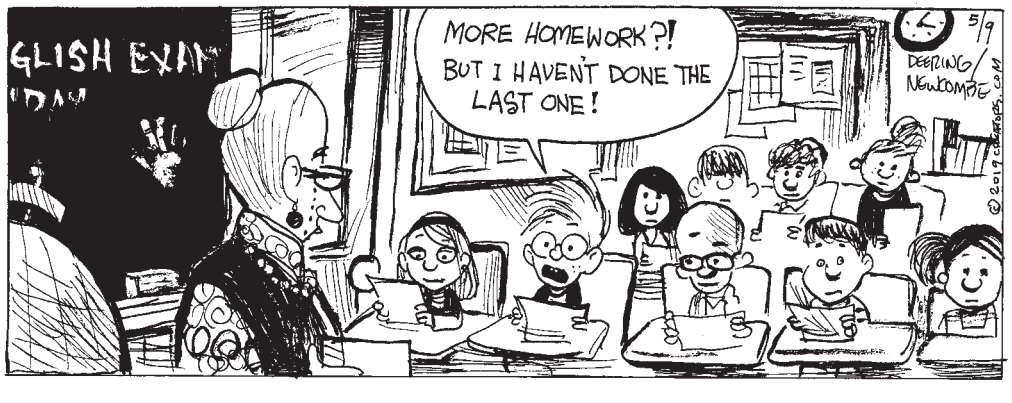
Dogs of C-Kennel

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NOTEWORTHY

FROM PAGE 4

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA - Spring Gala Chamber Music Fundraiser, Mayor Riordan's Brentwood estate, May 25, Annual Memorial Day Weekend Concert, Barnum Hall, SM, May 26; ORCHESTRA SANTA MONICA - "Bohemian Rhapsodies," Moss Theater, SM, May 26; LA PHIL, PARKENING INTERNATIONAL GUITAR COMPETITION - Pepperdine University, May 30, DUDAMEL - MAHLER's 8th, Disney Hall, DTLA, May 30, 31, June 2; City of SM, SM Pier, DTSM and SM Place will present the first ever SaMo PRIDE: a full month of festivities to raise awareness and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community, individuality, inclusiveness and acceptance, June, free; FATHER JOHN MISTY, JASON ISBELL AND THE 400 UNIT, Santa Barbara Bowl, June 7.

BODACIOUS BIRTHDAY: — let's go with yesterday's ROBERT JOHNSON (1911) — incredibly talented, moving singer, guitar player, composer, sold his soul to the devil for those talents, they say, at the crossroads, greatly influenced young Brits like Clapton, Keith, Plant, only 29 songs recorded, died mysteriously at 27 (first big-name member of The 27 Club). Very little is known about his short life. Famed blues musicologist John Hammond, Jr. narrated a 1991 UK TV doc "The Search for Robert Johnson," that did just that.

He mostly played around the Mississippi Delta at juke joints and on street corners. He tried to find a woman in every town who would take him in, and one of the stories of his death involved the jealous husband of someone he flirted with who gave him a poisoned bottle of booze. Or his advanced syphilis may have done it. We don't even know where he's buried.

The crossroads story? A common Faustian folk tale of the time, perhaps based in ancient African culture, and probably popped up when Johnson left town a novice musician and returned as a master. But here's the sad, local connection: when the second House of Blues in what became a chain was put up on the Sunset Strip in '94, founder Isaac Tigrett went to the Delta region for inspiration, and at a crossroads that could have been THE crossroads, there was an abandoned, dilapidated corrugated metal cotton mill structure. He bought it and carefully trucked it to LA, put it back together and it housed that HofB. I doubt Tigrett, whom I met, believed the legend but he respected the blues like a religion and that was his very expensive way to honor the blues.

For various reasons that HofB declined and finally closed, but what broke my heart was that the building was torn town and thrown on the scrap heap in June of 2017. Curbed Los Angeles has a photo and video of the demolition. That building was historic for so many reasons. Typical of their myopic, horrible music journalism, the LA Weekly ran a story headlined "Goodbye and Good Riddance, House of Blues Sunset Strip," and falsely insulted "the club's faux-decrepit exterior facade." In its place came, of course, a much-needed mixed use development with an eight-story hotel and a five-story condo building.

Charles Andrews has listened to a lot of music of all kinds, including more than 2,000 live shows. He has lived in Santa Monica for 33 years and wouldn't live anywhere else in the world. Really. Send love and/or rebuke to him at therealmrmusic@gmail.com

MARIJUANA

FROM PAGE 7

of that brownie," Wilson said.

Even for the relatively small number of California companies that are using the tracking system, it provides less than blanket coverage. Take the case of Moxie, which holds an annual license for manufacturing.

When the marijuana-extract company produces a fresh batch at its plant just outside Los Angeles, vice president Josh Haddox opens his laptop and types details about the product into the track-and-trace database.

Once it's in the platform, regulators can eyeball the same information.

But when the time comes to send a sample of extract to a testing company to check for purity and potency, it drops out of the state computer system. That's because Moxie, a brand of parent Pure CA, holds only a temporary license for its distribution arm and so doesn't have access to the system.

Haddox likes the system and is eager to see it in wide use. But with the piecemeal practices now in place, the state "has no way to tell how many products (a company) made or where it's going," he said.

With the explosion of cannabis sales, seed-to-sale tracking has emerged as a fiercely competitive business, with rival companies battling over lucrative government contracts.

In 2015, lawyers for Franwell, which has a two-year contract with California, said BioTrackTHC was using misleading publicity material and other tactics to undercut its business, claims denied by the rival company. BioTrackTHC in April filed a protest to void Missouri regulators' decision to award a medical cannabis licensing and seed-to-sale tracking contract to Franwell.

"Track-and-trace was definitely supposed to be one of those tools to define who is operating in the legal market and who is not," said Josh Drayton of the California Cannabis Industry Association. "We clearly are not getting the results we were hoping for."

FOOD DRIVE

FROM PAGE 1

and good people," Landrum said, mentioning organizations involving low-income summer students and veterans. "And it also goes to people like my mom. She's 78 and on a fixed income. She gets a box every week from the food bank. Donations go directly to people like her."

If inclined to help, all Santa Monica residents must do is set out non-perishable food items by their mailbox as early as possible for their letter carrier and carriers will take those items to the Westside Food Bank.

Allison Griffith, Director of Volunteers at the Westside Food Bank says items such as They protein/energy bars, breakfast cereals, pop tarts, pull tab cans, grab and go items, microwaveable soups, and peanut butter are preferred, though they'll take any non-perishable food items that haven't expired.

This time of year is crucial for donations, Griffith says. Westside Food Bank, which donates to organizations such as Veteran Lunch Bag and College Campus food programs through the drive, needs the local community's help to get over the donation-dry summer months.

"Right before Thanksgiving and through January, people are very driven to give," she said. "Summer months, donations go significantly down. This food drive is traditionally very nice to have to help carry through those summer months."

Speaking of carrying, Landrum says he and his fellow letter carriers do take on the physical brunt of lifting all those donations into their trucks on top of delivering mail all day. While they occasionally get some assistance via Boy Scout volunteers, Landrum says he and his fellow coworkers have no qualms with the extra physical exercise added to their day.

"It's all voluntary as far as the food pick up goes, and they do it out of the kindness of their hearts," Landrum said of fellow letter carriers. "They know it's for a good cause. There are smiles at the end of the day, we're all proud of what we've collected.

For more information, visit http://www.stampouthungerfooddrive.us/

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