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Council to adopt new water rates later this year

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The City of Santa Monica is preparing to establish new water rates for the next five years and officials will be soliciting public input into the new rates as early as this month.

2019 is the last of the current five-year rate structure approved by Council in 2015 and Council adopted a 9 percent increase this year.

In 2015, the City projected water rates would rise nine percent each year to fund water self-sufficiency projects, but rates only rose five percent in 2016, 2017 and 2018 because the City received more revenue from water sales than expected and had to delay some projects.

Despite a cumulative 33 percent increase over the last five years, Santa Monicans are still paying less for water than their neighbors in Los Angeles, Culver City or Beverly Hills. The average Los Angeles family pays $176 per month for water, while a family in Santa Monica pays $105 in 2019.

Santa Monica has long sought to wean itself off of water imported from Los Angeles and has a goal of self-sufficiency by 2023 via its Sustainable Water Master Plan (SWMP).

Staff said self sufficiency has several benefits including long-term cost savings, more sustainable water sources and a reduction in the amount of energy required to provide water.

The City's three-fold approach to reducing imported water is to continue to promote efforts to permanently reduce water demand, develop drought-resistant water sources and expand local groundwater production with sustainable yield limits.

"The anticipated cost to implement the SWMP components required to meet water self-sufficiency by 2023 is approximately $38 million in capital investments to increase local water supplies," said a city report on the upcoming rates. "These capital investments include expanding the treatment capacity of the City's existing Arcadia Water Treatment Plant (WTP), implementation of production efficiency enhancements, and acquiring an additional groundwater well to enhance resiliency. The required capital investments for the City to achieve water self-sufficiency by 2023 are a key consideration

SEE **WATER RATES** PAGE 3

Santa Monica's mural maestro

ANGEL CARRERAS
Daily Press Staff Writer

Throughout Santa Monica, your eyes will come across many a mural. Some bear the likeness of a famous food critic, some the mug of notorious MMA fighter, others have intricate designs and some attempt to distill SaMo history into a piece of artwork.

One series of murals, however, goes a more minimalist route — with words and phrases as deceptively simple as "Create", "love" and "You Are Beautiful", local artist Ruben Rojas aims to bring peace into your everyday life and perhaps one day, the entire world's.

"I use an urban landscape to look at life through a lens of love," Rojas says. "Every message is about love. Every single time I write 'You Belong Here', every single time I write 'Move Forward', it's a ripple effect toward

SEE **RUBEN** PAGE 7

NASA's first-of-kind tests look to manage drones in cities

SCOTT SONNER
Associated Press

NASA has launched the final stage of a four-year effort to develop a national traffic management system for drones, testing them in cities for the first time beyond the operator's line of sight as businesses look in the future to unleash the unmanned devices in droves above busy streets and buildings.

Multiple drones took to the air at the same time above downtown Reno this week in a series of

SEE **DRONES** PAGE 6



Bruce Hulse

CHARITY: **Several local women were recognized this month for their philanthropic work. Pictured are backrow: Grace Winter, Melanie Matayoshi, Jessie Bierschenk, Sierra Urbach, Charlie Andrews, Isabel Lewis, Catherine Jones. Frontrow: Raven Hilyard, Katherine Thomas, Claire Weigand, Grace Cortese. Not pictured: Penelope Brindley, Taylor Fortiq, Hallie Mandato, Kiley Wallace. See Page 3 for more information.**


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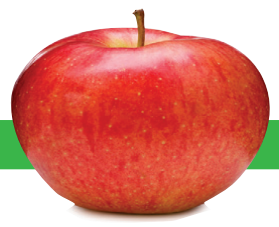
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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Friday, May 24

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 25

Lawn Bowling Open House

The Santa Monica Bowls Club wants you to try lawn bowling and experience how much fun it is. Free sessions are at noon on Saturday 25. Come as you are but wear flat, smooth soled shoes - we provide everything else. This is a very social sport that is easy to learn and you can play for a lifetime. We are located in Douglas Park at Wilshire Blvd and 25th Street in Santa Monica.

American Stories Book Group

Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck Pico Branch Library 2201 Pico Blvd 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Koto & Shakuhachi: Japanese Traditional Music Concert

Musicians Saeko Kujiraoka and Shozan Schultz join us to celebrate Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month with a performance of traditional Japanese music on the koto, a stringed-instrument, and shakuhachi, a bamboo flute. Seating is limited. Free tickets available 30 minutes before program (beginning at 1:30 p.m.) until supplies last. Fairview Branch Library 601 Santa Monica Blvd 2 - 3 p.m.

Toy Maker Workshop: Marionette

Design and make a marionette puppet of your own and explore the science behind all the fun! For grades K-5. Montana Avenue Branch Library 1704 Montana Avenue 3 - 4 p.m.

Sunday, May 26

Pool Open

The pool will be open from 10 am to 6 pm. Passes go on sale at 9am. Annenberg Community Beach House 415 Pacific Coast Hwy 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Santa Monica Symphony

The Santa Monica Symphony shines a spotlight on emerging talent in the final concert of its 74th season. The winner of the Symphony's 2019 Piano Concerto Competition, Nicholas Méndez Del Valle, will be performing Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2. The program will open with Verdi's compelling Overture to "La Forza del Destino" and close with Brahms' masterful Symphony No. 4. 7 p.m. Pre-Concert Lecture by Russell Steinberg at 6 p.m. Barnum Hall at Santa Monica High School, 600 Olympic Blvd. All Santa Monica Symphony Concerts are free with open seating. www.smsymphony.org

Monday, May 27

Pool Open

The pool will be open from 10 am to 6 pm. Passes go on sale at 9am. Annenberg Community Beach House 415 Pacific Coast Hwy 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 28

Write Away

Gain feedback and encouragement in your writing efforts from fellow writers in this supportive writer's meet-up Fairview Branch Library 601 Santa Monica Blvd 12:00pm-2:30 pm.

Walk-In Tutoring: Reading Writing and Online Skills

Friendly volunteer tutors provide help with basic reading, writing, and computer skills; using the Internet to search for information; opening and using an email account; filling out online forms or applications; learning how to write a resume or cover letter; and more. Main Library 601 Santa Monica Blvd Literacy Center 5:00pm-7:00 pm.

City Council Meeting

Regular Meeting of the Santa Monica City Council, City Hall, Council Chamber 5:30 pm.

Wednesday, May 29

A Lego Building Afternoon

Join us for fun with LEGO building. Ages 4-11. Ocean Park Branch Library 2201 Pico Blvd 3:30pm-5:00 pm.

Thursday, May 30

Current Events Group

Join us for a lively discussion of the latest news with your friends and neighbors. Fairview Branch Library 601 Santa Monica Blvd 1 - 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

National Charity League, Inc., Westside Chapter Celebrates The Class Of 2019 For Philanthropic And Leadership Achievements

On Saturday, March 16, the Westside Chapter of National Charity League, Inc. honored 15 Los Angeles area high school seniors at its annual Senior Recognition Dinner held at Le Meridien Delfina in Santa Monica.

National Charity League, Inc.'s mission is to foster mother-daughter relationships in a philanthropic organization committed to community service, leadership development and cultural experiences. In total, the Westside Chapter has contributed nearly 3,400 hours at various local charitable organizations over the past year. Areas supported by our local chapter include children in foster care, women and homeless shelters, programs for Veterans, health care and wellness services, animal shelters, and soup kitchens. In addition to volunteering with local Los Angeles area charities and nonprofit organizations, each young woman fulfills the requirements for participation in cultural activities and leadership development from seventh grade through her senior year of high school.

The Class of 2019 has volunteered at 14 local charities, developing a love for community service alongside their mothers. Together they provided over 1,025 volunteer hours. Catherine Jones, 17, was this year's recipient of the Senior Service Award, which celebrates the senior with the most volunteer hours throughout her tenure. Catherine completed 168.5 cumulative philanthropic hours in her six years serving the Westside Chapter.

"I was surprised and honored to receive the Senior Service Award," says Catherine Jones, senior at Viewpoint School and Palisadian native. "I loved volunteering at many NCL philanthropies, but Hollygrove holds a special place in my heart. Working with the kids at Hollygrove was always both meaningful and fun. I will never forget my time in NCL. Through NCL I have also been able to spend a lot of quality time with my mom, and we have made many memories together that I will always cherish."

To be recognized are: Charlotte McKenzie Andrews, daughter of Andrea and Mark Andrews; Jessica Lauren Bierschenk, the daughter of Lory and Kurt Bierschenk; Penelope Brindley, daughter of Jill and Paul Brindley; Grace Lee Cortese, daughter of Jocelyn and Greg Cortese; Taylor Fourtiq, daughter of Teresa and Micahel Fourtiq; Raven Marie Hilyard, daughter of Dawne Loera and Todd Hilyard; Catherine Liliana Jones, daughter of Heather and Evan Jones; Isabel Emmie Lewis, daughter of Ysette Witteveen and Richard Lewis; Hallie Mandato, daughter of Kathy and Vito Mandato; Melanie Kikumi Matayoshi, the daughter of Lillian and Duane Matayoshi; Katherine Paula Thomas, daughter of Nell Oliver and Duncan Thomas; Sierra Danielle Urbach, daughter of Gloria Kim and Dan Urbach; Kiley Wallace, daughter of Kitty and Craig Wallace; Claire Morrison Wiegand, daughter of Michele Shafroth and Marker Wiegand; and Grace Cameron Winter, daughter of Daniela and Doug Winter.

Established in Los Angeles, California in 1925, and incorporated in 1958, National Charity League, Inc. is the premier mother-daughter organization of women and their daughters in grades 7-12. Currently the membership organization has 70,000 Members in more than 256 Chapters that thrive in 27 states nationwide. Having grown by 65 percent in the past decade, those Members contributed 1.5 million volunteer hours to more than 3,000 local philanthropy partners last year alone.

Established in 2010, National Charity League, Inc., Westside Chapter currently has 213 Members and provides hands-on volunteer service for 14 philanthropic organizations in the community. Members are women and their daughters, grades 7-12. Through this community service, NCL, Inc. develops socially responsible community leaders and strengthens the mother-daughter relationship. The traditional Six Year Core Program also includes leadership development and cultural experiences.

For more information on the local Westside Chapter, visit their website at www.westside.nationalcharityleague.org.

SUBMITTED BY ANNA PURDUM, NATIONAL CHARITY LEAGUE, INC. - WESTSIDE CHAPTER

LOS ANGELES

Army veteran indicted in California bomb plot against rally

A U.S. grand jury has indicted an Army veteran in a plot to plant a bomb at a rally by white supremacists in California.

The U.S. attorney's office said Wednesday the indictment charges Mark Domingo with providing material support to terrorists and attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction.

The 26-year-old was arrested last month. Investigators say he wanted to kill people at a Nazi rally that was planned in Long Beach but didn't happen.

Court papers say Domingo discussed several types of attacks with an informant that included targeting Jews, churches and police.

Prosecutors say he wanted revenge for attacks on mosques in New Zealand that killed 50 people.

An email seeking comment from Domingo's public defender was not immediately returned.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WATER RATES

FROM PAGE 1

in the rate study to ensure adequate funds are available to support these projects and allow staff to maintain high quality service for the community."

Staff are currently working to establish the rates for the next five years "with due consideration given to ratepayers and the financial viability of the water and wastewater enterprise funds."

Outreach efforts on the upcoming rate structure are scheduled to begin immediately. Council will begin discussion of the proposals in July of this year with discussions continuing through October before final adoption in December.

"The target audiences for the rate study public outreach effort include ratepayers, civic/business groups, neighborhood associations, faith-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and multicultural organizations," said the report. "The public outreach efforts are intended to increase public awareness and understanding of the City's water and wastewater infrastructure and the rate adoption process in advance of presenting rate recommendations to City Council and the mailing of Proposition 218 notices to customers. Planned public outreach efforts include attending neighborhood and civic/business group meetings, developing fact sheets, and distributing notifications and soliciting public comments through the Proposition 218 process."



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PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

PARTNER
Todd James
todd@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Matthew Hall
matt@smdp.com

STAFF WRITERS
Angel Carreras
angel@smdp.com

Madeleine Pauker
madeleine@smdp.com

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Jenny Rice
jenny@smdp.com

OPERATIONS MANAGER
Cindy Moreno
cindy@smdp.com

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

PRODUCTION
Grape Multimedia Productions
production@smdp.com

CIRCULATION
Achling Holliday
ross@smdp.com

Keith Wyatt
ross@smdp.com

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

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WINNER

Laughing Matters

Jack Neworth
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

A Memorial Day to Forget

I only hope your Memorial Day holiday this Monday is more "peaceful" than the one I had more years ago that I care to admit. During this bygone "hippy era," I lived in Idyllwild, a small town nestled a high in the San Jacinto Mountains above Palm Springs, where I worked for the U.S. Forest Service.

Four days a week, I drove a sanitation truck collecting campground trash. Though not exactly a traditional job for a college graduate, I loved driving the 2 ½ ton International Harvester truck. For a sheltered Jewish kid from west Los Angeles, it was a kick.

On the fifth day, however, my duties were to patrol the campgrounds in a USFS pickup looking for violations, like building fires outside the fire pits. I also had to collect campground fees of $2 a day which were deposited by campers in a steel Forest Service green collection box. It was this aspect of my job that would land me flat on my back.

As I reminisce, under the heading "power corrupts," I think being in authority can go one's head. At least, it did mine. (The other 4 days, given the culture of the time, you could say it was pot going to my head.)

While the vast majority of campground visitors happily deposited their $2 per day, once in a while some didn't. In those cases I would go to the campsite and tell the campers that I didn't see an envelope in the box from them. However, I would always leave an out by saying maybe I missed it.

I would explain that I had to patrol further, "But afterwards I'll look again for the envelope as sometimes they get stuck." Ninety-nine times out of 100, the campers would rush to the collection box and pay their fees, so no harm, no foul. Apparently, this was the 100th time and some harm was done. (Apparently enough that I'm still writing about it decades later.)

The male camper, whom I would learn was a forklift operator, was burly, tattooed and rude. Especially to his attractive girlfriend. She also had a tattoo, a "tramp stamp" on her lower back, that revealed itself above her jeans. (FYI, tattoos on women were fairly rare in those days.)

The girlfriend seemed genuinely perplexed about the missing envelope. But, when I checked the box a second time, as I feared, it wasn't there. Now my bluff had been called and I had no choice but to write a ticket. This would be no fun.

As the girlfriend's protests were shushed by her boyfriend, I politely informed him I would have to give him a ticket and asked to see his driver's license. Everything seemed peaceful enough as he silently handed me his license and I began writing the ticket.

Moments later, however, he asked, "How much is this going to cost?" And here's where everything went south, including me. Instead of saying, "I have no idea, sir," I foolishly told the truth, "$50." And then...pow!

Instantaneously, I received a solid punch to the mid-section. The next thing I remember is my ticket book flying in the air and I was on my back wondering where the wind was that used to be in my lungs. Spoiler alert: the girlfriend had given him the campground fees and he'd pocketed it, so I suppose punched me to distract from that fact. It distracted, all right.

As I scrambled to my feet, he tackled me. Desperate, I managed to wrap my arms around him in a bear hug as we rolled in the dirt. Meanwhile, his girlfriend was screaming at him, "Have you lost your mind?! You're going to go to jail." (I felt like chiming in, "She has a point, you know.")

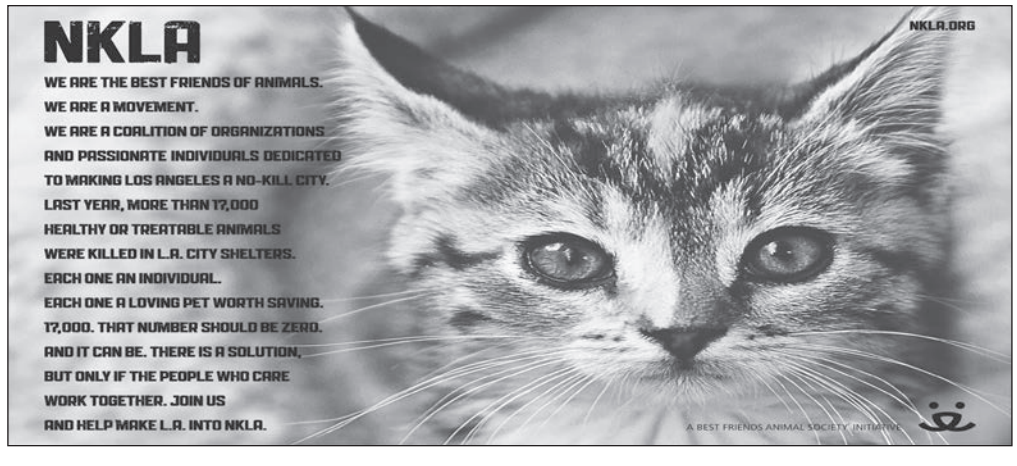
It's possible the word "jail" registered as I would learn that was a place he wasn't totally unfamiliar with. Thankfully, he curtailed the fisticuffs. I dusted myself off, made my way to my truck and got on the CB radio to headquarters. A fire patrol vehicle in the area was dispatched immediately.

The girlfriend continued chastising her boyfriend, "You're such an a**hole!" (Put it this way, she got no argument from me.) Actually I felt myself trembling as though I was in some kind of shock. A few campers who had witnessed what happened, asked if I was okay and I non-nonchalantly brushed it off. Truthfully, I was just glad I didn't burst out in tears. So what ultimately happened?

Sorry but I've run out of room. As a preview of next week's conclusion, against my wishes, I had to testify in U.S. Federal Court as my forklift operator foe was charged with "assaulting a federal officer" ... yours truly!

So, until next Friday, have a happy and peaceful Memorial Day!

Jack is at: facebook.com/jackneworth, twitter.com/jackneworth and jackdailypress@aol.com



OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters to the Editor can be submitted to letters@smdp.com. Receipt of a letter does not guarantee publication and all content is published at the discretion of the paper. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content. All submissions must include the author's name, address and phone number for the purposes of verification.



Your column here

By Ava Bourdeau

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Acceptance in Santa Monica

LGBTQ+ people have been around as long as homo sapiens themselves. However, despite their long history, they are still unaccepted and discriminated against around the world. As of 2017, students who identify as LGBT have been facing more "hostile" school environments. According to a survey conducted by Education Week, 80% of LGBTQ students reported facing verbal and physical abuse as of 2017. One out of six claimed that this harassment was solely due to their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. The survey also found that more than half of the students had heard their teachers say homophobic things, and under 20% experienced adult interventions when harassment was taking place. Furthermore, according to an article by USA Today, Americans' tolerance of LGBTQ people has decreased as a whole since the election of President Donald Trump.

While acceptance has increased in countries such as Iceland and Andorra, the USA's levels of prejudice have only grown in recent years. As residents of America, we as a community have the power and responsibility to help lower these disgusting statistics and help make everyone feel accepted and comfortable.

Tolerance also has its benefits. Countries such as Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands, nations boasting some of the highest rates of LGBTQ acceptance globally, are an eye-opening example. Since their tolerance rate began increasing rapidly in the 1980s, these nations, among others, have also become some of the most prosperous countries in the world. Researchers state that countries who possess the most inclusive Legal Environment Index (a way to measure the patterns of adoption of laws) enjoyed a significant $8,259 increase in GDP per capita. Additionally, countries who had at least one extra legal right associated with LGBTQ citizens had a $ 1,694 increase in GDP per capita. According to Lee Badgett, lead author of Links Between Economic Development and New Measures of LGBT Inclusion, "... policies that enhance access to education and health care will allow LGBT people the opportunity to realize their full economic potential, which will benefit the overall economy."

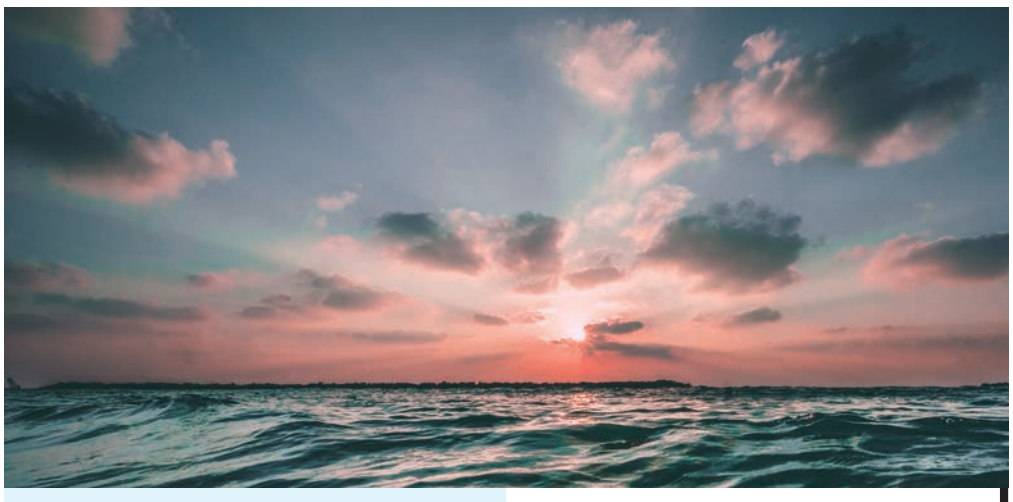
But how can we as Santa Monicans help make the local LGBT community feel more accepted? The first step is to stay informed and educated. In order to understand how to help a group of people, one must be aware of the issues which they face. There are many books, articles, and entire websites whose purpose is to educate the public on LGBTQ issues. Besides being informed, another important thing you can do to help is to be an upstander. If you see something, don't be afraid to speak out. However, when doing so, make sure that it is a safe situation and won't provoke any trouble. Another way to be an upstander in the community is to be a role model for young people. Many LGBTQ youths struggle with acceptance, and we must make sure that young people understand that they can be authentically themselves without feeling ashamed. Of course, the most important way to make a person feel accepted is to listen to them. If we are able to make people feel like they can safely and comfortably talk about their concerns and struggles, then they will feel more accepted overall. Being able to understand the issues they have faced personally will also make it easier for you educate others.

LGBTQ people are facing less discrimination in the 21st century. However, we still have a long way to go before prejudice has truly faded. We have the ability to take action within our community, and help go against stereotypes and intolerance to make the world a better place.

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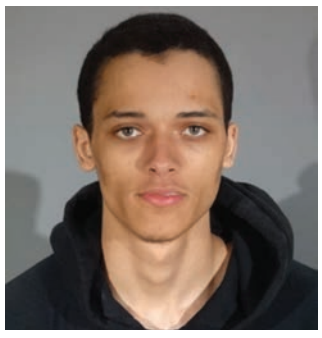
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CRIME WATCH BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

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.

ON MAY 8, AT 4:35 P.M.

Officers were called to 1441 21st St to deal with a person who was trespassing. The complex manager noticed a male subject on the 6th floor of the residential complex listening to loud music. The manager did not recognize the male as a tenant of the complex and asked him to leave. The subject refused to leave and ignored the request to leave. The police made contact with the subject who refused to answer any pertinent questions. The resident manager placed the subject under private person's arrest for trespassing. He was arrested without incident. Moses Abraham Phillips, 22, from Washington, was arrested for trespassing. Bail was set at $1,000.



File Photo
MOSES ABRAHAM PHILLIPS

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THE CLEAN SOBER NETWORK

DRONES

FROM PAGE 1

simulations testing emerging technology that someday will be used to manage hundreds of thousands of small unmanned commercial aircraft delivering packages, pizzas and medical supplies.

"This activity is the latest and most technical challenge we have done with unmanned aerial systems," said David Korsmeyer, associate director of research and technology at NASA's Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California.

An autonomous drone took off Tuesday from the rooftop of a five-story casino parking garage and landed on the roof of another out of view across the street. It hovered as onboard sensors adjusted for gusty winds before returning close to the center of the launchpad.

Equipped with GPS, others flew at each other no higher than city streetlights but were able to avoid colliding through onboard tracking systems connected to NASA's computers on the ground.

Similar tests have been conducted in remote and rural areas. The Federal Aviation Administration has authorized individual test flights in cities before but never for multiple drones or outside the sight of the operator.

The new round of tests continuing this summer in Reno and Corpus Christi, Texas, marks the first time simulations have combined all those scenarios, said Chris Walach, executive director of the Nevada Institute of Autonomous Systems, which is running the Reno tests of unnamed aerial vehicles, or UAVs.

"When we began this project four years ago, many of us wouldn't have thought we'd be standing here today flying UAVs with advanced drone systems off high-rise buildings," he said.

The team adopted a "crawl, walk, run" philosophy when it initiated tests in 2015, culminating with this fourth round of simulations, said Ron Johnson, project manager for unmanned aircraft systems traffic management at NASA's Ames Research Center.

"We are definitely in the 'run' phase of this development here in Reno," he said.

The results will be shared with the FAA. The agency outlined proposed rules in January that would ease restrictions on flying drones over crowds but said it won't take final action until it finishes another regulation on identifying drones as they're flying — something industry analysts say could be years away.

Critics assert that the FAA has stymied the commercial use of drones by applying the same rigid safety standard it uses for airlines.

"There can be a lot of Silicon Valley mentality where people don't want to wait. So, we're trying to strike a balance between unleashing entrepreneurship and ensuring we're doing it safely while trying to accelerate acceptance of drones in public," Johnson said.

Amazon and FedEx are among the companies that hope to send consumer products by drone by 2020. Drone delivery company Flirtey began testing delivery of defibrillators for cardiac arrest patients last year in Reno under FAA oversight.

Johnson said cities present the biggest challenges because of limited, small landing areas among tall buildings that create navigation and communication problems.

He said it became apparent early on that the travel management plans for drones would have to be completely automated because FAA air traffic controllers can't handle the enormous workload.

The system is being tested with the help of 36 private partners, including drone manufacturers, operators, software developers and other third-party service providers, Johnson said.

The system uses software on the ground that communicates flight plans and positions to other software systems. The drones are equipped with programs for landing, avoiding crashes, surveillance, detection and identification, optical cameras and systems similar to radar that work with lasers.

Huy Tran, director of aeronautics at NASA's Ames Research Center, said her supervisors at NASA headquarters were surprised to hear they had be testing drones in Reno.

"They said, 'Are you crazy?'" she said. "We hope (the test in) Reno shows drones can be flown and land safely."



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RUBEN

FROM PAGE 1

peace, for all humanity. I alone won't create world peace, but if I can inch the pendulum that way, I'm happy."

Rojas' work can be seen throughout Santa Monica, Los Angeles and a slew of select corporate sponsors, but his career trajectory in the art world started much differently than others and happened in the intersection between untapped talent and chance.

Rojas was born in Cedars-Sinai and raised in the Valley, raised by creative, entrepreneurial parents.

Rojas' mother owned an arts and crafts store, bringing a young Rojas around to mill about it. When Rojas wasn't doodling around in the margins of his notebooks during school, his mother would take him to art classes including oil painting, crochet, whittling and pottery.

Though he enjoyed these crafts, Rojas found himself attracted to helping people as he grew older.

He eventually applied to med school to become an orthopedic surgeon. After a few tours, however, he got cold feet.

"I was freaking out," Rojas said. "I thought, do I really want to be bald from ripping my hair out and in lifelong debt at 35? It wasn't going to work out for me."

At a buddy's suggestion, Rojas gave real estate a shot.

"In the first month I made a lot of money," Rojas said with a smile. "Every month I made more and more, it was crazy. I had properties and everything then 2008 happened."

During the Housing Crisis, Rojas says he lost everything in his life, at least in a material sense. He fell into financial advising and did that for years.

He looks back at this as a misguided time in his life, saying he was driven by being perceived as successful.

"This country shows us you're successful by the car you have, the watch, the status, all that," he said. "When I lost everything, the big lesson was I didn't need all these things. I saw I was still me. I stopped worrying about being defined by the things I owned."

Eventually a chance encounter with Beautify Earth's Evan Meyers led to a new career for Rojas. Rojas refers to Meyers as "the grandpapi of Beautify Earth" and the man that changed his life.

"Around then, Ruben and I were taking some leadership course," Meyers said. "We didn't know each other at the time but I saw this powerful, talented man. He was doodling in a meeting, I saw the doodle and said, 'This is amazing, why aren't you doing art?"

"I wasn't an artist at the time," Rojas says, "I was a suit. I randomly doodled here and there and did stuff for my high school, hoodie designs with positive affirmations, but that was kind of it. Evan took a chance on me."

Rojas' first mural with Beautify Earth exemplifies Rojas' artistic statement, asking "Who Will You Be?" It's a question Rojas asked himself before his art career, each mural of his is a paint covered mirror he's held up to himself before.

"Art is subjective, sure, but I try to open doors [of perception] for people with my work," Rojas said. "I made that mural and the others just talking to myself. If I open that door, interact however you want. I can show you this mirror because maybe you need it. I needed it. Maybe you needed to see this message to help you stop beating yourself up and make a change. There's never a better time than now."

A quick scroll through Rojas' tagged Instagram feed shows people reveling in his messages, taking selfies and group photos in front of his positive affirmations. While he says he initially was curious about murals to reach a larger audience (around 40k a day, he estimates), he's interested in going bigger.

Integrating art and tech, public statues, contributing to green-related efforts and collaborating with the City are all goals of his. All he wants, he says, is an opportunity to spread positive messages on a larger scale.

"All I want is to take someone off their normal path because they saw something that invoked a change at that moment and put a smile on their face," he said.

While his life has changed immeasurably — over the course of 80+ murals, Rojas says he's brushed shoulders with billionaires and has had the opportunity to travel the world to do Ted Talks, to name a few life changes — he still remains humble, the same Ruben Rojas that doodled in his notebooks and always wanted to help others. If he can have his life change for the better, he wants to help empower you to do the same.

"Did I set out for this? No, all this has organically happened. But everyone has that opportunity. Everyone has the opportunity to excel in what they've been gifted. Just be a good human and I think everything else will follow through. If my work can help with that, I'll know I did something right."

For more on Ruben Rojas, visit RubenRojas.com

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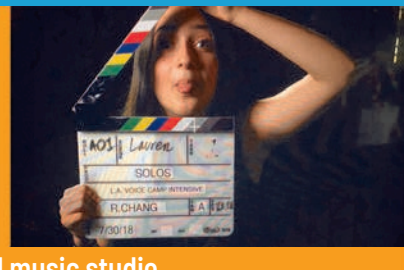
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ages 10-17

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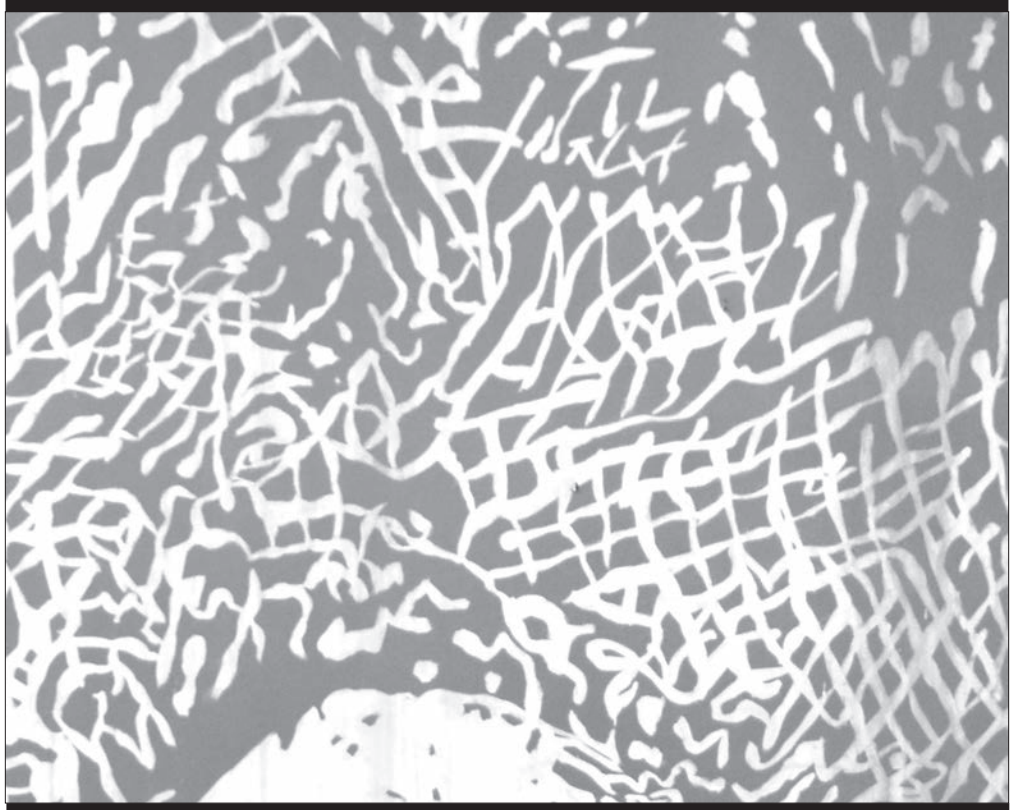
- Beginner/Intermediate Singers
- Perform live for friends and family and the Santa Monica Farmers Market
- An epic battle of Color War. This is MESSY!

ages 8-14

MYSTERY PHOTO

Send answers to editor@smdp.com.

The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize.



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DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 378 CALLS ON MAY 22

Fight 2900blk Pico Blvd 12:43 a.m.
Illegal weapon 300blk Santa Monica Pl 3:57 a.m.
Arson 2000blk Ocean Front Walk 5:17 a.m.
Bike theft 1500blk 2nd St 5:22 a.m.
Theft of recyclables 800blk 7th St 6:09 a.m.
Encampment 3100blk the beach 6:53 a.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries Lincoln Blvd / Washington Ave 6:55 a.m.
Fraud 300blk Olympic Dr 7:06 a.m.
Vandalism 300blk 18th St 7:10 a.m.
Burglary 500blk Palisades Ave 7:28 a.m.
Paparazzi complaint 4th St / San Vicente Blvd 7:46 a.m.
Auto burglary 700blk 18th St 7:49 a.m.
Petty theft 600blk 18th St 8:13 a.m.
Burglary 1000blk 20th St 8:38 a.m.
Traffic collision with injuries city prop involved Lincoln Blvd / Hill St 8:46 a.m.
Sexual assault 2600blk Main St 9:25 a.m.
Fraud 2800blk Broadway 9:31 a.m.
Assault 1500blk 4th St 9:45 a.m.
Traffic collision - unkn injuries Lincoln Blvd / Bay St 9:55 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 700blk Michigan Ave 10:01 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 500blk Ocean 10:04 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 700blk Ocean Ave 10:21 a.m.
Person down 1500blk 4th St 10:30 a.m.
Elder abuse 1300blk 20th St 10:32 a.m.
Fraud 2300blk 20th St 10:42 a.m.
Auto burglary 600blk 7th St 10:44 a.m.
Critical missing person 300blk Olympic Dr 11:09 a.m.
Battery 1500blk Broadway 11:11 a.m.
Silent robbery alarm 700blk Wilshire Blvd 11:56 a.m.
Lost property 2500blk 28th St 11:58 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 700blk Ocean Ave 12:02 p.m.
Traffic collision - unkn injuries 1800blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:14 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold 3rd Street Prom / Santa Monica Blvd 12:19 p.m.
Encampment 1700blk 9th St 12:20 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold 2200blk 22nd St 12:21 p.m.
Petty theft 1300blk Wilshire Blvd 12:48 p.m.
Petty theft Ocean Ave / Broadway 12:58 p.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries Yale St / Washington Ave 1:07 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 800blk 4th St 1:11 p.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries city prop involved 1700blk 21st St 1:12 p.m.
Bike theft 500blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:27 p.m.
Auto burglary 1400blk 5th St 1:28 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold Lincoln Blvd / Pacific St 1:29 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 2100blk Carlyle Ave 1:34 p.m.
Petty theft 1400blk 4th St 1:50 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 900blk 3rd St 2:02 p.m.
Drunk driving 26th St / Montana Ave 2:11 p.m.
Speeding 34th St / Pico Blvd 2:28 p.m.
Auto burglary 1400blk 2nd St 2:29 p.m.
Missing person 2600blk 4th St 2:43 p.m.
Animal related incident 2700blk Ocean Park Blvd 2:47 p.m.
Vehicle blocking driveway 200blk Bicknell Ave 2:47 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1300blk Centinela Ave 2:49 p.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1100blk 22nd St 3 p.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries 200blk Palisades Beach Rd 3:14 p.m.
Fraud 1400blk 18th St 3:16 p.m.
Stolen vehicle recovered 600blk Santa Monica Blvd 3:23 p.m.
Exhibition of speed 20th St / Pearl St 3:33 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold 2700blk Wilshire Blvd 3:49 p.m.
Traffic hazard 18th St / Santa Monica Blvd 3:50 p.m.
Person down 1500blk 2nd St 3:54 p.m.
Traffic collision with injuries 1600blk 10th St 3:57 p.m.
Lewd activity 2000blk Yorkshire Ave 4:04 p.m.
Encampment 1800blk Main St 5:40 p.m.
Construction noise 1900blk 19th St 6:11 p.m.
Vehicle blocking driveway 1200blk 18th St 7:07 p.m.
Indecent exposure 2700blk Santa Monica Blvd 7:17 p.m.
Found senile person 24th St / Montana Ave 7:21 p.m.
72 hour psychiatric hold 900blk 2nd St 7:32 p.m.
Found property 300blk Santa Monica Pier 7:34 p.m.
Traffic hazard Stewart St / Colorado Ave 7:35 p.m.
Indecent exposure 2nd St / Broadway 7:45 p.m.
Grand theft auto 1300blk 10th St 7:57 p.m.
Vandalism 1600blk Cloverfield Blvd 7:58 p.m.
Speeding Pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 8:04 p.m.
Fraud 1400blk Franklin St 8:05 p.m.
Vandalism 800blk Ocean Ave 8:15 p.m.
Vandalism 1600blk Cloverfield Blvd 8:16 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 31 CALLS ON MAY 22

Emergency Medical Service 1100blk 5th St 1:20 a.m.
EMS 1100blk California Ave 4:05 a.m.
EMS 900blk 12th St 4:19 a.m.
Automatic alarm 800blk Montana Ave 7:12 a.m.
Automatic alarm 1900blk 12th St 7:18 a.m.
Traffic collision with injury Lincoln Blvd / Hill St 8:48 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 10th St 8:51 a.m.
Automatic alarm 1300blk Ocean Ave 9:44 a.m.
EMS 900blk Pico Blvd 10:15 a.m.
EMS 1500blk 4th St 10:30 a.m.
EMS 800blk 5th St 10:40 a.m.
EMS 1100blk 12th St 11:21 a.m.
EMS 1100blk Wilshire Blvd 11:33 a.m.
EMS 2500blk La Mesa Dr 11:36 a.m.
Automatic alarm 2800blk Wilshire Blvd 11:45 a.m.
EMS 2300blk Ocean Park Blvd 11:52 a.m.
EMS 2400blk 16th St 11:53 a.m.
Traffic collision with injury 1800blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:14 p.m.
EMS 500blk Olympic Blvd W 12:59 p.m.
Elevator rescue 1500blk 2nd St 1:03 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 4th St 1:39 p.m.
EMS 2600blk Ocean Front Walk 2:49 p.m.
Traffic collision with injury 1600blk 10th St 3:57 p.m.
EMS 700blk Montana Ave 4:01 p.m.
EMS 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 5:38 p.m.
EMS 2800blk Ocean Park Blvd 7:02 p.m.
EMS 800blk Palisades Park 7:05 p.m.
Smoke investigation 1600blk 11th St 7:52 p.m.
EMS 1100blk 7th St 8:15 p.m.
Automatic alarm 2000blk Main St 8:22 p.m.

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 05/22
7 10 20 44 57
Power#: 3
Jackpot: $308 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 05/21
10 50 55 56 58
Mega#: 15
Jackpot: $393 M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 05/22
16 34 37 42 43
Mega#: 21
Jackpot: $47 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 05/22
3 4 7 8 36

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 05/22
Midday: 4 8 3
Draw Date: 05/22
Evening: 4 4 9

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 05/22
1st: 1 - GOLD RUSH
2nd: 3 - HOT SHOT
3rd: 6 - WHIRL WIN
RACE TIME: 1:40.32

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



SURF REPORT

SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 59.7°

FRIDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3 ft +waist to stomach high occ. 4 ft
Leftover NW swell. New SSW swell builds. Clean AM conditions continue.

SATURDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3 ft +waist to stomach high
Modest SSW swell shows mainly in north part of the South Bay. Minor NW swell.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

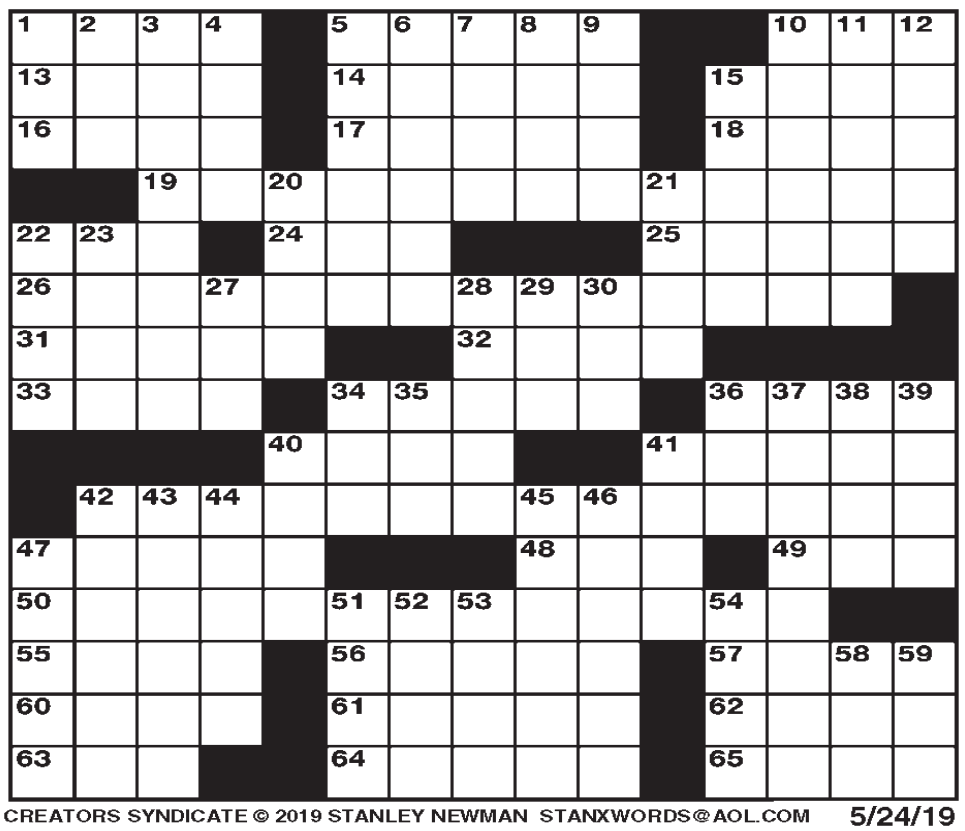
8		9	1			3		
			4					8
3		4		6		9		
				7		2		4
	9		8		1		7	
4		7		5				
		8		1		5		3
9					6			
		6			5	7		9

Newsday Crossword

SWITCHBOARD by Pam Klawitter
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Creature comforts
5 Pop star from London
10 Conan's home after NBC
13 45th state
14 Allude
15 Be discontented
16 10 Down agency of a sort
17 A member of
18 Sitar melody
19 Stratfordian nickname [letters 4-8]
22 Litigate
24 Juniper berry product
25 Without interruption
26 It might move you on a mountain [letters 4-8]
31 French royal name
32 ". . . such __ is"
33 Munch Museum home
34 Contralto's concern
36 Soft ball since 1969
40 Poetic foot
41 "Gunga Din" locale
42 Breakfast order [letters 2-6]
47 Goosebump-y
48 Without exception
49 Erode or annoy
50 Overflow insurance [letters 4-8]
55 ". . . __ away childish things"
56 In-group
57 Swanky
60 Not so great
61 Capital of 41 Across
62 West Point mascot
63 Tennyson preposition
64 Solemn affirmations
65 *Paradise Lost* river

DOWN
1 Knock-knock joke, e.g.
2 Frat letter
3 Showing class
4 Title like "czar"
5 World's largest peninsula
6 Factor in pricing
7 Get an __ effort
8 Furnish for a time
9 Conclusion intro
10 Journey
11 Old-style "Scram!"
12 Oboist's accessory
15 Euro predecessor
20 Head swellers
21 Indy family name
22 Without a 42 Down
23 Unsettling sightings
27 Former South American capital
28 White-tailed toon
29 MSN or AOL
30 AFL partner
34 Key near Q
35 Modern moody music
36 Compass reading
37 Squeaks by
38 Largest Baltic States city
39 Snappy
40 Put a name to
41 Insignificant
42 One on Santa's staff
43 Incite
44 Very funny folks
45 Jack London captain
46 In-groups
47 TurboTax choice
51 1910s screen superstar
52 Common scholarship donor
53 Ready for reaping
54 Spinning wheel stat.
58 Roguish
59 Bad spell



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2019 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 5/24/19

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (May 24)

This year is marked by spontaneity. Friends won't want to do anything without you, and some of your most interesting life events will come out of spur-of-the-moment requests. Also notable: a debt finally gets paid; you'll get a chance to use your high school training; extended family or old friends will act as business allies. Leo and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 10, 3, 33 and 37.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). When a rider pedals backward on a 10-speed bicycle, the feet rotate but the wheels don't engage. No momentum is created. Thinking against yourself has the same effect. It can't take you very far.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). People sometimes have to lose a thing to understand and appreciate fully what it is. So, don't get too upset by the minor ups and downs of people and possessions flowing through your life. It's all about learning.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). If you have to convince someone of your love, it might mean you're not showing them love in the preferred way they like to receive it. Once you find the right way, it takes a lot less energy to delight a person.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Love's language is unique to all who speak it. Every relationship has its own kind of culture. Your contribution to the relationship is only a part of this. If one person is too dominant, the relationship's potential is diminished.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). As a fire sign, you've an innate understanding of passion's nature. It is your nature, too. Like a fire, passion needs to be oxygenated and fueled in order to burn. And you need inspiration in order to be your best self.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Most of the tasks you execute today have to do with skills you've picked up through experience. You learn best by doing. But there's something on the horizon that's going to happen more smoothly if you get a little formal training.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's true that many social contracts are unspoken, but try not to take inferences too seriously right now. For instance, one date doesn't obligate you to anyone. Go out and try new things with new people just to see what happens.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You want to know if a person feels as you do, but questions can't get to the truth. Maybe it's impossible to verify. Love takes trust, and trust happens when you can consistently and accurately predict a person's behavior.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Just because most people believe a thing doesn't make it true. But when total strangers who are uninformed and unbiased about the situation weigh in, that opinion should have more credence in your poll.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Seeking love is seldom the way to find it. Creating beautiful experiences for yourself and others is a far more predictable route to your heart's fulfillment and one that's worked for you time and again.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Now is the day to consider what present you'll bring to an upcoming event. If you wait, your ideas will be less interesting and more motivated by what you can get in time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're probably not even aware of who's thinking of you now and considering you for a role. You don't have to prove you're right for the position; just prove you're awesome at the one you already have.

Stars Make Social Swirl

Don't worry about whether you know enough about the right things. Everyone feels out of place the first time they explore new terrain, and it's all new terrain this weekend. The chatty Gemini sun and social Aquarius moon will strike up new friendships, facilitate fascinating meetings and play just the sort of cosmic music that gets everybody dancing.

WEEKEND LOVE FORECAST:

ARIES: Refrain from using too many words. When the heart is expressing truth, excess words will only muddy the picture. TAURUS: Telling people to relax is usually a pretty good way to agitate them. You'll find other ways to be a calming influence. GEMINI: How a potential partner gets along with others shows how this person is likely to get along with you. CANCER: Maybe you can't do anything about a situation today, but eventually things will change. LEO: Happiness is attractive. Your smile will be considered a beautiful gift to all receive it. VIRGO: Don't underestimate the value of a hug or cuddle. LIBRA: It's what you learn past the third date that matters. SCORPIO: As good-looking as you may be, it's your kindness, warmth, humor and socially open attitude that are your most attractive qualities. SAGITTARIUS: How people treat those in a lower status will be the most enlightening and revealing test of their true character. CAPRICORN: There are certain people who will have the power to meet your preferences. So, never say never! AQUARIUS: A heart's capacity for passion and joy directly correlates with its capacity for pain. PISCES: Uninspired choices are a waste of time. Love needs a change of scenery. New scenes will invigorate.

COUPLE OF THE WEEKEND

As the sun's Gemini rays reflect off the face of the moon in the sign of the fish, the Pisces/Gemini couple decides something about their status as a twosome. They have the potential to effectively define how their relationship will be for the next three months and stick with the plan. These two will powerfully embrace new territories of the heart, each being the other's guide.

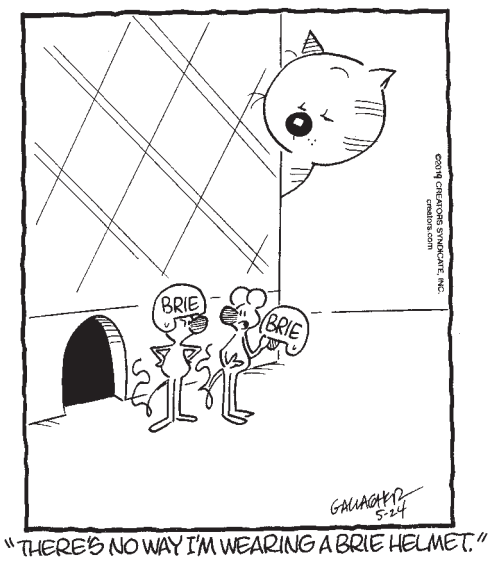
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WORD UP!

Overmorrow
noun [oh-ver-mawr-oh, [mor-oh]
the day after tomorrow: I've heard that tomorrow and overmorrow may bring exceptionally high waves.

Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"THERE'S NO WAY I'M WEARING A BRIE HELMET."

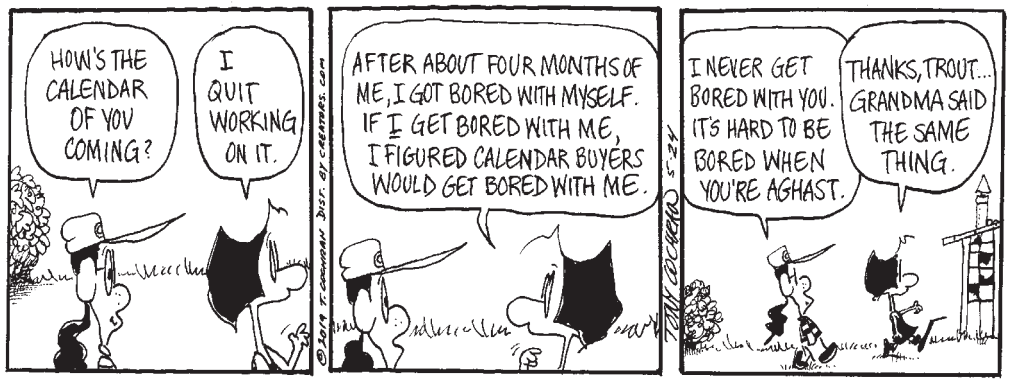
Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

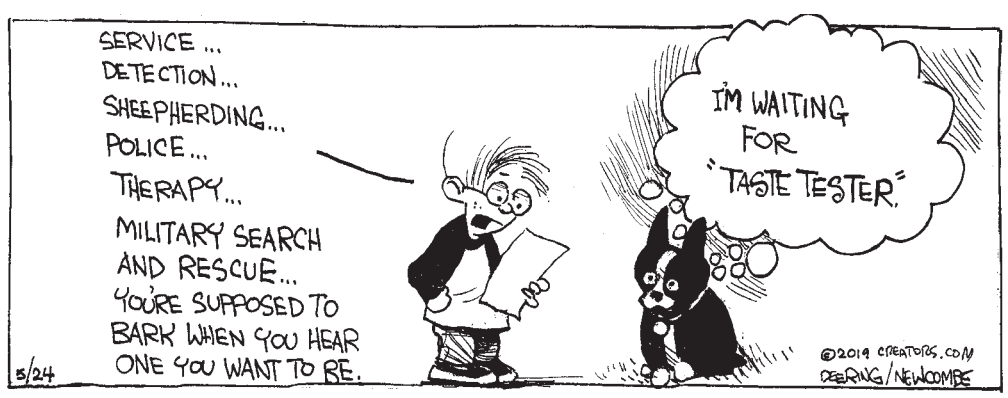
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California Assembly OKs cap on consumer loan interest rates

ANDREW OXFORD
Associated Press

The California Assembly voted Thursday to cap the interest lenders may charge on loans that can carry rates spiraling into the triple digits.

Backed by civil rights groups, religious organizations and some trade associations, the proposed law would cap annual rates at around 38% for loans between $2,500 and $10,000.

The bill comes as legislators across the country seek to reign in a storefront lending industry critics accuse of preying on low-income consumers in need of cash and trapping them under mounds of debt for years.

But even as the bill advanced, some California lawmakers expressed concern that it will limit choices for consumers with bad credit or little access to banks and other financial products. And the lending industry, which wields significant influence in legislatures as well as in Washington, has launched an advertising campaign in California attacking the bill as it heads to the state Senate, where observers expect a tougher fight.

Proponents of capping interest rates point to an explosion in high-interest consumer loans around the state over the last decade.

The state already caps interest rates on consumer loans under $2,500 but not for amounts over that threshold. In 2009, 8,468 loans for amounts between $2,500 and $10,000 came with interest rates over 100%, according to data from state regulators. Lenders now issue more than 350,000 loans each year with interest rates in the triple digits. A legislative analysis said at least one out of three borrowers is unable to pay their loans.

But proposals to cap interest rates in recent years have faltered at California's Legislature. Several lawmakers still expressed concern about the latest proposal, suggesting it could drive lenders out of the market, pushing consumers with low incomes toward unregulated lenders or cutting off their easy access to capital.

"Without these alternative financial service providers, those folks would have nowhere else to go," said Democratic Assemblywoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove of Los Angeles.

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon dismissed arguments the bill would ultimately harm low-income residents.

"Those are merely talking points of an industry that has repeatedly lied to members of this chamber," he said.

Casting the bill as a moral issue, the Democrat said the legislation can be considered as important as any other lawmakers will vote on this year in the country's most populous state.

The bill ended up passing with bipartisan support as one Republican legislator cited religious prohibitions on usury.

"I'm a free-market capitalist and I'm unashamed of it but we need to stand up and protect people who are being preyed upon," said Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham of San Luis Obispo.

The support of the financial industry this year, too, may also signal that the sector foresees a reckoning in the state or at least further political uncertainty if lawmakers do not approve limits for loans between $2,500 and $10,000.

The California Supreme Court cast a legal question mark last year over the lending industry's practices, deciding in one class action lawsuit that some interest rates can be so high as to be deemed unconscionable under financial laws.

Democratic Assemblywoman Monique Limon of Santa Barbara, the bill's author, also suggested that an interest rate cap could end up on the ballot if the Legislature does not act.

If passed, California would join 38 states and the District of Columbia in capping interest rates for these types of loans, according to a legislative analysis. The level proposed in California would be on the higher end.

Observers expect a bigger political fight when the bill heads to the state Senate, however.

Opponents of the bill have launched an advertising campaign aimed at stopping it.

The trade group Online Lenders Alliance has bought ads on Sacramento television stations, according to Federal Communication Commission filings.

A group calling itself Don't Lock Me Out California has also bought online ads attacking the bill.

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