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- 2 **Tourism summit**
Looking to the future.
- 3 **Legislative flurry**
From Zbur's office.



- 4 **Test of democracy**
Failing grade.
- 7 **Flag Day**
At the Elks Lodge.

Volume 25 Issue 142

MONDAY 6/8/26

smdp.com

Toxic carcinogen found in L.A. wildfire cleanup zones, putting millions at risk

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

A cancer-causing metal detected in the air around last year's Los Angeles wildfire cleanup zones may have exposed more than 3 million residents to dangerous levels of a toxic carcinogen, according to a new study by University of California researchers.

The peer-reviewed study, published in the journal *Nature Communications Earth & Environment*, found hexavalent chromium — commonly known as chromium-6 — in neighborhoods surrounding the Palisades and Altadena fire zones two months after the January 2025 blazes. Calculations using models for wind-carried contaminants suggest the microscopic particles traveled as far as six to nine miles from the burn areas, reaching communities including Beverly Hills, West Hollywood and parts of the southern San Fernando Valley.

Researchers estimate approximately 3.3 million people received doses of the carcinogen at levels hundreds of times higher than those normally found in Los Angeles air.

"It shows that well after the wildfires were extinguished, nanoparticles, which are so small they can enter the circulatory system very quickly, were in the air around the burn zones," said Dr. Michael Jerrett, professor in the Department



RESEARCH: A joint UC Davis and UCLA team researched the presence of hexavalent chromium, a known carcinogen, in the air across southern California in the aftermath of the 2025 Los Angeles County wildfires.

of Environmental Health Sciences at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and a co-author of the study. "These probably traveled far enough to give 3.3 million people doses that were hundreds of times the levels that are normally seen in the air in

Los Angeles." Chromium-6 is a toxic metal linked to asthma, bronchitis and lung cancer. The nanoparticles identified in the study measure less than one-thousandth the width of a human hair — small enough to cross

cell membranes and move through the bloodstream. Researchers measured average concentrations of 13.7 nanograms per cubic meter in the cleanup zones. While those levels fall below the National Institute for Occupational

Safety and Health's workplace exposure limit of 200 nanograms per cubic meter, they significantly exceed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's screening levels for indoor air — 0.1 nanograms per cubic meter for cancer risk and 3 nanograms per cubic meter for non-cancer health effects.

Lead author Dr. Michael Kleeman, a professor at UC Davis, said the findings were released early to alert residents and other researchers, even as the study undergoes final revisions.

"Caution and health surveillance is warranted for nearby residents given that nanoparticles can easily cross cell membranes and circulate throughout the body," Kleeman said. "Discovering these airborne, chromium-bearing nanoparticles in the wildfire debris cleanup zones is a unique finding that implicates the fires as a source of toxic nanoparticle metals."

The source of the elevated chromium-6 remains unknown. Researchers point to a range of possible culprits in the burned structures, including computer screens, solar panels, electric vehicles and flame retardants — all materials common in the urban neighborhoods consumed by the fires.

The study also raises a concerning timeline question: monitoring did not begin until two months after the

SEE WILDFIRE PAGE 11

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At tourism summit, Santa Monica charts its Next Global Chapter

MICHELLE EDGAR
Special to the Daily Press

Santa Monica tourism and city leaders gathered Thursday to assess the city's visitor economy and outline plans for an unprecedented stretch of global events, including FIFA World Cup 2026, Super Bowl LXI and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The occasion was Santa Monica Travel & Tourism's 17th Annual Tourism Summit, held at Hotel Casa del Mar. Themed "The Road Ahead: Inspired by Route 66, Driven by What's Next," the event served as both an industry celebration and a progress report on the city's ongoing revitalization efforts.

According to Santa Monica Travel & Tourism, the city welcomed 3.9 million visitors in 2025, a 4.1% increase in international visitation over the prior year. Those visitors generated \$996.6 million in economic activity, a 9% increase from 2024.

Tourism also produced \$60.2 million in hotel tax revenue and \$5.8 million in retail tax revenue for the city's general fund, supporting public safety, parks, beaches, schools and community services. The organization estimates that tourism activity saved each Santa Monica household approximately \$1,267 in taxes last year.

Looking ahead, hotel revenue is projected to surpass \$400 million in 2026, with occupancy expected to reach 76.3% as major events continue to draw visitors to the region.

City Manager Oliver Chi framed the economic gains in broader terms, describing Santa Monica's recovery as an effort rooted in restoring basic civic functions before chasing outside attention.

"I don't think we're going to earn the world back just by chasing visitors," Chi said. "We're going to earn that trust if we start by getting our own house in order."

Chi described the city's realignment strategy as a deliberate effort to move away from what he called "managing decline" and toward measurable accountability. The city now publishes monthly scorecards tracking progress across key performance areas.

Among the improvements he highlighted: removal of more than 500 tons of trash from the downtown core, pruning of more than 700 trees, planting of 40 new trees, installation of 7,000 square feet of new sidewalks and expanded power-washing efforts. He said crime has declined 12.5% year over year.

"The basics may not be glamorous," Chi said. "But without getting the basics right, we can't get to all the other things we aspire to do."

The city has also launched a multimillion-dollar revitalization fund to encourage investment and stimulate economic activity throughout Santa Monica.

Chi also outlined an aggressive events calendar tied to the coming years. Santa Monica is activating fan programming and cultural events throughout the FIFA World Cup tournament. ESPN and Disney are planning to establish their Super Bowl LXI broadcast headquarters in Santa Monica next year, and a major beach festival — produced by the team behind Coachella — is planned later in 2026.

Looking further ahead, Chi said Santa Monica is already positioned to host international hospitality houses during the 2028 Olympic Games, with Switzerland House and France House expected to be located in the city. Discussions with additional countries are continuing.

"When people think about Los Angeles and Southern California, they think about Santa Monica," Chi said. "It's an extraordinary opportunity that lies before us."

Santa Monica Travel & Tourism President and CEO Misti Kerns acknowledged the turbulence of recent years while expressing confidence in the trajectory ahead.

"The last few years have been a bit of a roller coaster ride," Kerns said. "But 2026 continues to bring us hope, and the future is looking more positive."

Kerns noted that the city's hotel inventory has never been stronger and that new businesses continue to open across Santa Monica.

SEE TOURISM PAGE 8

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Zbur Bills targeting AI, health care, energy costs clear State Assembly

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

A package of six bills by Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur advanced out of the California State Assembly this week, addressing artificial intelligence disclosures in customer service, rare disease treatment delays, reproductive health care privacy, data center energy costs, workforce training investments, and alternatives to criminal arrest.

Zbur, a Democrat who represents the 51st Assembly District — which includes Santa Monica, West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and portions of Hollywood and West Los Angeles — serves as the Democratic Caucus Chair. All six measures now head to the Senate.

RIGHT TO HUMAN CUSTOMER SERVICE

AB 1609, the Right to Human Customer Service Act, would require large businesses serving California consumers to provide access to a human customer service representative during normal business hours. Under the bill, businesses offering online or telephone customer service must make a good-faith effort to connect consumers with a human representative within 15 minutes of a request.

The measure also requires businesses to clearly disclose when consumers are interacting with an AI-powered customer service system and prohibits companies from representing an artificial intelligence system as a human being.

“Technology should make our lives easier — not trap consumers in endless phone trees, AI chat loops, and hours-long hold times,” Zbur said. The bill is sponsored by the Communication Workers of America District Council 9.

RARE DISEASE TREATMENT ACCESS

AB 1887 would reduce prior authorization delays and step therapy requirements for Californians living with rare diseases. The bill requires accelerated prior authorization for FDA-approved rare disease therapies and automatically approves requests not acted upon within 30 days. It also prohibits step therapy requirements — which force patients to try and fail on alternative treatments before accessing prescribed medications — for rare disease treatments prescribed by appropriate specialists.

Rare diseases affect an estimated 4 million Californians. According to a 2021 American Medical Association survey, 93% of physicians reported patients experienced delayed care due to prior authorization requirements and 34% reported serious adverse events, including hospitalization, permanent disability, or death. The bill passed with no opposition votes and is sponsored by the California Chronic Care Coalition.

REPRODUCTIVE AND GENDER-AFFIRMING HEALTH CARE PROTECTIONS

AB 1930 strengthens California’s shield laws protecting patients and providers of reproductive and gender-affirming health care. The bill requires California entities to notify the Attorney General within seven

days before complying with out-of-state subpoenas seeking information related to legally protected health care services, and mandates a 30-day waiting period before any compliance.

Zbur cited a 2025 U.S. Department of Justice subpoena to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles seeking records on more than 3,000 transgender youth, which contributed to the closure of the hospital’s gender-affirming care program, as well as efforts by Louisiana officials to target a California physician who provided abortion care to an out-of-state patient. The bill is sponsored by California Attorney General Rob Bonta and Equality California.

DATA CENTER ENERGY COSTS

AB 2383 would require the California Public Utilities Commission to establish a new electricity customer classification for large energy users, such as data centers, by 2028. The goal is to ensure those facilities pay the infrastructure costs associated with their energy demand rather than shifting those costs onto residential and small business ratepayers.

The California Energy Commission projects statewide peak electricity demand could exceed 66 gigawatts by 2040, with data centers accounting for approximately 6.7 gigawatts of new demand — roughly equivalent to the electricity consumption of more than 4 million households. The bill passed with bipartisan support and is backed by the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Little Hoover Commission.

WORKFORCE TRAINING

AB 2634, the High-Road Jobs and Workforce Training Act, would strengthen California’s High Road Training Partnership program by directing the state to prioritize grant funding for programs rooted in labor-management collaboration. Supporters say recent investments have shifted toward business-first models with weaker ties to job quality. The bill passed with bipartisan support and is backed by SEIU California, the Building Skills Partnership, and the Hospitality Training Academy.

ALTERNATIVES TO ARREST

AB 2217 expands California’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program, renaming it “Alternatives to Arrest” and broadening eligibility so law enforcement officers can refer individuals experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges, or substance use disorders to case management and crisis services instead of making an arrest for certain low-level offenses. Newly added eligible offenses include petty theft, second-degree burglary, and trespassing.

A California State University, Long Beach evaluation found that individuals in Los Angeles not referred to the diversion program had felony arrest rates 537% higher than program participants 12 months after implementation. The bill is sponsored by the Drug Policy Alliance and Californians for Safety and Justice.

editor@smdp.com



Weather

Monday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 69.
Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 59.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 69.
Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 61.

| Date | Day | Time (LST/LDT) | Predicted | (ft)High/Low |
|------------|-----|----------------|-----------|--------------|
| 2026/06/08 | Mon | 03:02 AM | 3.65 | H |
| 2026/06/08 | Mon | 09:59 AM | 0.82 | L |
| 2026/06/08 | Mon | 5:03 PM | 4.43 | H |
| 2026/06/08 | Mon | 11:27 PM | 2.00 | L |
| 2026/06/09 | Tue | 04:39 AM | 3.33 | H |
| 2026/06/09 | Tue | 10:45 AM | 1.13 | L |
| 2026/06/09 | Tue | 5:37 PM | 4.95 | H |
| 2026/06/10 | Wed | 12:29 AM | 1.17 | L |
| 2026/06/10 | Wed | 06:08 AM | 3.23 | H |
| 2026/06/10 | Wed | 11:29 AM | 1.42 | L |
| 2026/06/10 | Wed | 6:13 PM | 5.52 | H |
| 2026/06/11 | Thu | 01:22 AM | 0.29 | L |
| 2026/06/11 | Thu | 07:27 AM | 3.29 | H |
| 2026/06/11 | Thu | 12:15 PM | 1.69 | L |
| 2026/06/11 | Thu | 6:53 PM | 6.08 | H |
| 2026/06/12 | Fri | 02:11 AM | -0.52 | L |
| 2026/06/12 | Fri | 08:32 AM | 3.45 | H |
| 2026/06/12 | Fri | 1:02 PM | 1.89 | L |
| 2026/06/12 | Fri | 7:35 PM | 6.58 | H |
| 2026/06/13 | Sat | 02:59 AM | -1.19 | L |
| 2026/06/13 | Sat | 09:27 AM | 3.59 | H |
| 2026/06/13 | Sat | 1:50 PM | 2.03 | L |
| 2026/06/13 | Sat | 8:20 PM | 6.96 | H |
| 2026/06/14 | Sun | 03:46 AM | -1.65 | L |
| 2026/06/14 | Sun | 10:19 AM | 3.70 | H |
| 2026/06/14 | Sun | 2:40 PM | 2.11 | L |
| 2026/06/14 | Sun | 9:06 PM | 7.17 | H |
| 2026/06/15 | Mon | 04:34 AM | -1.86 | L |
| 2026/06/15 | Mon | 11:10 AM | 3.77 | H |
| 2026/06/15 | Mon | 3:32 PM | 2.15 | L |
| 2026/06/15 | Mon | 9:54 PM | 7.14 | H |
| 2026/06/16 | Tue | 05:23 AM | -1.84 | L |
| 2026/06/16 | Tue | 12:02 PM | 3.84 | H |
| 2026/06/16 | Tue | 4:26 PM | 2.20 | L |
| 2026/06/16 | Tue | 10:44 PM | 6.88 | H |
| 2026/06/17 | Wed | 06:12 AM | -1.60 | L |
| 2026/06/17 | Wed | 12:54 PM | 3.93 | H |
| 2026/06/17 | Wed | 5:25 PM | 2.27 | L |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Draw Date: 6/3 14 16 38 55 64 Power#: 12 Jackpot: 212 M</p> | <p>Draw Date: 6/4 6 23 25 27 38</p> |
| <p>Draw Date: 6/2 15 26 43 48 60 Mega#: 12 Jackpot: 368 M</p> | <p>Draw Date: 6/4 EVENING: 5 2 0 Draw Date: 6/4 MIDDAY: 7 3 4</p> |
| <p>Draw Date: 6/3 3 15 17 36 41 Mega#: 13 Jackpot: 26 M</p> | <p>Draw Date: 6/4 1st: 05 - California Classic 2nd: 06 - Whirl Win 3rd: 01 - Gold Rush Race Time: 1:40.23</p> |

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The Santa Monica Daily Press publishes Monday - Saturday with a circulation of 8,200 on weekdays and 8,000 on the weekend. The Daily Press is adjudicated as a newspaper of general circulation in the County of Los Angeles and covers news relevant to the City of Santa Monica. The Daily Press is a member of the California Newspaper Publisher’s Association, the National Newspaper Association and the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce. The paper you’re reading this on is composed of 100% post consumer content and the ink used to print these words is soy based. We are proud recipients of multiple honors for outstanding news coverage from the California Newspaper Publishers Association as well as a Santa Monica Sustainable Quality Award.

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Legal Notices

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON THE LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP) AND THE BUDGET OF SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY. The Governing Board of Santa Monica - Malibu Unified School District will hold a public hearing on the LCAP and the BUDGET OF THE DISTRICT FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, PRIOR TO Final Adoption as required by Education Code Section 42103 and 52062. The public hearing will be held at 1717 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 on June 18, 2026, at 5:30 PM. The public is cordially invited to attend this meeting. Pursuant to Education Code 51062, member of the Public may submit written

comments regarding specific actions and expenditures proposed to be included in the LCAP. Comments may be submitted to: Office of Superintendent, 1717 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. The proposed LCAP and Budget will be on file and Available for public inspection should members of the Public wish to review the LCAP and Budget prior to the public hearing, at the following location(s): Office of the Superintendent, 1717 4th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401 from: June 10, 2026 to: June 15, 2026 during the hours of: 8:00 AM to: 5:00 PM. Debra Duardo, M.S.W., Ed.D. Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. 6/8/26 CNS-4044142# SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

If California's race for governor is a stress test for democracy, it's failing

The California Democratic Party watched the governor's race this week with some relief — relief it has not yet earned.

Democratic candidate Xavier Becerra is currently in second place behind Republican Steve Hilton. And billionaire progressive Tom Steyer was trailing behind in third in the latest count.

It's clear Democrats will get at least one candidate through to the November election, so the nightmare scenario — that two Republicans would advance in the nation's bluest state — disappears.

But before anyone congratulates themselves, they should be honest about how we got here.

The once-leading Democrat, Eric Swalwell, exited after multiple women accused him of sexual misconduct, including one allegation now under investigation by the Manhattan District Attorney.

The timing may or may not have been coincidental, but election campaigners have long known that a well-timed scandalous disclosure can do what campaign ads cannot. Whether the allegations were timed to surface by a political actor or simply by the time it took for journalists to corroborate rumors, the effect was the same: The frontrunner collapsed, the field scrambled and California Democrats narrowly avoided a political catastrophe.

That is not a system working. It is a system in which the mechanisms for sorting candidates — relatively low-turnout primaries, fragmented fields, outsized spending — reliably produces chaos and occasionally produces outcomes that should not require luck to avoid.

The winner of the gubernatorial primary likely will claim the nomination with somewhere around 25% of the vote. In relatively low turnout primaries, where about 2 in 10 eligible voters typically participate, that works out to be the active preference of perhaps 1 in 22 eligible Californians. That's a remarkably thin mandate to call democratic.

The structural problem runs deeper than this race. California's legislature, like most, answers to its donor ecosystem and its most activated partisan base — not to the majority of Californians who face a housing crisis, a utility monopoly, a school funding shortfall and wildfire risks. These problems do not go unsolved because

solutions are unknown. They go unsolved because the incentive structure facing legislators does not reward solving them.

Ranked-choice voting would reduce the fragmentation that makes these chaotic primaries possible.

For example, a top-five primary followed by ranked-choice voting in the general election would produce a governor with a genuine majority mandate, not a small plurality of a small fragment of the eligible electorate.

Take Alaska, where the top four candidates advance to the general and the winner is selected by ranked-choice voting. Voters backed the switch six years ago, and in 2024 rejected a referendum seeking to reverse it.

But ballot design does not fix the underlying engagement problem. What moves disengaged voters, who are the overwhelming majority in primaries, is not just a better process. It is a credible reason to believe that showing up will produce a visible result for concerns they actually have.

America's Tocquevillian history hints at what is needed. Trusted civic organizations, such as unions, faith communities, neighborhood associations and veterans' groups, historically stepped into the gap between government and the people. Today, empowered by new civic infrastructure and modern tools, they can give California's middle majority the connective capacity to research candidates together, extract policy commitments and speak to voters with moral authority.

Electoral reforms are necessary but insufficient. The deeper problem is not the ballot — it is the collapse of the organized civic life that once connected voters to the institutions that govern them. Rebuilding that infrastructure is not a workaround. It is the most important work we can be doing today, not just for California but for America.

California dodged a bullet. It usually does. But dodging bullets is not a governance strategy, and the relief of this particular escape should not substitute for the structural reform and civic empowerment the state still needs.

Daniel Wolf is founder of Democracy Counts, a tech company, and a leader in the Middle Majority Movement, which seeks to empower voters regardless of party.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

SMC

SMC Voice Showcase Set for June 11

The Santa Monica College Music Department will present the SMC Voice Showcase on Thursday, June 11, at 7:30 p.m. at The Edge at the SMC Performing Arts Center, 1310 11th St.

Led by directors Jeremiah Selvey Convento and Janelle DeStefano, advanced voice students will perform classical, opera, jazz, musical theater and contemporary commercial songs.

Tickets are \$10 general admission plus a service charge, with proceeds supporting student opportunities in the Music Department. Tickets are available at smc.edu/tickets, by calling 310-434-3005, or at The Broad Stage Box Office starting 45 minutes before the performance. Parking is free. Seating is first-come, first-served.

For more information, call 310-434-4323 or visit smc.edu/events. The concert is subject to change or cancellation.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Ernest Convento

SHOWCASE: The Santa Monica College (SMC) Music Department will present the SMC Voice Showcase on Thursday, June 11.

Los Angeles

Santa Monica man pleads guilty to doxing ICE attorney

A Santa Monica man pleaded guilty last week to a federal charge of doxing an attorney for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Gregory John Curcio, 68, pleaded guilty to one count of violating a federal law that prohibits making certain personal information about federal employees publicly available. Restricted information under the statute includes Social Security numbers, home addresses, phone numbers and personal email addresses.

In February 2025, Curcio created a Facebook post identifying the victim as an ICE agent, published her home address and directed others to "swat" her at that address. He also posted her home address on a second social media account with similar instructions.

Swatting involves placing a false emergency call to law enforcement, typically reporting a fabricated crisis or crime at a specific location to provoke a large law enforcement response.

Court documents show the victim told authorities Curcio is a former resident of her mother's apartment building in Santa Monica. She said she had never met Curcio but that he had harassed and threatened her mother for years and had targeted the victim and her family since at least January 2024.

U.S. District Judge Michelle Williams Court scheduled a sentencing hearing for Aug. 21, 2026. Curcio faces a maximum of five years in federal prison.

The ICE Office of Professional Responsibility is investigating the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Lauren Restrepo of the National Security Division is prosecuting.

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Malibu

Malibu City Hall to Host American Red Cross Blood Drive June 11

The City of Malibu and the American Red Cross will hold a community blood drive Thursday, June 11, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Malibu City Hall, 23825 Stuart Ranch Road.

The drive comes as the Red Cross reports a critical national blood shortage, with supplies down more than 3,300 units. Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood, and the Red Cross supplies patients nationwide through approximately 130,000 blood drives each year.

“Donating blood is one of the simplest and most meaningful ways we can help others in a time of need,” said Mayor Bruce Silverstein. “I encourage our community to come together, support this important blood drive, and help ensure lifesaving blood is available for patients and families who depend on it every day.”

The Red Cross is also reporting a severe shortage of blood platelets and is specifically encouraging African American donors to give. Sickle cell disease, which disproportionately affects African Americans, impacts more than 100,000 people in the U.S., many of whom depend on routine blood transfusions to prevent life-threatening complications. More information for African American donors is available at redcrossblood.org.

All donors will receive a \$15 e-gift card and be entered into a \$7,500 sweepstakes.

To register, visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter sponsor code “90265.” Donors are encouraged to bring a photo ID, stay hydrated and eat before and after donating.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

Downtown Santa Monica

Santa Monica Place to Host Free World Cup Watch Party June 12

Santa Monica Place will host a free all-day FIFA World Cup watch party and fan festival Friday, June 12, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. in Center Plaza and throughout the property.

The event will feature live broadcasts of the FIFA World Cup 26 Canada vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina match at noon and the featured USA vs. Paraguay match at 6 p.m. Programming throughout the day will include DJs, live entertainment, food and drink vendors, branded activations, interactive fan experiences, face painting and VIP lounge access.

The Center Plaza activation is restricted to guests 21 and older. The rest of Santa Monica Place remains open to all ages.

“With the global spotlight turning toward Los Angeles, this event reflects our ability to bring people together through culture, sport and shared moments,” said Rachel Chang, vice president of marketing for Prism Places.

Guests are encouraged to RSVP in advance via Eventbrite to guarantee entry. The event is powered by Michelob ULTRA, Stella Artois and NÜTRL and is not affiliated with or endorsed by FIFA.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy of Santa Monica Place

EVENT: Santa Monica Place hosts free World Cup watch party June 12 with USA vs. Paraguay at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Pico

Santa Monica Elks Lodge to Host Flag Day Ceremony June 11

The Santa Monica Elks Lodge will host a Flag Day celebration Thursday, June 11, at 1040 Pico Blvd. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. for \$15, followed by a ceremony at 7 p.m. The event is open to all.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks played a foundational role in establishing Flag Day, observed nationally on June 14. The Elks were the first fraternal organization to mandate the holiday's observance, a patriotic tradition the organization continues to mark each year nationwide.

EDITED BY SMPD STAFF

FLAG DAY
CELEBRATION
JUNE 11, 2026
Dinner begins at 6:00 PM
Program begins at 7:00 PM
\$15
 TAX INCLUDED; THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING FOR ALL ELKS IN GOOD STANDING AND THEIR GUEST. RSVP AT [HTTPS://SM-ELKS-LODGE-EVENTS-26-27.CHEDDARUP.COM](https://sm-elks-lodge-events-26-27.cheddarup.com)

Courtesy Image

CEREMONY: Santa Monica Elks Lodge hosts Flag Day dinner and ceremony June 11 at 1040 Pico Blvd.

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TOURISM

FROM PAGE 2

The summit's keynote was delivered by Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California, who is preparing to retire later this year after nearly three decades leading the state's tourism promotion efforts. She was recognized by Santa Monica Travel & Tourism for her contributions to California's travel industry.

Beteta offered a statewide perspective, noting that California generated \$158.9 billion in travel-related spending in 2025 while supporting approximately 1.2 million jobs. She cautioned, however, that tourism remains a fragile ecosystem.

"All of these levers have to be pulled in coordination with one another just to get that visitor here," she said, referencing the interdependence of public safety, affordability, accessibility, infrastructure and destination appeal.

Beteta also pointed to declining visitation from Canada and broader geopolitical uncertainty as ongoing challenges, while emphasizing that the coming wave of major events represents a generational opportunity

for destinations throughout Southern California.

Chuck Davison, vice president of commercial strategy and partnerships at Tourism Economics, projected demand growth of 4.6% and revenue growth approaching 10% in 2026, with Santa Monica outperforming many state and national benchmarks in the luxury travel segment.

The summit also included recognition of industry contributors. Mel's Drive-In, located at the western terminus of Route 66 at Lincoln and Olympic boulevards, received the Jeff King Tourism Champion Award for its role in the Route 66 Centennial celebration. The 2026 Thelma Parks Tourism Spirit Award was presented to Richard Schade, theater operations and events manager at BroadStage, for his contributions to guest experience and cultural programming.

Tourism leaders described the years ahead as a "decade of events" for Southern California — a period they believe could reshape visitation patterns, attract new investment and redefine the region's global profile.

michelle@smdp.com

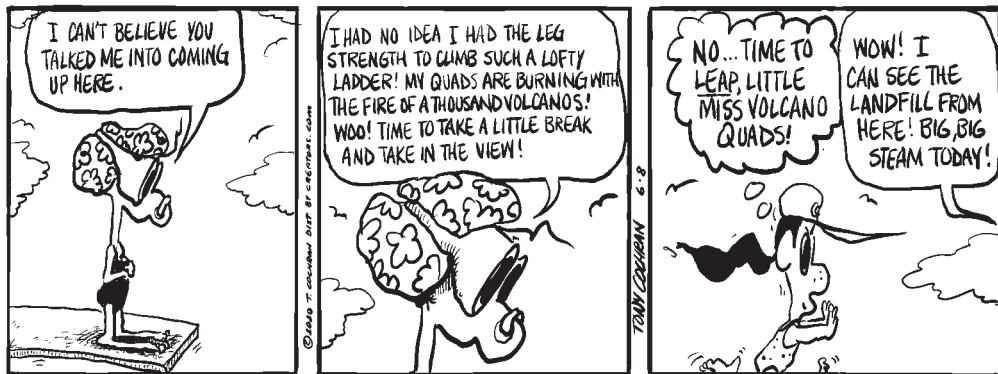


TOURISM: Charlie Lopez-Quintana, Misti Kerns and Marlena Borchio were all part of the summit.

Michelle Edgar

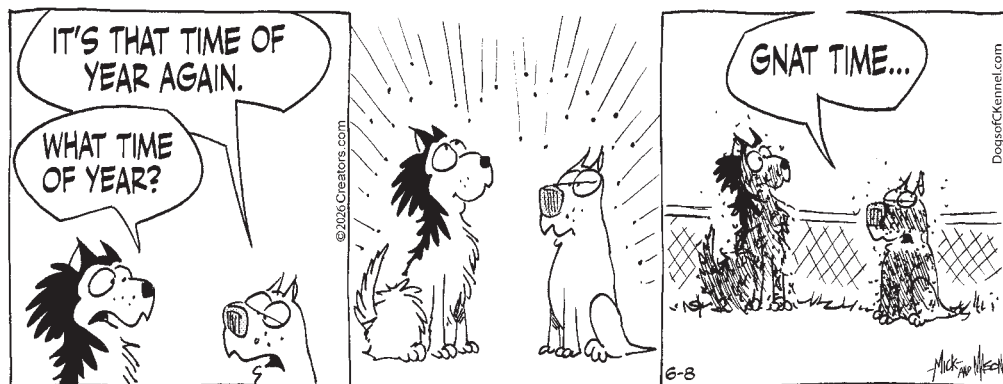
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE

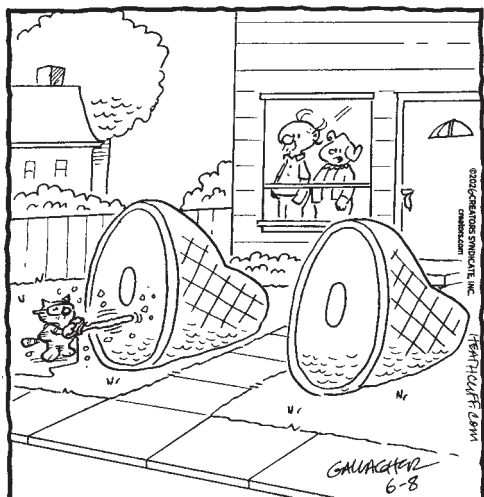


Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 17 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

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Athletics for kids

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

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------|--------------|------------|
| Amenities | Fitness | Lose | Speed |
| Applause | Food | Mile | Sprint |
| Basic | Hammer | Organisation | Supporters |
| Baton | Handicap | Overheat | Team |
| Caber | Hooker | Pole | Times |
| Cardiovascular | Hope | Races | Travel |
| Child | Hurdle | Record | Trials |
| Coach | Image | Relay | Walk |
| Event | Injury | Rest | Zone |
| Field | Laps | Season | |
| Final | Leap | Shotput | |

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (June 8)

It's your Turned Up Year in which the volume of your soul gets dialed to perfect amplification. No more toning yourself down to avoid challenging, upsetting or offending people. You're around people who get you and want you to shine. More highlights: You'll be entrusted with the keys to headquarters and hearts. You'll enjoy the company of those who need you and who are there when you need them. Four fun trips. Leo and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 44, 2 and 17.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The fast way to get to know someone is to be in a totally new situation with them. It creates a shared sense of discovery. Away from routine, people reveal different sides of themselves, form vivid memories and develop trust through experience.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You've already analyzed the situation enough. Continued thinking will have diminishing returns. Success depends less on whether you act and more on how you enter the situation. What's the thing people want here? Can you position yourself to be that?

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Some are fluent with ideas but disconnected from emotional realities. Others understand feelings deeply yet struggle with structure. Today features rare and lovely interactions combining emotional awareness with accountability, honesty, boundaries, humor and practical problem-solving.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You appreciate fairness and good business not despite life's inequities but because of them. You have some very creative ideas about how to even the score, shore up inequities and make up for disproportionate sorrows.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Ask any jury: passing judgment can be exhausting work. Spare yourself the drain by directing your attention toward people you genuinely enjoy, admire and understand. Delight tends to produce far better company than criticism does.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You're always learning more about how to communicate with people because communication is always evolving. People's needs, moods and goals change. Your capabilities change. Language itself changes. You adapt like a pro.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Politeness is a foundation of a decent society. Today there's a shared decorum that keeps people cooperating. While good manners alone can't solve every problem, they create conditions where people can solve them together.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Shared human experiences are powerful all by themselves. There doesn't have to be anything planned or structured or fancy about team building. Just doing something together will be enough to improve vibes and heal rifts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). As you respond predictably, you'll earn someone's trust. If you respond unpredictably, you'll earn other things, which may include alertness, excitement, fear or wonder. You want them to be comfortable, but you should not let them get too comfortable.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). In today's relationship landscape, what's broken can be fixed. Even so, avoid approaching the issue with a line like, "Can I talk to you?" which only puts others on the defensive. The fix starts in your heart and your imagination.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your experiences have taught you patterns that no book could fully explain. After enough disappointment, tenderness, conflict and repair, you recognize emotional dynamics and respond to challenging exchanges with skill, diplomacy and self-respect.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Someone prosperous is looking for someone with whom to share their good fortune. You'll stand out as a solid prospect, not because you are needy but because you appreciate with enthusiasm and do not take life's gifts for granted.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Newsday Crossword

SHAKE IT by Guilherme Gilioli
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

- 1 Arctic ice mass
- 5 Bird that quacks
- 9 Highest-quality
- 13 Turn ___ a new leaf
- 14 Of unknown name: Abbr.
- 15 Not as colorful
- 16 Bit of heredity
- 17 Green citrus fruit
- 18 Higher than
- 19 Domed souvenir with falling flakes
- 21 Works at a keyboard
- 22 Went jogging
- 23 Police car alarms
- 24 Ohio and Iowa
- 28 Hot chocolaty drink
- 30 Impressive formation
- 31 "Ali ___ and the Forty Thieves"
- 32 Clock readout
- 36 Literary verse
- 37 Raring to go
- 38 Serving platter
- 39 Wild guess
- 40 Bird of ___ (eagle or vulture)
- 41 Without a companion
- 42 Unlocks
- 44 Parts of a play
- 45 Professor's job security
- 48 Kitty or hamster
- 49 Love, in Italy
- 50 Beauty parlor's aerosol
- 56 On a need-to-know ___

- 57 Spot of land in the sea
- 58 Marathon or sprint
- 59 Bank's legal claims
- 60 Jungle roarer
- 61 Veggie in gumbo
- 62 "If all ___ fails..."
- 63 Past the deadline
- 64 Fortune-teller

DOWN

- 1 Marshy regions
- 2 Get ___ (take revenge)
- 3 Nevada casino city
- 4 Got taller
- 5 Fort Worth neighbor
- 6 Workers' organization
- 7 Barber tool with teeth

- 8 Leg joint
- 9 Infant's noise-making toy
- 10 Run off to wed
- 11 Second-grader's usual age
- 12 Long hair curl
- 15 Backyard cookout spot
- 20 Earl ___ tea
- 23 Lasting mark
- 24 Drains of energy
- 25 Jogger's pace
- 26 Zone
- 27 Musical instrument that jingles
- 28 Zoo enclosures
- 29 Follow orders
- 31 Building for cows

- 33 Skirt-smoothing appliance
- 34 Horse's long locks
- 35 A sight for sore ___
- 37 Fencing sword
- 41 Plays a role
- 43 Printing machine
- 44 Tranquil
- 45 Kitchen furniture
- 46 Memo sent online
- 47 Odor detectors
- 48 Aviator
- 50 Small mountain
- 51 China's continent
- 52 Athletes who are paid
- 53 Leaf-gathering tool
- 54 Rural land measure
- 55 January to December

Sudoku

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

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.

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

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | | |
| 13 | | | | | 14 | | | | | 15 | | | | | |
| 16 | | | | | 17 | | | | | 18 | | | | | |
| 19 | | | | | 20 | | | | | 21 | | | | | |
| | | | | | 22 | | | | | 23 | | | | | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | | | | 28 | 29 | | | | | | | |
| 30 | | | | | | | 31 | | | | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | |
| 36 | | | | | | | 37 | | | | | 38 | | | |
| 39 | | | | | | | 40 | | | | | 41 | | | |
| | | | | | 42 | 43 | | | | | 44 | | | | |
| 45 | 46 | 47 | | | | | | | 48 | | | | | | |
| 49 | | | | | | | | 50 | 51 | | | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 |
| 56 | | | | | | | | 57 | | | | 58 | | | |
| 59 | | | | | | | | 60 | | | | 61 | | | |
| 62 | | | | | | | | 63 | | | | 64 | | | |

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MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

WILDFIRE

FROM PAGE 1

fires were extinguished. Jerrett said the delay was due to a lack of funding, with researchers needing time to secure internal support before fieldwork could begin.

Children, the elderly and people with pre-existing health conditions are generally more vulnerable to the effects of air pollution, Jerrett noted, though he cautioned that the novelty of this type of nanoparticle exposure means researchers do not yet know whether those groups faced disproportionately greater harm.

There is some encouraging news. Co-author Dr. Yifang Zhu, a UCLA professor of environmental health sciences, said chromium-6 concentrations declined over time and returned to background levels approximately eight months after the fire, as the carcinogenic form converted to the less toxic chromium-3.

“This highlights the importance of continued monitoring to track how environmental risks change during the recovery process,” Zhu said.

Researchers are urging residents living near wildfire cleanup zones to use indoor air filters and limit outdoor exercise in affected areas until conditions return to safe levels.

The January 2025 fires killed at least 31 people and damaged or destroyed more than 18,000 structures across Los Angeles County, according to county figures. The blazes swept through the Pacific Palisades-Malibu area in western Los Angeles and the Altadena-Pasadena foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Scientists warn the findings carry implications far beyond Los Angeles, given the increasing number of fires that begin in open space and cross into urban areas.

“Unfortunately, given continued expansion of wildland-urban interface areas worldwide

“Unfortunately, given continued expansion of wildland-urban interface areas worldwide alongside increasing wildfire risk, we are likely to see more and more of these sorts of fires — and to deal with their impacts — in the future”

- Dr. Christopher Cappa, a UC Davis environmental engineering professor and study co-author

alongside increasing wildfire risk, we are likely to see more and more of these sorts of fires — and to deal with their impacts — in the future,” said Dr. Christopher Cappa, a UC Davis environmental engineering professor and study co-author.

The study received partial funding from the Speigel Foundation, with additional support from UC Davis and UCLA.

maaz@smdp.com



MONDAY | JUNE 8

COMMUNAL GARDENING @ ISHIHARA PARK

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Ishihara Park 2909 Exposition Blvd Santa Monica. Communal Garden Program Work Days @ Ishihara Park Learning Garden - Mondays and Wednesdays | 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. | Free. Come get your hands dirty in the Communal Garden Program at Ishihara Park Learning Garden, a communal spot to learn and acquire gardening skills. Seasoned as well as new gardeners of all ages are welcome. Free drop in activity, no reservation needed. Visit the Ishihara Park Learning Garden site for More Information. Subject to cancellation due to weather. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/communal-gardening-ishihara-park/18461167/2026-06-08T09>

YOUTH SUMMER FENCING CAMP

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Beverly Hills Fencers Club 1990 S. Bundy Drive, Suite 125 Los Angeles. Summer Camps at Beverly Hills Fencers' Club are designed for those with little to no fencing experience or to practice your skills. Through fun games and exercises, students will learn all the basics of the Olympic sport of epee fencing: safety basics, how to hold the epee, how to dress up with the protective gear, fencing footwork, how to attack and defend, as well as all of the rules needed to fence. And of course, we will play group battle games. \$450.00 — Sibling discount or two weeks \$50 off. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/youth-summer-fencing-camp/18963218/2026-06-08T09>

LA MODE 2026 FASHION SHOW

4:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Performing Art Center John Adams Middle School, 2425 16th Street Santa Monica. Don't miss the excitement of SMC's renowned annual fashion extravaganza showcasing the talents of our fashion design and fashion merchandising students. "Above the Clouds in Style, Substance and Sustainability" will be the theme for LA Mode 2026. Call 310-434-3547, visit smc.edu/fashion, @smclamode on Instagram, and SMC LA Mode Fashion Show on Facebook for update, and send email to LAmode@smc.edu for questions. 4:30 p.m. - Cloud Carpet. 7 p.m. - Fashion Show. \$20 - Students. \$25 - General Admission. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/la-mode-2026-fashion-show/18977325/2026-06-08T16>

STAND UP 101: FIND YOUR VOICE (MONDAYS)

7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. 1424 4th Street Santa Monica. Jump into Stand Up! Discover your own comedic sensibility and shape it into a clear and unique point of view! 6 weeks + a Showcase! \$345.00. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/stand-up-101-find-your-voice-mondays-18996105/2026-06-08T19>

THE GORDONS IMPROV RESIDENCY

7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Westside Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd St Santa Monica. Welcome to The Gordons Improv Show at Westside Comedy Theater! IMPROV RESIDENT TEAM NIGHT! Check out our current lineup of Resident Improv Teams! These teams perform Long-Form Improv all inspired by a suggestion from the audience. Think of it as a sitcom made up on the spot. Catch them before they are gone! These teams rotate every three months! Get ready for a night filled with laughter, spontaneity, and hilarious moments. Join us for an evening of unscripted comedy where

every joke is made up on the spot. Our talented improv performers will have you in stitches as they create scenes, characters, and stories based on your suggestions. Don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind experience! Grab your friends and come on down to Westside Comedy Theater for a night you won't forget. \$10.00. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-gordons-improv-residency/14863274/2026-06-08T19>

TUESDAY | JUNE 9

ELEMENTARY ART STUDIO 3:30-4:20PM

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Palisades Community Renewal Center 3212 Nebraska Ave Santa Monica. Unleash your creativity and connect with your community in this hands-on art making session. In case this event has been updated, please visit <https://www.pccrsm.org/event/elementary-art-studio-3-30-4-20pm-8758b> for full details before arriving. Thank you! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/elementary-art-studio-3-30-4-20pm/18825639/2026-06-09T15>

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

5:30 p.m. Santa Monica City Hall 1685 Main St. Santa Monica. The City Council is made up of seven members elected at-large for staggered four-year terms. Every two years, after each election, the City Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor and another to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore. The City Council also sits as the following bodies for the City of Santa Monica. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/city-council-meeting/13799967/2026-06-09T17>

CURTAIN UP: AN EVENING WITH THEATRE PALISADES

6:00 p.m. Pacific Palisades Woman's Club 901 Haverford Ave Pacific Palisades. Join us for a special evening celebrating the talent of both youth and adult performers from Theatre Palisades & Theatre Palisades Youth, with drinks and snacks. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/curtain-up-an-evening-with-theatre-palisades/18929076/2026-06-09T18>

LATE NIGHT HAPPY HOUR AT MARELLE - NIGHT CAP MENU

9:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Marelle at Sandbourne Santa Monica 1740 Ocean Ave Santa Monica. Marelle will be launching a late-night happy hour menu called 'Night Cap' starting Monday, April 6th. Guests can order from this menu exclusively at Marelle, bar and bar lounge only. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/late-night-happy-hour-at-marelle-night-cap-menu/18409321/2026-06-09T21>

WEDNESDAY | JUNE 10

MOBILE COMMUNITY MEDITATION CENTER - GUIDED MEDITATION

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Santa Monica Beach Lot 5 South 2600 Bernard Way Santa Monica. Please join Mobile Community Meditation Center aka Buddhist Boondockers Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 10 am for a 45 minute fully guided mindfulness meditation - on the grass, under the shade of the trees, with a stunning view of the sparkling ocean. Free— Donations are accepted. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/mobile-community-meditation-center-guided-meditation/16994548/2026-06-10T10>

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