smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

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Volume 20 Issue 185

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Save the Library
Libraries Level the Field.
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Free Lunch for kids
Food for students during the summer.
Page 6

Santa Monica readies to celebrate Juneteenth

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

Juneteenth is set to become the first new federal holiday since 1983 when Martin Luther King Jr. Day was created, and Santa Monica residents are eager to celebrate the occasion in person this weekend.

The term Juneteenth is a blend of the words June and nineteenth. The holiday has also been called Juneteenth Independence Day or Freedom Day and was often celebrated with church picnics and speeches before the holiday spread across the nation and internationally as Black Texans moved on from the bondage of slavery.

The celebration started with the freed slaves of Galveston, Texas, shortly after the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves in the South in 1863.

Laura Smalley, who was freed from a plantation near Bellville, Texas, remembered in a 1941 interview that her former master

SEE **JUNETEENTH** PAGE 11

County officials wary of Covid variants

SOFIA LAUREL PIRRI
SMDP Intern

Covid infections in Los Angeles County are increasingly contained to unvaccinated individuals and officials are concerned a more dangerous variant could spread if vaccination rates continue to decline.

Delta variants, formerly known as Indian variants, played a huge role in India's catastrophic outbreaks as well as recent spikes in the UK. The Delta variants first began infecting Los Angeles residents in the beginning of April and since then, there have been 64 known cases of Delta variant infection in LA County.

"We're especially concerned about this variant because it appears to be highly transmissible," said Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer. "By that we mean it's more contagious, even than other highly contagious COVID variants. It's also thought that this variant may cause more severe infections."

Ferrer emphasized that vaccinations are the best form of protection against the variant but warned that those with only one shot of the vaccine are not nearly as well protected. For them, protection hovers around 30-35 percent.

Officials are watching out for any increase in infection and hospitalization rates among vaccinated individuals. According to Ferrer, "An increase in hospitalizations or deaths amongst fully vaccinated people would be one of the earliest signals that a more lethal variant, not prevented by available vaccines, is in circulation."

Currently, these rates are low, with only 0.4 percent of vaccinated individuals in LA County testing positive for the virus and 0.003 percent hospitalized.

Completely unvaccinated people have zero protection against the dangerous variant.

"I would note that much of the transmission of this variant appears to be occurring within households," Ferrer pointed out. "34 of the 64

SEE **COVID** PAGE 5

Aquatic themed drag show to stream live from the Pier



Courtesy photos

DRAG: Members of QWN, a gender non-conforming production company perform in the show.



CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

In a celebration of nature, Pride, and queerness, Heal the Bay is hosting a performance packed and environmentally engaged aquatic drag show.

The first ever "Queers on Piers" event will be live streamed on June 25 at 7 p.m in partnership with SaMo Pride.

Heal the Bay Education Coordinator Robert Ramos will act as a live host using a blend of wit and cheer to weave together the marine-themed drag acts and informative segments on environmental issues and queerness in the natural world.

Ramos led the development of this creative and genre-bending project and enlisted the talents of his fellow performers in the gender non-conforming production company QWN (Quintessential Wonder Nasty). He also interviewed queer scientists to highlight their work and perspective, while raising awareness around environmental issues.

The event is centered on the idea of radical inclusion and seeks to increase queer representation in environmental spaces.

"I love science, I love the environment, but growing up as a queer person of color I didn't see myself really represented in natural spaces or even in STEM," said Ramos. "The point of this show is to bridge those communities, the queer community and also the environmental and scientific community."

Each of the drag performances focuses on a different marine topic. One act is a metaphor for the impact

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DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 295 CALLS ON JUNE 16

Petty Theft 1600blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:14 a.m.
Periodic Check 1600blk Ocean Front Walk 12:25 a.m.
Family Disturbance 1900blk 11th St 12:35 a.m.
Periodic Check 1100blk Lincoln Blvd 12:56 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop Ocean Ave / Colorado Ave 12:59 a.m.
Petty Theft 1600blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:51 a.m.
Found Property 600blk Marine St 2:57 a.m.
Periodic Check 2200blk Virginia Ave 3:19 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1300blk 2nd St 3:20 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1900blk Pico Blvd 3:42 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1500blk Palisades Park 4:27 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1100blk Santa Monica Blvd 4:41 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1100blk Palisades Park 4:51 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 600blk Bay St 6:15 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1400blk 2nd St 6:29 a.m.
General Parking Problem 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 6:34 a.m.
Auto Burglary Report 300blk 12th St 6:35 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1600blk Berkeley St 6:43 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1100blk Palisades Park 6:44 a.m.
Pedestrian Stop 4th St / Santa Monica Blvd 7:18 a.m.
Indecent Exposure Now 20th St / Wilshire Blvd 7:42 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 3rd Street Prom / Santa Monica Blvd 7:54 a.m.
Petty Theft Report 4th St / Colorado Ave 8:14 a.m.
Red Zone Violation 3000blk 4th St 8:17 a.m.
Panic Alarm 1600blk Main St 8:25 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 7th St / Montana Ave 8:26 a.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 200blk Pacific Coast Hwy 9:06 a.m.
Indecent Exposure Now 1600blk 7th St 9:12 a.m.
Periodic Check 2200blk Virginia Ave 9:14 a.m.
Expired Registration 1500blk Harvard St 9:33 a.m.
Juvenile Annoying Investigation 1700blk 4th St 10:20 a.m.
Injured Person Ocean Ave / Strand St 10:24 a.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation 26th St / San Vicente Blvd 10:33 a.m.
Overdose 1300blk Ocean Ave 10:39 a.m.
Burglary Report 2000blk Euclid St 10:40 a.m.
Public Intoxication 1700blk Ocean Ave 11:02 a.m.
Found Property 200blk Santa Monica Pier 11:17 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 1300blk 2nd St 11:21 a.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 500blk 11th St 11:24 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 600blk California Ave 11:25 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 1800blk Delaware Ave 12:00 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 800blk Georgina Ave 12:05 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 1000blk Olympic Blvd W 12:06 p.m.
Missing Person 1600blk Ocean Ave 12:14 p.m.
Oversize Vehicle Violation 400blk Pacific Coast Hwy 12:26 p.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1200blk 2nd St 12:39 p.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1200blk 4th St 1:00 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 300blk 15th St 1:05 p.m.
Identity Theft 1500blk 6th St 1:09 p.m.
Information Only Broadcast 300blk Olympic Dr 1:20 p.m.
Found Property 1100blk 11th St 1:26 p.m.
Indecent Exposure Now 900blk 10th St 1:27 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 1000blk Centinela Ave 1:29 p.m.
Fraud Report 1000blk Wilshire Blvd 1:44 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1700blk Sunset Ave 1:59 p.m.
On Foot 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 2:25 p.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1400blk 2nd St 2:29 p.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1400blk 2nd St 2:37 p.m.
Lewd Activity 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 2:39 p.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 200blk Santa Monica Pier 2:41 p.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 500blk Olympic Blvd W 2:47 p.m.
Assault 600blk Wilshire Blvd 2:51 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Ocean Ave / Broadway 2:59 p.m.
Petty Theft Report 3100blk Urban Ave 3:06 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 1500blk Lincoln Blvd 3:07 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries City Prop Involved 5th St / Olympic Blvd W 3:20 p.m.
Family Disturbance 1200blk 17th St 3:46 p.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 300blk Santa Monica Pier 3:47 p.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 300blk Santa Monica Pier 3:49 p.m.
Bike Theft Report Berkeley St / Nebraska Ave 3:51 p.m.
Found Property 200blk Santa Monica Pier 3:59 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1700blk Pico Blvd 4:06 p.m.
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Investigation Lincoln Blvd / Olympic Blvd W 4:07 p.m.
Burglary Report 2000blk Euclid St 4:26 p.m.
Battery 1500blk 2nd St 4:27 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries 2800blk Neilson Way 4:32 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 500blk 11th St 4:35 p.m.
Petty Theft 300blk Arizona Ave 5:03 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed 26th St / Santa Monica Blvd 5:07 p.m.
General Parking Problem 1400blk Olympic Blvd 5:15 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries City Prop Involved 7th St / Olympic Blvd W 5:27 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 1500blk 4th St 5:35 p.m.
Drinking In Public 1600blk Ocean Park Blvd 5:37 p.m.
Animal Related Incident 800blk Pacific St 5:59 p.m.
Exhibition Of Speed Cloverfield Blvd / Pico Blvd 6:09 p.m.
Drinking In Public 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 6:11 p.m.
Drunk Driving Investigation 1000blk Pacific Coast Hwy 6:30 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Princeton St / Arizona Ave 6:32 p.m.
Oversize Vehicle Violation 900blk Michigan Ave 7:04 p.m.
Fight 21st St / Wilshire Blvd 7:39 p.m.
Transport Prisoner 300blk Olympic Dr 7:43 p.m.
Rape Report 300blk Olympic Dr 7:59 p.m.
Pedestrian Stop 1400blk 2nd St 8:30 p.m.
Battery 3rd Street Prom / Wilshire Blvd 8:47 p.m.
Battery Report 1600blk Ocean Ave 8:48 p.m.
Lewd Activity 1000blk 14th St 9:15 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2200blk Santa Monica Blvd 9:15 p.m.
Person With A Gun 2800blk Ocean Front Walk 9:25 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 3100blk Wilshire Blvd 9:50 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2600blk 4th St 10:08 p.m.
Party Complaint 1300blk 2nd St 10:35 p.m.
Domestic Violence Now 2000blk 20th St 10:46 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1200blk 2nd St 10:51 p.m.
Living In A Vehicle 2200blk 5th St 11:02 p.m.



‘Obamacare’ survives: Supreme Court dismisses big challenge

MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

The Supreme Court, though increasingly conservative in makeup, rejected the latest major Republican-led effort to kill the national health care law known as “Obamacare” on Thursday, preserving insurance coverage for millions of Americans.

The justices, by a 7-2 vote, left the entire Affordable Care Act intact in ruling that Texas, other GOP-led states and two individuals had no right to bring their lawsuit in federal court. The Biden administration says 31 million people have health insurance because of the law, which also survived two earlier challenges in the Supreme Court.

The law’s major provisions include protections for people with existing health conditions, a range of no-cost preventive services, expansion of the Medicaid program that insures lower-income people and access to health insurance markets offering subsidized plans.

“The Affordable Care Act remains the law of the land,” President Joe Biden, said, celebrating the ruling. He called for building further on the law that was enacted in 2010 when he was vice president.

Also left in place is the law’s now-toothless requirement that people have health insurance or pay a penalty. Congress rendered that provision irrelevant in 2017 when it reduced the penalty to zero.

The elimination of the penalty had become the hook that Texas and other GOP-led states, as well as the Trump administration, used to attack the entire law. They argued that without the mandate, a pillar of the law when it was passed, the rest of the law should fall, too.

And with a Supreme Court that includes three appointees of former President Donald Trump, opponents of “Obamacare” hoped a majority of the justices would finally kill the law they have been fighting for more than a decade.

But the third major attack on the law at the Supreme Court ended the way the first two did, with a majority of the court rebuffing efforts to gut the law or get rid of it altogether.

Trump’s appointees — Justices Amy Coney Barrett, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh — split their votes. Kavanaugh and Barrett joined the majority. Gorsuch was in dissent, signing on to an opinion from Justice Samuel Alito.

Justice Stephen Breyer wrote for the court that the states and people who filed a federal lawsuit “have failed to show that they have standing to attack as unconstitutional the Act’s minimum essential coverage provision.”

In dissent, Alito wrote, “Today’s decision is the third installment in our epic Affordable Care Act trilogy, and it follows the same pattern as installments one and two. In all three episodes, with the Affordable Care Act facing a serious threat, the Court has pulled off an improbable rescue.” Alito was a dissenter in the two earlier cases in 2012 and 2015, as well.

Like Alito, Justice Clarence Thomas was in dissent in the two earlier cases, but he joined Thursday’s majority, writing, “Although this Court has erred twice before in cases involving the Affordable Care Act, it does not err today.”

Because it dismissed the case for the plaintiff’s lack of legal standing — the ability to sue — the court didn’t actually rule on whether the individual mandate is unconstitutional now that there is no penalty for forgoing insurance. Lower courts had struck down the mandate, in rulings that were wiped away by the Supreme Court decision.

With the latest ruling, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that “the Affordable Care Act is here to stay,” former President Barack Obama said, adding his support to Biden’s call to expand the law.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton pledged to continue the fight against “Obamacare,” which he called a “massive government takeover of health care.”

But it’s not clear what Republicans can do, said Larry Levitt, an executive vice president for the nonprofit Kaiser Family Foundation, which studies health care.

“Democrats are in charge and they have made reinvigorating and building on the ACA a key priority,” Levitt said. “Republicans don’t seem to have much enthusiasm for continuing to try to overturn the law.”

Republicans have pressed their argument to invalidate the whole law even though congressional efforts to rip out the entire law “root and branch,” in Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell’s words, have failed. The closest they came was in July 2017 when Arizona Sen. John McCain, who died the following year, delivered a dramatic thumbs-down vote to a repeal effort by fellow Republicans.

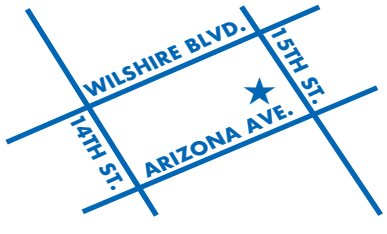
Chief Justice John Roberts said during arguments in November that it seemed the law’s foes were asking the court to do work best left to the political branches of government.

The court’s decision preserves benefits that have become part of the fabric of the nation’s health care system.

Polls show that the law has grown in popularity as it has endured the heaviest assault. In December 2016, just before Obama left office and Trump swept in calling the ACA a “disaster,” 46% of Americans had an unfavorable view of the law, while 43% approved, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation tracking poll. Those ratings flipped, and by February of this year 54% had a favorable view, while disapproval had fallen to 39% in the same ongoing poll.

The health law is now undergoing an

SEE **OBAMACARE** PAGE 11

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Your column here

Hien Nguyen — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Libraries Help Create a More Level Playing Field

Libraries are vital to our Santa Monica community. My first job ever was as a library page in a public library, shelving books. To this day, my first job at the library remains the best job I ever had. My library colleagues (professional librarians) were dedicated people who were genuinely interested in helping the public obtain the information, introducing library patrons to resources, and providing helpful suggestions.

My family came to the US as immigrants, and we were poor. When we were children, my mother took us to the library weekly (and more often as needed for special school assignments). My siblings and I would always excitedly comb the shelves to select out the books that would constitute our "maximum" allowance of books that we could check out per library policy. As I child, I resented the "maximum" number of books policy. Reflecting back, I now appreciate the subtle benefits of the library policy because it challenged me to read the books faster and created an incentive to have my books read by the next regularly scheduled library visit.

The public library helped create a more level playing field for my family. We did not have the means to have our own encyclopedia set (this was pre-internet times) that my classmates had at their homes. My parents could not afford the Kaplan SAT and ACT college prep classes that more privileged income classmates were attending. The library provided a safe space and refuge for studying away from the chaos and loudness of our crowded and less than tranquil home. The library played an important role in our academic success, including my sister graduating as the high school valedictorian.

As a practicing attorney, my greatest fear in practicing law is that you don't know what you don't know. I mitigate that fear by learning as much as I can about the subject. Librarians may not necessarily know the answer to all your questions, but I have consistently found that librarians will direct you to resources and introduce you to resources that you did not know were available. From every experience I have had with our fine SM librarians, it's evident that librarians love their jobs because they genuinely relish in assisting others to share their wealth of knowledge.

Like many families in Santa Monica, we bought our home in Santa Monica as new parents because of our newborn child. I looked forward to creating a tradition of walking my child to the library every weekend, watching her excitement as she exercises her agency in selecting for herself books, introducing her to the same books that I read as a child, and experiencing the warm memories and joys of the library all over again through her eyes.

Remember, the budget the City approves on June 22 won't just impact library access in 2021, it will also impact library access in 2022, 2023, and beyond! I ask the City to please take the necessary steps and refund the Santa Monica Public Library system, restaff our libraries, and reopen the closed branches to whatever extent possible.

Hien Nguyen, Email save.sm.library@gmail.com or contact @SaveSMLibrary1 for more information.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Celebrate America 2021 Canceled Due to Lingering Safety Concerns About Large-Scale Public Events

Santa Monica College (SMC) has officially canceled "Celebrate America" for 2021 due to planning logistics and lingering safety concerns regarding large-scale, in-person events during the still-ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

SMC Event Producer and Associate Dean of Facilities Programming Linda Sullivan cited ongoing uncertainty about COVID-19 safety measures for large-scale non-ticketed events and planning logistics particular to the college as the main factors behind the decision; SMC's classes and student support services will remain mostly online throughout Summer 2021, as previously announced.

"In addition to COVID-19 concerns – we also have no direction on how to check spectators or participants for vaccination status," said Sullivan. "While 'Celebrate America' is not possible this year, we at SMC look forward to future occasions where we can once again interact safely with our community!"

Celebrate America is a free, unticketed event for the community, but hosting the event requires substantial staff preparation and participation by many SMC departments, including Campus Police and Facilities Maintenance and Operations, Sullivan added.

SMC continues to present free cultural and educational events online, and free to the public. Including the Drescher Planetarium shows on Friday nights (see smc.edu/planetarium). SMC also offers free videos of dance, music, and theatre arts performances. Upcoming events will be posted on the SMC Events calendar at smc.edu/calendar.

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WINNER

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California drops workplace mask rule for vaccinated workers

DON THOMPSON
Associated Press

California regulators on Thursday approved revised workplace pandemic rules that allow employees who are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus the same freedoms as when they are off the job, including ending most mask requirements.

The revised regulations approved by the governor-appointed California Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board come after weeks of confusion. The rules adopted in a 5-1 vote, with one member absent, now conform with general state guidelines that took effect Tuesday by ending most mask rules for vaccinated people.

Gov. Gavin Newsom immediately issued an executive order waiving the usual 10-day legal review. The new rules will take effect as soon as they are filed with the secretary of state.

"While I understand the proposal in front of us today is extremely controversial and inconvenient, now I don't think is the time to let our guard down," said David Harrison, a labor representative on the board who voted for the revised rules. "We need to do everything reasonable — and I highlight reasonable ... within our power to protect employees in California and across the country."

The rules apply in almost every workplace in the state, including offices, factories and retailers.

They are intended to ensure that workers are protected while businesses resume normal or near-normal activity, Eric Berg, deputy chief of health for California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health, known as Cal/OSHA, told the board.

Business groups had sought the changes but argued they didn't go far enough. They supported conforming rules for businesses with state guidelines patterned after the latest federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations.

Board member Laura Stock, an occupational safety expert who cast the lone opposition vote, warned that the pandemic is not over.

"This has real consequences that people can get sick and die due to exposure in the workplace," Stock said.

She said the rules go too far by eliminating physical distancing and workplace partitions and allowing workers to self-report their vaccination status, while relying too heavily on people to be vaccinated.

"What's very difficult is to figure out what the balance is so that we're doing the most good for the most people, but not at all dismissing the vulnerable in our population," said Chris Laszcz-Davis, a management representative on the board.

The move comes after the board did a double-twisting backflip in recent weeks when it first postponed, then rejected, then adopted, then rescinded rules that would have allowed workers to forgo masks only if every employee in a room was fully vaccinated against the coronavirus.

Fully vaccinated employees will not need to wear masks, except in locations like mass transit and classrooms, where they are required for everyone, or in the event of outbreaks.

Physical distancing also will end except for certain workers during major outbreaks. Vaccinated employees won't need to be tested or quarantine unless they show symptoms, even if they have close contact with an infected person.

Employers must document that workers who skip masks indoors are indeed fully vaccinated. But employers have the choice of requiring workers to show proof of vaccination or allowing employees to self-report their status, with the employer keeping a record of who does the latter.

They also could decide to require everyone to remain masked — vaccinated or not. And vaccinated employees will still be able to wear masks if they choose without facing retaliation.

Public comments to the board before the vote largely split along management and employee lines.

Rob Lapsley, president of the California Business Roundtable, said the rules don't fully conform to the state's other standards.

That's because of the requirement that employers provide masks and keep track of employees' vaccination status, record-keeping that he and others said could create liability and privacy issues.

"They do remain a significant barrier to fully reopening the economy," Lapsley said.

Loosening the masking rules while a majority of Californians are not fully vaccinated and dangerous variants spread "will sicken many and likely kill some workers" as protections ease, countered Mitch Steiger, a legislative advocate for the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.

The California Chamber of Commerce praised the move to immediately end social distancing obligations instead of waiting until July 31, as Cal/OSHA had initially proposed. And employers must now provide the most effective N95 masks for free to unvaccinated employees only upon request, under the latest revision.

Newsom promised to provide a one-month supply of the masks after business groups complained they would have to stockpile the N95s in competition with healthcare workers.

There were 700 California workplace outbreaks and more than 10,000 infections in the last 30 days, Cal/OSHA's Berg said, but he said the N95s are the best alternative as other protections wane.

Lapsley's organization, joined by groups representing restaurateurs, manufacturers, retailers and others, in a statement called the revised rules "a step in the right direction" but asked Newsom to end what they said are confusing differences between state rules and federal guidelines.

"There is still more work to be done and these new Cal/OSHA regulations do not ensure that the economy can 'roar' back," the groups said.

COVID

FROM PAGE 1

cases live in a household with one or more other Delta variant cases. Nonetheless, it's concerning to see this increase, as it is concerning to see these increases across the country."

Vaccination continues to increase, albeit more slowly, with more and more children getting vaccinated in recent weeks. As of June 13, almost one third of 12-15 year olds and nearly half of 16-17 year olds have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

According to Ferrer, 56 percent of residents 16 and above are fully vaccinated, and 66 percent have received their first dose. Rates are much higher for the population 65 and over, with 74 percent fully vaccinated and 86 percent having received one dose.

However, the rate of Los Angeles residents receiving their first dose is steadily decreasing. "Now that we've reopened and safety modifications have been lifted in many settings, it is particularly concerning to see vaccination momentum flagging," said Ferrer.

The slightly over 62,000 vaccinations administered last week is a far cry from the county's target of 100,000.

Ferrer also notes that the gaps in infection rates seen among racial groups persist in vaccination rates as well. As of June 13, 64 percent of the county's white population had received one dose and 74 percent of the Asian population. However, for the Latino population that number was 51 percent and for the Black population, 43 percent.

The County is incentivizing vaccination by implementing sweepstakes in partnership with the Staples Center and Universal Studios.

From this Friday June 18 to next Thursday June 24, adults 18 and over receiving their first dose of the vaccine at a county run vaccination site, LA City site, or St. John's Well Child and Family Center sites will have the opportunity to win one a prize. 217 people will receive packages to see the value ladder at the Staples Center this November and 20 people will win a VIP experience at Universal Studios in Hollywood. More information and official rules can be found on the Los Angeles County Vaccination Sweepstakes page online.

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City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

SANTA MONICA
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE

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

DATE/TIME: Monday, June 21, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: In an effort to reduce the risk of spreading Coronavirus (COVID-19), members of the Architectural Review Board and City Staff will participate via teleconference. The public may join the teleconference via https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/srbkqdrk dialing in at +1 (415) 466-7000 (US) PIN: 2615112 #.

PROPERTIES:

- 21ARB-0107: 1345 3rd Street Promenade: Façade Remodel

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

LET US KNOW YOUR OPINION
Santa Monica Daily Press editor@smdp.com

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Virginia Avenue Park

National Free Summer Lunch For Youth at Virginia Avenue Park

The City of Santa Monica opens its free summer lunch program for school-aged children at Virginia Avenue Park on Monday, June 21. The program, a collaboration with the Department of Education, offers free grab-and-go meals Monday through Friday at the Virginia Avenue Park Thelma Terry Building from 12 to 1 p.m. through August 11, 2021.

All meals meet the nutritional requirements established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Adults can pick up a bag lunch for each school-age child in their household without a child present due to COVID-19 safety guidelines until supplies last.

This service is walk up only. Face masks are required. For more information about the lunch program, call 310-458-8688 or email vap@santamonica.gov.

SUBMITTED BY CONSTANCE FARRELL, SANTA MONICA PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 30 CALLS ON JUNE 16

EMS 2500blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:08 a.m.
EMS 2300blk 30th St 12:46 a.m.
Elevator Rescue 1100blk 2nd St 1:32 a.m.
EMS 1600blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:46 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 2400blk Colorado Ave 3:07 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 2nd St 3:20 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 2400blk Colorado Ave 3:49 a.m.
EMS 200blk 19th St 5:57 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 2300blk Wilshire Blvd 7:32 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 200blk 20th St 9:55 a.m.
EMS 800blk Pico Blvd 9:58 a.m.
EMS 1800blk Wilshire Blvd 11:11 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1000blk 7th St 12:07 p.m.
Vehicle Fire 26th St / Olympic Blvd 12:49 p.m.
EMS 2400blk 21st St 1:07 p.m.
EMS 1900blk Santa Monica Blvd 1:52 p.m.
EMS 2600blk 28th St 2:19 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 16th St 2:23 p.m.
EMS 2300blk 4th St 3:12 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 2nd St 4:28 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury 2800blk Neilson Way 4:32 p.m.
EMS Stanford St / Arizona Ave 6:11 p.m.
Traffic Collision With Injury 2700blk Arizona Ave 6:32 p.m.
EMS 2100blk Ocean Ave 6:33 p.m.
EMS 300blk Santa Monica Pl 8:15 p.m.
Wires Down 1500blk Harvard St 9:07 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 5th St 11:16 p.m.
EMS 100blk Wilshire Blvd 11:36 p.m.
EMS 1900blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:45 p.m.
EMS 1600blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:58 p.m.

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California urges power conservation as heat wave bakes state

CHRISTOPHER WEBER
Associated Press

California's power grid operator called for voluntary energy conservation Thursday as much of the state sweltered under a heat wave that has baked the U.S. West.

The California Independent System Operator issued a Flex Alert for 5 to 10 p.m., urging people to set their thermostats to 78 degrees or higher and avoid using washers, dishwashers and other major appliances.

While the electrical supply was tight, CEO Elliot Mainzer said blackouts were unlikely. But he added that could change as temperatures spiked and urged people to heed the Flex Alert.

"Californians have stepped up many times before when asked to pitch in, and I'm confident they will do so," Mainzer said.

During an intense Western heat wave last August, the state saw two days of rotating power outages that affected more than 200,000 people. They were the first such blackouts since 2001.

Power officials said the electrical grid has seen upgrades in power storage and transmission since then, including adding about 3,500 megawatts of capacity — enough to power some 2.6 million homes. That includes 2,000 megawatts worth of battery storage that could be crucial when solar power generation tails off after dark.

Temperatures in the 80s and 90s were recorded up and down the state, with triple-digit highs in deserts, some mountains, non-coastal valley and interior areas.

The National Weather Service warned of "dangerously hot, potentially life-threatening temperatures" through Saturday in the San Joaquin Valley.

A heat advisory was issued through Friday night for much of the San Francisco Bay Area, and several counties announced they were opening cooling centers.

Temperatures moderated along much of the coastline in Southern California, where an influx of clouds brought cooling showers and occasionally heavier rain. Morning fog was thick enough to delay the start of golf's U.S. Open at Torrey Pines in San Diego County.

Overall, however, the heat was expected to ease only slightly heading into Sunday, the official first day of summer.

The heat was due to a dome of high pressure that has covered the U.S. West. Oppressive daytime highs have been followed by very warm nights. Death Valley roasted at 125 degrees (52 degrees Celsius) on Wednesday.

The heat wave comes amid a drought that has dried up vegetation, increasing fire danger. There have been a number of small wildfires around California this week but the state avoided the kind of fierce gusts that drove last year's devastating blazes.

Even so, people should be careful, warned Pam Temmermand, a fire prevention specialist with the state fire agency's unit in Morgan Hill in the Silicon Valley.

People should not use outdoor power tools or lawn mowers that could hit rocks and create sparks, and those towing trailers should make sure the chains aren't dragging on the road, she told the Bay Area News Group.

"All it takes is one spark," Temmermand said.

If there was any good news about the heat wave, it meant more business for restaurants, bowling alleys and other air-conditioned spots that just got state permission to abandon their coronavirus-related capacity restrictions.

Customers flocked to the Westfield Santa Anita shopping mall below the foothills northeast of Los Angeles, and they were "feeling, 'Gosh, I can get out of those 100-plus temperatures,'" management executive Molly Unge told KCBS-TV.

Gabriel Mora, who owns an ice delivery business in Los Angeles and also sells snow cones, told the station that his business also was booming.

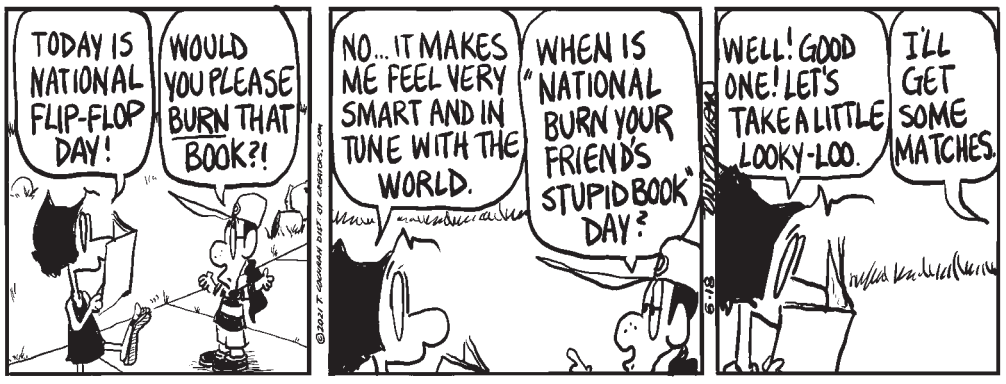
"It's been really crazy from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and still I get after-hour deliveries from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m.," he said. "It's nonstop."





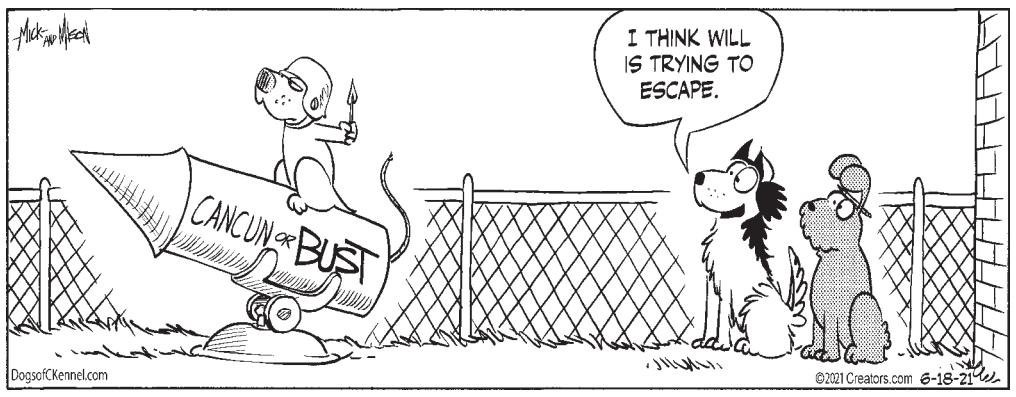
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



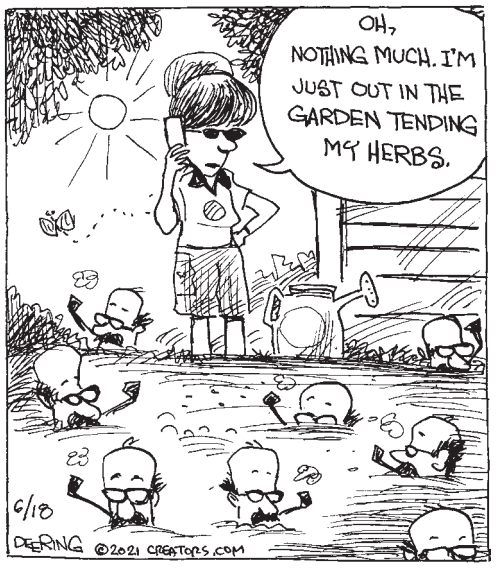
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 68.2°

FRIDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist high
Modest SSW/S swell eases, minor/fading NW swell. AM winds look light. Points should remain rideable, especially for the big boards.

SATURDAY - **POOR TO FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ Waist to stomach high
Morning looks clean. Old SSW/S swell drops. Fresh SSW swell gradually fills in.

WEATHER

Friday: Patchy dense fog before 11am. Otherwise, partly sunny, with a high near 75.
Friday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 58.
Saturday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 76.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2021/06/18	Fri	03:32 AM	3.88	H
2021/06/18	Fri	10:20 AM	0.66	L
2021/06/18	Fri	5:21 PM	4.73	H
2021/06/18	Fri	11:44 PM	1.79	L
2021/06/19	Sat	05:04 AM	3.62	H
2021/06/19	Sat	11:09 AM	0.95	L
2021/06/19	Sat	5:59 PM	5.30	H
2021/06/20	Sun	12:46 AM	0.91	L
2021/06/20	Sun	06:28 AM	3.56	H
2021/06/20	Sun	11:56 AM	1.24	L
2021/06/20	Sun	6:37 PM	5.88	H
2021/06/21	Mon	01:40 AM	0.03	L
2021/06/21	Mon	07:43 AM	3.63	H
2021/06/21	Mon	12:42 PM	1.51	L
2021/06/21	Mon	7:18 PM	6.41	H
2021/06/22	Tue	02:30 AM	-0.74	L
2021/06/22	Tue	08:45 AM	3.75	H
2021/06/22	Tue	1:30 PM	1.73	L
2021/06/22	Tue	8:01 PM	6.83	H
2021/06/23	Wed	03:18 AM	-1.31	L
2021/06/23	Wed	09:41 AM	3.85	H

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 6/16
19 29 34 44 50
Power#: 25
Jackpot: 52 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 6/15
18 22 27 38 52
Mega#: 11
Jackpot: 30 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 6/16
1 6 21 38 39
Mega#: 10
Jackpot: 56 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 6/16
19 26 27 35 37

Daily 3
Draw Date: 6/17
MIDDAY: 2 8 4
Draw Date: 6/16
EVENING: 2 9 4

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 6/16
1st: 02 - Lucky Star
2nd: 04 - Big Ben
3rd: 07 - Eureka
Race Time: 1:48.15

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

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (JUNE 18)

Talent rises up in you, finding ideal expression. A new openness will lead to better living. You'll meet people who inspire you. You'll refine former methods and run your life with fresh efficiency. And you'll connect with new sources of sustenance. Your luck runs the gamut, touching down in every segment of life. Libra and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 8, 40, 20 and 11.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Bathing in the golden light of the sun charges up your fire sign batteries and fuels the day's peak activities. Of course, there's a point of diminishing returns, which is when shade and sunscreen are your best friends.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Oddly enough, in the matter of other people's perceptions, strategic timing can get you there faster than strategic effort. You'll work smart to position yourself. You'll go from underestimated to the undisputed champion.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The older people want to be younger, the younger people want to be older. How unusual to be a person who sees what's here to seize, in this day, at this age. This is rare, and therefore also beautiful.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). There is art in the concept, but the concept is not the art until it is constructed and able to be experienced with the senses by someone in the world at large, not in the world of the artist's imagination. In short, bring it to life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Like a juggler, you will launch your props into flight constantly and repeatedly. For you and the juggler, things get impressive not after you've successfully executed them once, but after you've done so for a length of time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The move to cover up vulnerability with a distraction is valid enough, though you become wiser by resisting such a dodge -- acknowledging your fear and respecting the potential for pain.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). When a dream becomes reality, the experience of it is inevitably going to be different. Otherwise, what would be the point of working to make things real? Expect the difference and get ready to welcome however that shows up.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). As you resolve yourself to a meaningful goal, your ego, nervous and threatened by the newness of it all, will chatter away, harassing your life. Just ignore. Neglected egos have a way of settling down on their own.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). If you repeat an attempt that didn't work a dozen times, success will depend only on luck, which is not helpful to you. Analyze, hypothesize and experiment. Your scientific approach will eventually get a favorable result.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). There's a carefree feeling in the air, which you'll breathe into your lungs and let oxygenate the blood that energizes your mind to generate the whimsy that your body will impulsively dance to.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The tools of a masterful practitioner eventually become extensions of the self; body, mind and tool become one entity in the creation process. You're almost there.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You'll inhabit two different worlds and an auspicious cross-pollination will occur. The thoughts from one world will empower the physicality of the other, or an idea will take a new form in the other environment.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

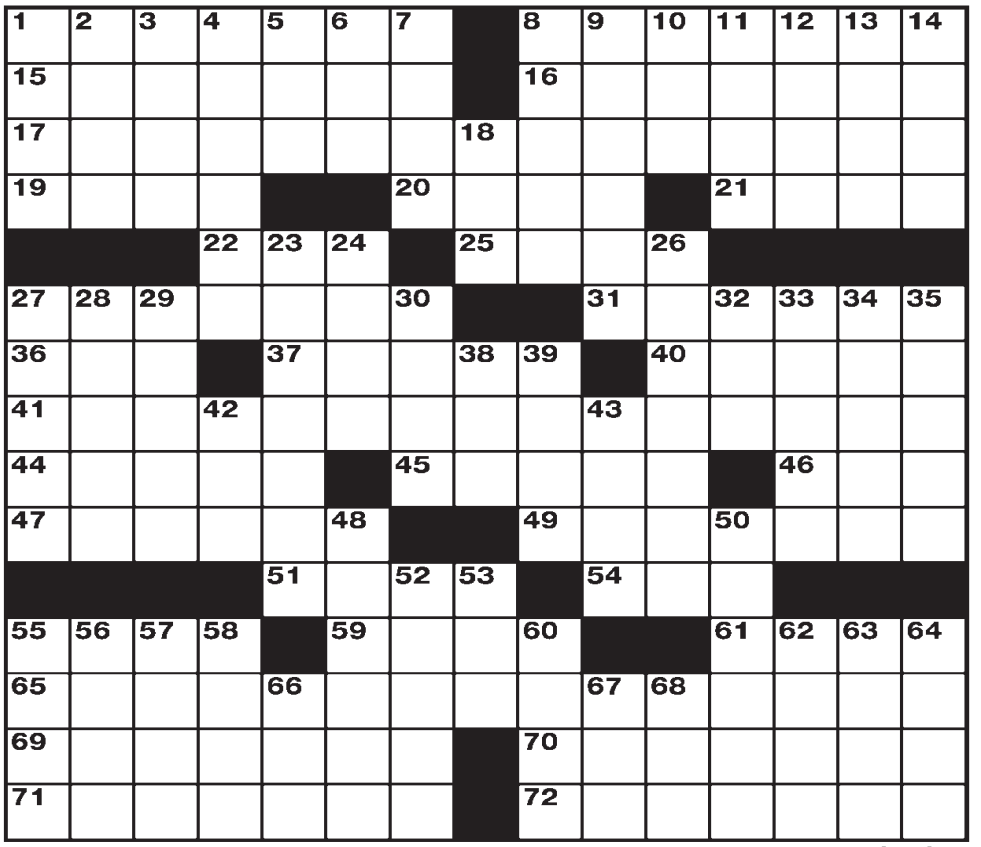
IT'S NOT A CRIME by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Exodus oppressor
8 Some brain teasers
15 Kid-lit byline
16 Add a scent to
17 Groom's comment on his bride
19 Curbside call
20 Fruit cover
21 Some long-term investments
22 Aficionado
25 Proper function
27 Welcomes, as a new year
31 Kitchen machine
36 Presidential nickname
37 Rodeo beast
40 Small canyon
41 Cashier's comment to customer
44 "Ditto!"
45 Set of furniture
46 United
47 Make certain
49 Teaching staff
51 Big brass
54 Sweetheart
55 Chips off the old block
59 Prescribed amount
61 Trip, as a trap
65 Employer's comment on vacationers
69 Cost of leaving
70 Ben Franklin publication
71 Sort of soap
72 Auction principals

DOWN

1 Ancient history
2 A couple of laughs
3 Visa alternative
4 On an upswing
5 PC key near X
6 John __ Lennon
7 Facilitate
8 Shakespearean teen
9 Pastoral poems
10 *Simpsons* exclamation
11 Bonn trio
12 Emphatic denial
13 Old Testament prophet
14 Arranges carefully
18 Occupational suffix
23 PC outlet
24 Exhaust
26 Painter from Crete
27 *Spider-Man* series director
28 Norwegian playwright
29 Small salamanders
30 Silent assents
32 Summer Games org.
33 Swimming stroke
34 Marsh bird
35 "I Am Woman" singer
38 Spike Lee alma mater
39 Hairdo
42 Evidence of debt
43 A Four Corners state
48 Author Welty
50 Open, as an envelope
52 Unhappy spectator
53 Request of
55 Shot in the dark
56 Louisville's river
57 Geek
58 Comcast cable network
60 Sked stats
62 All's opposite
63 Miles away
64 One-stripe GIs
66 Evidence of debt
67 Suffix for project
68 CCV times 10



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2021 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 6/18/21

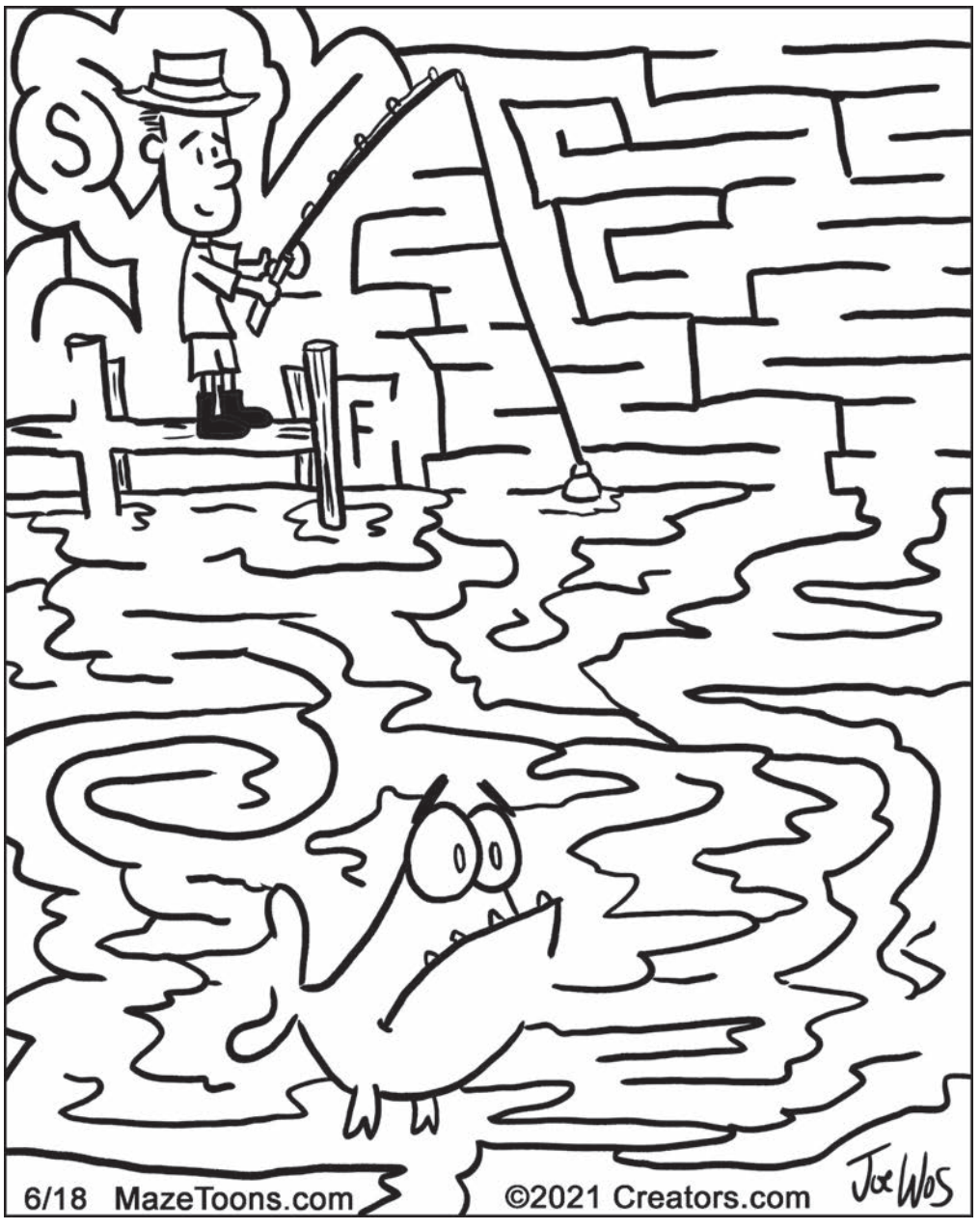
Binary Puzzle

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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



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

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smdp Santa Monica Daily Press

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 23 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle. © australianwordgames.com.au 5149

Salad bar

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

Aloe
Aubergine
Basil
Beet
Brussels sprout
Carrot
Corn
Crop
Diet
Dill
Eggs
Frost
Fruit
Greens
Grow
Gumbo
Herbs
Hose
Kale
Leek
Lemon
Lunch
Mace
Mango
Mint
Neep
Nuts
Oils
Pecans
Pests
Reap
Rocket
Roots
Sage
Snow peas
Spinach leaves
Squash
Swede
Taro
Tomato
Turnip
Water
Weeds
Yams

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
Time to spoil yourself

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PRIDE

FROM PAGE 1

of big oil and plastic pollution on ocean life. Another focuses on direct actions community members can take to be positive stewards of the environment. Others are fun celebrations of marine creatures that display queer behavior.

Associate Aquarium Director Lauren Rink will speak about the queerness that can be found right inside the Heal the Bay Aquarium. This includes the sex-changing California Sheephead fish and the Pacific Seahorse, which is a species where the males carry the eggs.

These are just two examples out of many species that break ideas of strict gender binaries and roles, according to Ramos. Yet, many people are not aware that queerness is a naturally occurring phenomenon.

Ramos hopes that these discussions help increase awareness and in turn lead to more inclusion. The interviews with queer scientists are also part of his goal to build a connection between the queer and scientific worlds and make everyone feel like they can be part of the environmental community.

"LGBTQIA+ individuals, people of color, disenfranchised groups of people, I want them to watch this show," said Ramos. "I want them to see that there's a place for them in this world and know that the love they feel for one another is just that — it's love. It's natural, it's normal, and it's worthy of celebration."

The event is an adults only (18+) show and will be streamed live via Zoom from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on June 25. Tickets can be purchased for $18 on eventbrite by visiting tinyurl.com/QueersonthePier and will help fund the environmental work of the Heal the Bay foundation.



Courtesy photos

SHOW: Tickets for the online show are available for $18.

More information on QWN can be found at @wondernasty on Instagram or www.wondernasty.com. More information on Heal the Bay can be found at @healthebay and @healthebayacquarium on Instagram.

Clara@smdp.com

JUNETEENTH

FROM PAGE 1

had gone to fight in the Civil War and came home without telling his slaves what had happened.

"Old master didn't tell, you know, they was free," Smalley said at the time. "I think now they say they worked them, six months after that. Six months. And turn them loose on the 19th of June. That's why, you know, we celebrate that day."

Union Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger and his troops arrived at Galveston on June 19, 1865, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved men and women of the South were now free. That was more than two months after Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in Virginia.

Granger delivered General Order No. 3, which said: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor."

The next year, the now-free people started celebrating Juneteenth in Galveston, and its observance has continued around the nation and the world since.

The City of Santa Monica has celebrated Juneteenth for nearly three decades. The first was a small celebration held at the Third Street Promenade 28 years ago.

Last year, the pandemic forced the City to hold its festivities online, which it will do again this year. But a few local organizations will unite this weekend to celebrate in person and they invite the community to come join them.

HERITAGE CELEBRATION

The oldest African-American Baptist church in the city of Santa Monica will kick off its Juneteenth Heritage Celebration at 1502 20th Street in Santa Monica, beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday. Juneteenth Celebration Planning Committee Member Patsy Cobb said the community will be able to enjoy live music, a step show and other participatory performances.

Guest Speakers include Naomi Nightingale, a Santa Monica Historian and Activist, and Laverne Ross, who organized the city's inaugural Juneteenth event 28 years ago. Food trucks and community vendors and artists will also be on-hand until 3 p.m.

FILM SCREENING

Later in the evening, residents can head over to Historic Belmar Park from 8 - 10 p.m. for "Wade in the Water: A Tiny Film Fest," an in-person event that will feature an outdoor screening of short films, which seek to celebrate Black culture and its connection to water.

The screening will feature the premiere of "BELONGING," a Belmar History + Art site-specific dance film honoring African Americans in Santa Monica, and pre-event activities include food trucks and music by DJ Moni Vargas. Participants are also encouraged to explore the historic panels and public sculpture, "A Resurrection in Four Stanzas" along the park's walking path.

For more information on the upcoming Juneteenth celebrations, visit https://bit.ly/3cRwuIZ.

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OBAMACARE

FROM PAGE 3

expansion under Biden, who sees it as the foundation for moving the U.S. to coverage for all. His giant COVID-19 relief bill significantly increased subsidies for private health plans offered through the ACA's insurance markets, while also dangling higher federal payments before the dozen states that have declined the law's Medicaid expansion. About 1.2 million people have signed up with HealthCare.gov since Biden reopened enrollment amid high levels of COVID cases earlier this year.

Most of the people with insurance because of the law have it through Medicaid expansion or the health insurance markets that offer subsidized private plans. But its most popular benefit is protection for people with preexisting medical conditions. They cannot be turned down for coverage on account of health problems, or charged a higher premium. While those covered under employer plans already had such protections, "Obamacare" guaranteed them for people buying individual policies.

Another hugely popular benefit allows young adults to remain on their parents' health insurance until they turn 26. Before the law, going without medical coverage was akin to a rite of passage for people in their 20s getting a start in the world.

Because of the ACA, most privately insured women receive birth control free of charge. It's considered a preventive benefit covered at no additional cost to the patient. So are routine screenings for cancer and other conditions.

For Medicare recipients, "Obamacare" also improved preventive care, and more importantly, closed a prescription drug coverage gap of several thousand dollars that was known as the "doughnut hole."

Associated Press writer Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar contributed to this report.

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