2 **State Legislature**
Faces college budget deadline

3 **Nonprofits**
Caught in political crossfire

4 **Unmuted**
Is Target hurting consumers?

5 **Gas Buddy**
Where to fill up locally

smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 23 Issue 152 WEDNESDAY 6/19/24 smdp.com

Santa Monica's Sci-Fi Museum goes from catastrophe to closure



Scott Snowden

CLOSED BEFORE IT OPENED: After a disastrous launch event, the museum will never open.

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

The latest chapter in the ongoing saga of Santa Monica's Sci-Fi Museum seems like it might be the last, certainly for a while at least.

The fate of the museum was confirmed in the last City Council meeting when a gentleman named Aubrey West approached the podium during public comment on non-agenda items. In a statement that lasted less than 40 seconds, he said, "I'm Aubrey West from Sci-Fi World. I appeared before you last year when we were acquiring the space at 302 Colorado. We were — after a lot of setbacks — we were slated to open our museum experience next month, but the building owners, Seritage, have decided, in their wisdom, not to renew our lease on the building at 302 Colorado."

"So unfortunately, we're going to have to move to a new location. I wanted to thank all of you who were so supportive of us here and during this process, city, police, fire and we'll see where the project goes from here. We appreciate your help and thank you for your time."

However, even before we got to this stage, the story was marred with controversy. Back in August 2011, three "Star Trek" fans were able to rescue a replica USS Enterprise bridge from "Star Trek: The Next Generation" before it was taken away from a warehouse in Long Beach to be trashed. It was built for the Las Vegas installation "Star Trek: The Experience," which was closed in 2008 after a successful 10-year run.

SEE **SCI-FI** PAGE 6

Maru Sushi opens on Wilshire following months of permitting delays

SCOTT SNOWDEN
SMDP Staff Writer

Chances are you'd noticed the evolving exterior of 331 Wilshire Blvd over the past nine months and wondered when the tantalizing tease of a new sushi restaurant would be over. Well, the patience of those who seek reasonably-priced raw fish has finally been rewarded as the long-awaited Maru Sushi has officially opened its doors.

Owner and head chef Nick Choi speaks very little English, so this interview was conducted through his trusty employee Diana Lee, who acted as a translator.

"His idea was, usually if you go to a Santa Monica restaurant, he said all the food is so expensive, but he wanted to try out [a more] reasonable price with good quality and wanted to show that to the customer. And he wanted to try it in Santa Monica," Lee said.

Choi originally hails from Seoul, South Korea, but he trained in Japan and came to the US 30 years ago. He owns another restaurant in the Los Angeles metropolitan area called Otto Sushi at 7205 Van Nuys Blvd.

"There is another location, but it's not the same name and a different style and different concept. We always open up the restaurant depending on the area," Lee said, adding that the demographics of the local area can also affect decisions on what to offer on the menu. She says that the Van Nuys restaurant caters to a bigger demand for delivery for instance, whereas the Santa Monica eatery is designed more for a sit down dining experience. Lee also says that Choi very much intends

SEE **SUSHI** PAGE 7

Local director takes deep dive into ocean sustainability with new PBS series

THOMAS LEFFLER
SMDP Staff Writer

Natives of Santa Monica are already well-versed in ocean environmental matters, but one local wants to bring that knowledge worldwide in his latest media endeavor.

Santa Monica-based director Brian Peter Falk's new documentary project "Hope in the Water" premieres Wednesday on PBS, a collaboration between Falk, Emmy Award-winning producer Andrew Zimmern and media storyteller David E. Kelley. The three-part series explores the work of fishers, aqua farmers and scientists who make the difficult possible, harvesting aquatic species to grow the nation's food base and helping to save the species' ocean homes at the same time.

"(It's) actually not really a series about fish, but it's a series about people, and it's the characters that you get to meet (who) are folks who are working toward a future for sustainable fishing every day," Falk said. "These are not policy folks, these are not think-tank people, these are fishers (and) farmers and scientists and community activists who are trying to make sure that the future of fishing is both a sustainable one for people ... but it also can be healthy for the oceans."

Falk added that in the world of environmental documentaries spelling out doom and gloom for Earth, he wanted to show examples

SEE **DOCUMENTARY** PAGE 7



Gary Limjap
(310) 586-0339

In today's real estate climate ...
Experience counts!
garylimjap@gmail.com www.garylimjap.com

COLDWELL BANKER
CalRE # 00927151

FINDING A NEW
DENTIST IS TOUGH!
(BUT WE MAKE IT EASY!!!)

If you don't like what we have to say we will give you a copy of your x-rays at no charge

DENTAL CARE WITHOUT JUDGEMENT!

WE OFFER UNIQUE SERVICES
*Emergencies can be seen today
*No interest payment plans
*Our dentists and staff members are easy to talk to

AND OF COURSE WE DO
· Invisalign
· Periodontist on Staff
· Oral Surgeon on Staff
· Cosmetics and Implants
· Zoom bleaching
· and more

SCAN ME

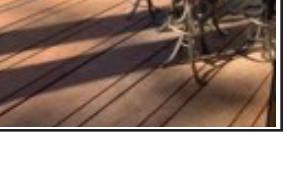
YOUR CHOICE

TRY OUR NO OBLIGATION
$20 EXAM
INCLUDES FULL XRAYS

OR

TRY OUR NO OBLIGATION
$99 EXAM
AND CLEANING
For New Patients
INCLUDES FULL XRAYS

SANTA MONICA FAMILY DENTISTRY
SANTA MONICA FAMILY DENTISTRY
DR. ALAN RUBENSTEIN
WWW.ALANRUBENSTEINDDS.COM
1260 15th ST. SUITE #703
(310) 736-2589



Gavin Newsom and the Legislature are far apart on college spending as budget deadline nears



Photo by Semantha Norris, Calmatters

COLLEGE: Inside J. Paul Leonard Library at San Francisco State University in San Francisco on July 7, 2023.

MIKHAIL ZINSHTEYN
Special to the Daily Press

Within the next week and change, Democrats who control the Legislature and fellow Democrat Gov. Gavin Newsom will need to reconcile their competing budget plans for higher education in California, with huge implications for student financial aid and the short-term fiscal health of the state's public universities.

At issue is the 2024-25 state budget that begins July 1 and the multibillion-dollar projected deficits California faces. Lawmakers and the governor are in the final, secretive sprint of the annual process to craft the state government's spending plan.

The Legislature fulfilled its constitutional duty last Thursday by passing its budget plan. That started the clock for Newsom and lawmakers to reach a compromise for the final 2024-25 budget by late June.

And on higher education, they're far apart in key ways — differences that first emerged in January, when budget season publicly kicked off with Newsom's first proposal for 2024-25.

"As depressed as I was in January, and as bad as some of the cuts still are that are included in this budget, in education I think we've been able to step ahead with this budget," said John Laird, a senator and Democrat from Santa Cruz who is chair of the budget subcommittee on education, at a hearing on the Legislature's budget last week.

HOW MUCH FOR MIDDLE CLASS SCHOLARSHIP?

Newsom's last public spending proposal, released in May, would permanently gut the Middle Class Scholarship to just $100 million annually — a serious blow to California's dreams of supersizing college financial aid so that no university student would need to take out student loans.

The Legislature countered last week with a stark "nope," instead keeping a past-year's promise to grow the program to $926 million in 2024-25 and the following year.

The dueling proposals would either slash how much each of the roughly 300,000 student recipients who attend University of California and California State University would receive — or make debt-free college a closer reality.

Under the governor's plan, average awards would drop from between $2,500 and $2,800 to just over $300. If the Legislature gets its way, average awards would range from $3,100 for UC students to $3,600 for Cal State students.

The cuts would likely mean more college loans for students, an official with the governor's Department of Finance said at a hearing last month.

The Legislature's plan "significantly brings back the Middle Class Scholarship, right at the time that parents and students are making decisions about what colleges to go to and whether they have the financial resources to go to certain public higher education institutions in California," Laird said at the budget hearing last week.

WILL CAL GRANTS HELP MORE STUDENTS?

The Legislature also seeks to partially expand the Cal Grant, the state's marquee financial aid program, for the 2025-26 budget year. If the plan is approved, another 21,000 students would receive the grant for the first time. About 400,000 students receive it currently.

Newsom in May formally rejected any expansion of the Cal Grant, citing California's colossal fiscal hole. But legislative budget leaders have been adamant about rolling out the Cal Grant to more students despite the state's difficult finances to make good on years of aggressive advocacy from lawmakers.

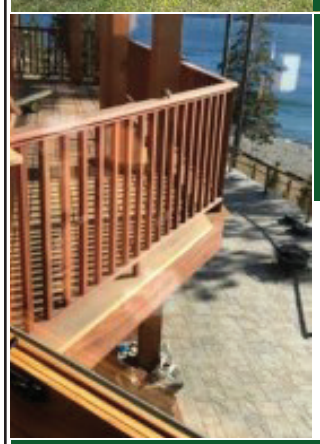
The cost would be $47 million in one-time funding to ensure current students receiving the Cal Grant under the current rules would

SEE **BUDGET** PAGE 11

IT'S DECKING SEASON!



VISIT OUR LUMBER DEPT



SUMMER TIME OFFER
RED MANGARIS ONLY $3.79 / LN FT
SKU 16M

Bourget Bros. Building Materials
1636 - 11th Street
Santa Monica, CA 90404 • (310) 450-6556
bourgetbros.com

How California's nonprofits got dragged into a fight between unions and local governments

RYAN SABALOW
Special to the Daily Press

California's nonprofits have been dragged into a bitter legislative battle with some of the state's most powerful labor organizations over local government contracts with non-union workers.

Democratic Assemblymember Liz Ortega took a shot at the chief executives of the nearly 190 nonprofits that wrote in to oppose her legislation, Assembly Bill 2557, that would add new disclosure requirements for private organizations — many of them nonprofits — that do work for local governments under contract.

"Looking at several of the executives who signed the nonprofit opposition letter, it was brought to my attention that many of them make upwards of over $200,000 per year," Ortega, a former Alameda County union official, told the Senate's Local Government Committee last week. "Some make even more than $300,000, while many of their staff are in line for services that we provide in the nonprofit sector."

It was the latest salvo in a big-money lobbying fight between labor unions and local governments over the hiring of private contractors that perform services for the state's 4,800 counties, cities, special districts and schools.

Local governments rely on contractors to perform a wide range of services paid with taxpayer funds. Contractors run animal shelters and after-school programs. They provide health care in local jails as well as homeless, legal aid and immigration services. Contractors cut fire breaks around rural communities, perform engineering services for public works projects, build affordable housing and fix government computer systems.

Unions have long demanded cities and counties hire their dues-paying members to do government work. They say the outsourcing to contractors erodes middle-class jobs, and they cite concerns about misuse of taxpayer funds. This has led to clashes with local officials who argue contractors help keep down costs for taxpayers as they provide vital services for communities across California, particularly during an ongoing local government labor shortage.

Despite the tensions, Geoff Green, who heads the California Association of Nonprofits, said he was still surprised by Ortega's attack that kicked off the start of last week's committee hearing.

He said his member organizations strive to get local government contracts that pay nonprofit workers as much as what union members make. He didn't dispute the executive salary ranges, which Ortega's office told CalMatters had been pulled from the tax forms of eight large nonprofits that opposed her bill. But Green called it a "non-starter argument" for her to attack the pay of the people running "some of the most successful nonprofit organizations that serve millions of Californians."

"It really impugns the sector, the whole nonprofit sector, and insults those who work in it and lead it," Green told CalMatters.

UNIONS HIGHLY INFLUENTIAL IN CALIFORNIA POLITICS

There are few groups more influential in state politics than unions in California, despite only representing one-sixth of the state's workforce.

As CalMatters reported, they regularly get their way on bills at higher rates than other prolific lobbying groups, due in part to the massive amounts of money they spend on state politics. Unions have donated at least $22 million to sitting legislators' campaigns since 2020, according to the Digital Democracy database.

The California Labor Federation, which has donated at least $729,600 to campaigns since 2020, is "a proud co-sponsor" of Ortega's bill. So is the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which has donated at least $1.8 million. Service Employees International Union, which has donated at least $2.7 million, is another cosponsor.

Ivan Fernández, a California Labor Federation lobbyist, told the Senate committee last week that contracting out instead of hiring union members has led to a decline in middle class jobs, particularly for women and workers of color.

"Previously viewed as the backbone of the middle class, public sector jobs provided community members with long-term, sustainable employment," he said. "Today, many simply do not have these opportunities due to local governments choosing to utilize a quick, contracted workforce."

Local governments are prohibited from spending taxpayer money on political campaigns. But they're no slouches when it comes to lobbying, though they tend to get their way less often on bills than unions do.

The League of California Cities, which opposed Ortega's bill, is one of the top lobbying spenders in California. The group reported to the Secretary of State it spent nearly $2.6 million since January 2023 on lobbying. The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) spent $1.1 million.

"CSAC opposes AB 2557 quite simply because it will harm our ability to care for the 39 million Californians your chamber and our boards mutually serve," the association's president, San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Bruce Gibson, told the senate committee.

BILL WATERED DOWN IN SENATE

Ortega is one of at least six lawmakers who are former union officials or who have close ties to the labor movement. She was secretary-treasurer of the Alameda Labor Council and statewide political director for the University of California's largest employee union, AFSCME Local 3299. Since winning her first election in 2022, she's authored several union-sponsored bills.

Her latest bill would have originally put more requirements on contractors than the version California's 40 state senators are now considering.

The version of the bill that passed the Assembly this spring would have required local government contractors to pay for regular audits of their own job performance, and it would have required that names of contractors and their employees — as well as their compensation and benefits — be publicly disclosed.

After local government, business and non-

SEE **UNION** PAGE 7



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **67.1**

WEDNESDAY — *FAIR*
SURF: 3-4ft
Waist to chest
Leftover SW swell and NW windswell mix on tap - it's slower than the start of the week but should be rideable on the early tide push. Will just want to keep an eye on the potential for lingering AM southerly wind.

THURSDAY — *FAIR*
SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh
Smaller blend of leftover SW/SSW swell and NW swell mix. Wind looks reasonably light for the morning so it might be worth a look on the small wave gear.

Weather

Wednesday: Patchy fog. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 72. East wind 5 to 10 mph.
Wednesday Night: Patchy fog. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 59.
Thursday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 70.
Thursday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 60.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2024/06/19	Wed	02:56 AM	-0.23	L
2024/06/19	Wed	09:24 AM	3.30	H
2024/06/19	Wed	1:28 PM	2.37	L
2024/06/19	Wed	8:03 PM	5.99	H
2024/06/20	Thu	03:32 AM	-0.63	L
2024/06/20	Thu	10:05 AM	3.40	H
2024/06/20	Thu	2:07 PM	2.45	L
2024/06/20	Thu	8:38 PM	6.25	H
2024/06/21	Fri	04:10 AM	-0.93	L
2024/06/21	Fri	10:46 AM	3.47	H
2024/06/21	Fri	2:47 PM	2.48	L
2024/06/21	Fri	9:15 PM	6.44	H
2024/06/22	Sat	04:50 AM	-1.13	L
2024/06/22	Sat	11:28 AM	3.53	H
2024/06/22	Sat	3:29 PM	2.50	L
2024/06/22	Sat	9:55 PM	6.51	H
2024/06/23	Sun	05:31 AM	-1.20	L
2024/06/23	Sun	12:12 PM	3.59	H

Daily Lottery

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

POWERBALL
Draw Date: 6/15
4 36 48 54 56
Power#: 2
Jackpot: 44 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 6/14
1 25 26 31 65
Mega#: 2
Jackpot: 61 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 6/15
6 8 12 24 31
Mega#: 13
Jackpot: 45 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 6/16
10 12 14 16 25

Daily 3
Draw Date: 6/16
EVENING: 2 0 5
Draw Date: 6/16
MIDDAY: 7 8 0

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 6/16
1st: 05 - California Classic
2nd: 04 - Big Ben
3rd: 07 - Eureka
Race Time: 1:48.91

PUBLISHER
Ross Furukawa
ross@smdp.com

PARTNER
Todd James
todd@smdp.com

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Matthew Hall
matt@smdp.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Charles Andrews,
Jack Neworth,
David Pisarra.

CIRCULATION
Guadalupe Navarro
ross@smdp.com

Keith Wyatt
ross@smdp.com

STAFF WRITERS
Scott Snowden
scott.snowden@smdp.com

Thomas Leffler
thomas@smdp.com

DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING
Cindy Moreno
cindy@smdp.com

MARKETING MANAGER
Dina Araniva
dina@smdp.com

PRODUCTION
Esteban Inchaustegui
production@smdp.com

Julio Davalos
julio@smdp.com

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

AWARD WINNER

Sustainable Quality Awards
WINNER

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.

PUBLISHED BY NEWLON ROUGE, LLC
© 2023 Newlon Rouge, LLC, all rights reserved.
Santa Monica Daily Press

ART IN THE + ALLEY WAYS

@ARTINTHEALLEYWAYS



OPINION | UNMUTED

Devan Sipher

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Are we being Targeted?

Is Target targeting customers?

Last fall, I went to a nearby Target for laundry detergent and found the bottles locked in a glass case like prized jewels. I was confused: Was there another supply chain snafu? Or was it a safety concern, like when Sudafed was moved behind the pharmacy counter? Were people getting high on the fumes of liquid Tide?

After waiting nearly ten minutes, an employee liberated the cleaning product, explaining that the inconvenience was due to increased shoplifting. I wondered how anyone could fit gallon-size containers in their purses or down their pants, but I didn't dwell on it. Until a visit a few months later – when glass cases had sprouted on other aisles. Now toothpaste and Tylenol were also being held captive.

I don't want to make light of the increased theft that many businesses are facing, which I'll be writing about in a future column. However, I would expect the response from a $65 billion corporation to be increased security guards and staffing. Neither of which seem to be taking place. In a half dozen investigative visits to three local Target stores this past week, I rarely saw security guards. I saw lots of locked glass cabinets.

It seems that Target's solution for their security problem is to make it their customers' problem instead. Which makes us seem less like their customers than their patsys.

I reached out to Target with questions, and though I didn't receive the courtesy of a response, I should make it clear that Target isn't alone in this anti-customer behavior. I've seen locked cabinets at CVS, Rite-Aid and Walgreens. And when it comes to punishing customers for their patronage, the airline industry is way ahead of chain stores. But airlines have a near monopoly over long-distance travel in this country. Retail stores aren't so lucky.

Last month, I ran out of detergent and absentmindedly headed over to Target again. But this time when I found myself waiting for an overburdened employee, I pulled out my phone and bought a bottle online from Amazon instead. Numerous friends have told me that the locked merchandise has motivated them to also switch more purchases to Amazon. The problem is that if everyone does the same, Target won't be around very long.

Now I know that shopping at a brick-and-mortar store is a little old-fashioned in these days of digital disruption. Prices are often better online, and customer service at the understaffed stores can be nonexistent. (The irony is that the lack of staff results in harried employees flinging open locked cases before hurrying to the next waiting customer, defeating any supposed security benefit.)

But sometimes it's more satisfying to shop in person. Maybe I want to feel the weight of a towel or smell the scent of a shampoo. Or maybe I want to continue to have the option to do so in the future and don't want Amazon to be the only retail option in the country.

The question is whether Amazon's competitors are equally committed to their own survival. Target's sales and foot traffic were down this past year, though their profits soared thanks to increased prices. The C-Suite gurus seem to think they can succeed at the expense of their customers, forgetting a central tenet of capitalism, which is that companies increase in value when they create value for their customers.

We should feel appreciated by the places we spend our money. It would be even nicer to be rewarded. At the very least, there shouldn't be a bullseye on our back.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Convicted criminal

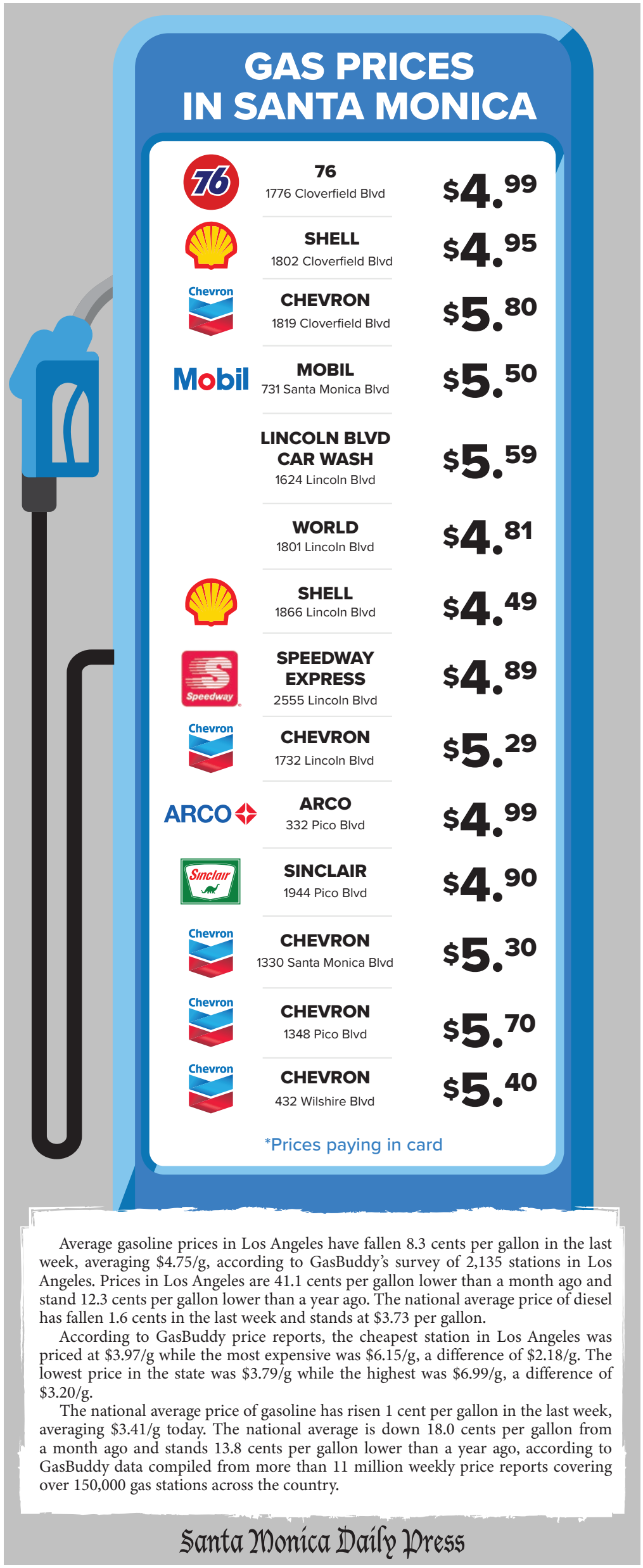
EDITOR:

Donald Trump was found guilty of all 34 felony counts of falsifying his company's business records to keep information from voters that he knew would harm his 2016 presidential campaign. Lying on official business filings is a serious criminal offense and another clear example of Trump's pattern doing anything to gain or stay in power. No one is above the law, and any other American would be punished if they committed the same crime.

Despite the guilty verdict, Trump is still very much running for president. If he is elected to a second term, our democracy would be in serious peril. Don't just take my word for it: Trump has pledged to weaponize the Department of Justice to seek revenge against his political opponents, pardon himself and his allies for crimes they commit, and deploy the military against demonstrators exercising their First Amendment rights—all while purging the federal government of anyone who doesn't agree with him.

There's too much at stake to let Trump return to the Oval Office. It's up to us to make sure we hold Trump accountable at the ballot box in November.

Janet Heinle, Santa Monica



Average gasoline prices in Los Angeles have fallen 8.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging $4.75/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 2,135 stations in Los Angeles. Prices in Los Angeles are 41.1 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 12.3 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 1.6 cents in the last week and stands at $3.73 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Los Angeles was priced at $3.97/g while the most expensive was $6.15/g, a difference of $2.18/g. The lowest price in the state was $3.79/g while the highest was $6.99/g, a difference of $3.20/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 1 cent per gallon in the last week, averaging $3.41/g today. The national average is down 18.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 13.8 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Santa Monica Daily Press

SMALL BUSINESS
STARTUP?
LET ME HELP YOU SUCCEED
TAXES • BOOKKEEPING • STARTUPS • CORPS. • LLCS
(310) 395-9922
SAMUEL B. MOSES, CPA
100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1800 • Santa Monica 90401

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Santa Monica invites sealed proposals for

RFP: # 411 GIS Managed Services

- **Submission Deadline is July 19, 2024 at 3:00 PM Pacific Time.**

Proposals must include forms furnished by the City of Santa Monica. Request for Proposals may be obtained on the **CITY'S ONLINE VENDOR PORTAL.** The website for this Request for Proposals and related documents is OpenGov (https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/santa-monica-ca) There is no charge for the RFP package.

JAKLE, ALEXANDER & PATTON, LLP

We're thrilled to have the support of our clients, friends, and local community.
WE LOVE SANTA MONICA!



1250 6th St., Suite 300 Santa Monica, CA 90401 | (310) 395-6555

SCI-FI

FROM PAGE 1

Not long after, one of the three, a "Star Trek" superfan named Floyd Huston Huddleston, announced an ambitious crowdfunding campaign to raise "$175,000 to bring the bridge to life — complete with a viewscreen, the captain's chair, and even operational touchscreen computers."

Two years later, in 2014, Huddleston announced additional fundraising for an ambitious museum that would become the permanent home of the legendary "Star Trek" bridge, plus a host of other iconic science fiction and horror film sets, props and related memorabilia.

Then in March, 2018, Huddleston was arrested in Southern California on child pornography and other related felony charges after a five-year FBI investigation. Huddleston originally pleaded not guilty. Needless to say, volunteers and board members abandoned ship and resigned in protest. However, as Ars Technica reported, he was also "slammed" for poor financial management and for "his inability to make good on his grand promises."

Following a jury trial in June 2018, it was revealed that Huddleston withdrew his "not guilty" plea on the charge of possessing pornography produced with the use of a person under 18 and instead entered a plea of "no contest." He was found guilty, convicted and placed on a three year probation. He was ordered to serve 126 days in a Los Angeles county jail, pay a total of $520 in fines and complete a 52-week sex offender counseling program. Huddleston was also registered as a sex offender.

After all of this, it was unclear what Huddleston's level of involvement with the project was. According to the Los Angeles Times, "Huddleston said he knew that any association with the museum after his conviction would be toxic for an organization that hopes to attract young fans, so he gave up control of the nonprofit and its collection of film and TV ephemera to the museum's chief executive."

The Los Angeles Times adds that, "several Sci-Fi World volunteers past and present [said] that Huddleston remains active — if not central — in museum operations and preparations for opening. Lee Grimwade, one of the museum's lead volunteers who quit a day before the gala, said Huddleston is 'definitely 100% involved.'"

For some time, John Purdy was listed as the CEO of the Sci-Fi World Museum, but Huddleston's mother remained as the museum's Chief Financial Officer. However, confusion over who was actually in charge reached a crescendo when Purdy and General Manager Cory Dacy recently resigned.

Dacy told the Los Angeles Times that he resigned partly because the museum was not remotely ready to open.

"It's been haphazardly handled," Dacy said. "It's being treated the way a pop-up would be treated, in my opinion, where you go in with the idea that you're going to be open for a few weeks."

To top everything off, the restored Enterprise bridge is not even assembled inside the Sci-Fi World museum. The organization announced that Santa Monica city inspectors, together with the owners of the building, will not issue a permit allowing it to be displayed because the ceiling is not equipped with sprinklers, thus creating a fire hazard.

Regardless, the "red carpet" gala opening went ahead on May 27, as advertised on the organization's website and social media. Even with just a sneaky peak through the doors, it was plain to see that the interior of the building was very far from finished. Unless the team behind the project were deliberately going for an Incomplete Chic, a significant amount of work still needed to be done.

Upon arrival, it soon became clear that no one was going to be allowed inside the building because of the fire code violation. Meanwhile, tables and chairs were hastily being set up near the entrance of the venue as any display item inside that could be moved outside was so in a desperate, improvised attempt to create something worth the $200 ticket price many had paid.

A group who had dressed in "Star Trek" cosplay had flown down from San Francisco specifically for this event and another had traveled from Minneapolis.

Moreover, $500 VIP tickets had been advertised and according to a page now removed from the website, a VIP ticket included, "exclusive walkthrough the museum, free food and drinks, 1980s classic arcade games on free play, live band performance with special seating, exclusive goody bag, autographed photos and photo ops with celebrities and access to the VIP room."

A glance at the invite list showed that at least a few stars of television sci-fi might be in attendance and sure enough, Gigi Edgley, probably most well known for playing the character Chiana in the sensational sci-fi show "Farscape" showed up. Wearing a stunning blue cocktail dress, she hung around for less than five minutes then walked back to her car. Granted, it's entirely possible she had another function to go to, who knows.

The "red carpet" was a small scrap of material placed next to the outdoor toilets and the food and beverages on offer consisted of Buca di Beppo self-served from a tin tray and discount soda. Oh, and an inflatable Tyrannosaurus rex was wheeled periodically in an attempt to placate the people scratching their heads and wondering if they could still make it home in time to catch "Last Week Tonight."

Regarding potential refunds and possibly even legal action, the visitors from San Francisco said, like several others, that they were desperate to see this succeed and indeed, many had been behind the project since the very beginning, when the crowdfund campaign had been launched.

It's hard to imagine how anyone might have thought it was a good idea to proceed with the opening, but the passion for this project still remains among the fan faithful. Hopefully, it will sort itself out in time.

A spokesperson from the organization said in an email to the Daily Press regarding the decision by Seritage to not renew their lease, "Sadly that is the case, but we are trying our best to fight it. They gave us no reason, and as of mid-May, they said they would renew our lease for another six months, then changed their minds.

"It's really sad and has caused us all a lot of stress, but all we can do is our best and to keep fighting, because this is something so many people really want."

scott.snowden@smdp.com

DOCUMENTARY

FROM PAGE 1

of "how great the promise is if we change and start to do things the right way." Notable examples showcased on "Hope in the Water" include sea urchin divers in the Santa Barbara area taking harmful kelp-eating purple sea urchins off the Pacific coastline, and a sustainable community-sponsored fish agriculture program in Philadelphia.

"We've been sort of sold this kind of false binary in a lot of environmental television programming, which is that if we take things from the ocean, we take fish from the ocean, we're destroying the ocean, and that's not really the reality," Falk said. "The reality is that if we take things from the ocean and we understand how to (responsibly) farm, fish … if we do those things in responsible ways, we can actually do things that are beneficial for us, for our diets, and we actually can do it without hurting the ocean."

In Goleta, just east of Santa Barbara, Falk directed the team of urchin divers who worked alongside actress Shailene Woodley on the endeavor. The overgrowth of purple urchins on the coastline has negative impacts on the ocean's predators, and also contributes to the destruction of kelp forests that are instrumental in biodiversity. The divers pulled up baskets of the urchins and put them in water tanks, sending them to a farm where they can become sellable materials, making economic and environmental gains alike.

"They're taking something that (has) basically just been destructive for the ocean, removing it from the ocean … then bringing it to a farm (and) turning it into something that can be sold for money, so there are a lot of wins there," Falk added.

Guest starring in the series are Woodley, journalist Baratunde Thurston, humanitarian and chef José Andrés and mogul Martha Stewart. Falk's team ventured to Stewart's home in Maine, taking her to Penobscot Bay for a firsthand experience in a scallop farming operation, something Falk said she "really had a great time" with.

Now ready to air, Falk stated that PBS was the perfect partner for "Hope in the Water" because of the organization's commitment to balanced journalism and educational outreach. The network plans to cut down the hour-long broadcasts into smaller pieces for student digestion, placing the documentary into school lesson plans.

"There has already been a lot of interest from a huge number of schools across the country about getting the content into schools, so that kids in school can learn about sustainability and blue food and all that," Falk said.

Though the series has a nationwide focus, Falk never let his Santa Monica roots get too far away from him, taking his experience from the "amazing community" to be better informed on the show's topics. His son is currently a counselor at Heal the Bay Aquarium at the Santa Monica Pier, continuing a family environmental legacy.

"I always feel like on a project like this, I already have a leg up because there are things I certainly understand about the coast in a way that I wouldn't if I were living in a more landlocked place," Falk said.

"Hope in the Water" airs Wednesday at 6 p.m. PDT on PBS SoCal 1. For more information, visit pbs.org/show/hope-in-the-water.

thomas@smdp.com





Courtesy Photos

OCEAN: Santa Monica-based director Brian Peter Falk (above) is tackling issues like overpopulation of purple sea urchins, in his new PBS documentary series "Hope in the Water."

SUSHI

FROM PAGE 1

Maru Sushi to be for local residents, rather than purely focusing on tourists.

According to Lee, Choi chose this particular site, formally Greenleaf Kitchen & Cocktails, because there's good public parking behind the building (parking garage 9) and he very deliberately wanted to open an affordably-priced sushi restaurant in the downtown area where there are a lot of high-end and consequently expensive eating options.

Choi says that he carefully selects his fish from all over the world, depending on what is in season and where, with much of it coming from Canada, Spain, Scotland and New Zealand.

He also says that in his professional career, he's opened a total of 28 restaurants, every one of them in the state of California, but he's never experienced as many problems with permitting and city officials as he has recently had to endure in Santa Monica. Lee explains that Choi was repeatedly told to address changes that he himself had not made.

"Even right now they're in a process, he keeps complaining that they say, 'you fix something, put it back,' but he's never touched it. He has so much problems with that [sic] … going crazy, getting stuck in a restaurant because of a small thing that he never touched," Lee says.

Because Choi had hoped to open after just a few months of acquiring the site back in August of last year, he's had to pay rent throughout this whole process.

Lee says that Choi has been repeatedly offered the chance to be the head chef of well-known restaurants in Japan, but he has insisted on operating his own. He says that the word "maru" means circle (it's often attached to Japanese ship names, Kobayashi Maru, for example) and in this instance he wants it to reflect the circular journey of the customer's experience in the restaurant. From entering, to ordering, to enjoying to finally leaving.

"He says life should have no sharp edges," Lee said, adding, "And that's what he's trying to do, to not add any edges or corners in people's lives."

scott.snowden@smdp.com

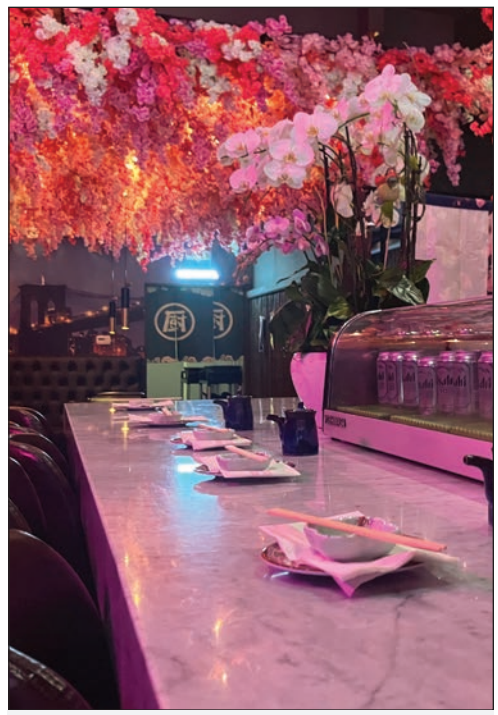


Photo by Scott Snowden

SUSHI: The long-awaited Maru Sushi restaurant has officially opened its doors at 331 Wilshire Blvd.

UNION

FROM PAGE 3

profit lobbying groups complained that the requirements were wildly impractical, expensive and burdensome, the bill was amended last week in the Senate to remove the self-auditing requirements and the public naming of private-sector employees.

The new version would require that contracts be posted on local government websites and that unions be informed of new contracts and changes in existing ones. Now, only the number of contracted employees, their job classes and salaries would be made public.

Ortega told the Senate committee last week the measure is intended to improve transparency and accountability.

"As lawmakers, we have the right to know what our taxpayers' monies are going for and making sure that the results that we're looking for are achieved," she said.

Asked why the measure was necessary, her office provided CalMatters with a list of nine recent news stories that detailed problems with local governments' contracts with nonprofits. They included an article about a San Francisco nonprofit accused of spending around $80,000 of taxpayer funds on luxury gift boxes, limo rides and a Lake Tahoe trip; and another that detailed how a nonprofit mismanaged Sacramento County funds.

LONE DEMOCRAT CASTS 'NO' VOTE

The original version of Ortega's bill sailed through the Assembly earlier this year without any of the chamber's 62 Democrats voting "no."

However, 11 Democratic lawmakers — most of them former local elected officials — didn't vote on the bill when it was on the Assembly floor last month. As CalMatters reported, not voting counts the same as voting "no," and lawmakers regularly don't vote on controversial bills to avoid angering influential groups such as unions.

When the bill passed the Senate's local government committee last week, Sen. Steve Glazer, the former mayor of Orinda, became the lone Democrat in the Legislature to cast a "no" vote so far on the proposal.

Glazer is one of the few Democrats in the Legislature who regularly sides against unions on legislation.

For instance, he's aligned with the California Labor Federation with its position on bills just 54% of the time, according to Digital Democracy. The four other Democratic senators on the local government committee — Nancy Skinner, Aisha Wahab, Scott Weiner and María Elena Durazo — align with the federation between 83% and 97% of the time.

Glazer, who is stepping down at the end of this year, told CalMatters he voted against Ortega's bill because it creates "an added burden" on local governments, and he "didn't see the justification for what they claimed was the purpose of the measure."

Despite his group's opposition, Green, the nonprofit association CEO, said it doesn't mean nonprofits are out to take jobs from local government union members.

"We are not in competition with public-sector workers," he said. "That is the bottom line."

Editor's note: CalMatters is a member of the California Association of Nonprofits and its newsroom staff recently voted to join a union that's affiliated with the California Labor Federation. This article was originally published by CalMatters.

Building a Cleaner Future for Santa Monica

As the climate crisis worsens, the urgency to reduce emissions and transition to clean energy solutions increases. Santa Monica has partnered with QuitCarbon to provide a free service that helps homeowners convert to climate-friendly, electric systems for heating and cooking.

QuitCarbon's free, expert guidance makes it simple and affordable to get fossil fuels out of our homes. QuitCarbon has helped thousands of homeowners with planning, installation, and rebates on upgrades like heat pumps, mini-splits, induction cooking, and EV chargers. QuitCarbon is the only ENERGY STAR® partner providing free assistance with clean energy upgrades.

What's at Stake

This initiative could have a huge impact. Gas-powered water heaters, furnaces, and other appliances can be replaced with electric counterparts, reducing Santa Monica residents' fossil fuel pollution. Consider the following:

- It is possible to reduce your emissions from heating your home by up to 93% by replacing a gas furnace with an air-source heat pump.
- Using a heat pump water heater instead of a natural gas water heater can reduce a home's total emissions by 49%.
- Heat pumps are 2-4 times more efficient than gas furnaces and their efficiency continues improving with technology advancements.[1]

The City's partnership is also timely, since statewide regulations are phasing out gas appliances. California's Air Resources Board voted to ban the sale of new gas furnaces and water heaters beginning in 2030.The Southern California Air Quality Management District is developing standards for zero emission equipment, which would phase out gas appliances installed in new buildings beginning as early as 2026 and would require zero NOx appliances in existing buildings when an appliance is replaced beginning in 2029 or later depending on the equipment type. (These policies are not yet finalized.) . Santa Monica homeowners can easily and cost-effectively prepare for this transition by working with QuitCarbon now.

[1] Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE)

"Making clean energy home upgrades is complicated and confusing. That's why we provide simple, money-saving guidance at every step of the way, at no cost to the homeowner." said Cooper Marcus, QuitCarbon's Chief Quitter and CEO.

Marcus is also quick to point out that "quitting" is about far more than slashing emissions; it's a matter of safety and comfort. "Electric-powered upgrades improve indoor air quality, comfort, and safety compared to gas appliances," he said. "Home gas appliances create more NOx pollution than our cars and power plants – and gas stoves produce more cancer-causing benzene than cigarette smoke!"

Engaging the Community

As part of the partnership, QuitCarbon will conduct outreach campaigns to educate Santa Monica homeowners about home electrification and enroll them in QuitCarbon's concierge service.

Homeowners are guided through each step of the process by QuitCarbon's unbiased energy advisors, who develop customized upgrade plans, connect them with vetted local contractors, and assist with rebate applications and bid reviews.

During the campaign, QuitCarbon and the City will track data to better understand common objections and barriers to electrification. This will inform future policies and efforts to make residential electrification equitable and accessible throughout Santa Monica.

Interested homeowners can learn more about the process and incentives for making the switch to clean energy in an upcoming webinar organized by the City of Santa Monica and QuitCarbon.

Free registration is here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-practical-guide-to-electrification-in-santa-monica-tickets-914742528527

Sparking Change Together

Our community can – and must – take the lead on climate action. The City of Santa Monica's latest initiative, in partnership with QuitCarbon, embodies this spirit of change. By partnering to put clean-energy homes within reach, we're empowering Santa Monicans to build a healthier and more sustainable future.

For more information, visit www.QuitCarbon.com and https://www.santamonica.gov/process-explainers/how-to-electrify-your-home.

> "Making clean energy home upgrades is complicated and confusing. That's why we provide simple, money-saving guidance at every step of the way, at no cost to the homeowner."

Don't upgrade your home's water heater, furnace, or stove without free money-saving guidance from QuitCarbon!

Before you buy a heat pump, mini split, water heater, induction stove, panel upgrade, EV charger, battery, or solar...

Get free money-saving guidance

☑ Planning ☑ Rebates ☑ Contractors

Save **thousands of dollars** with federal and state rebates!

☑ Santa Monica is Quitting Carbon



Annika, Ocean Park

"It's complicated to get your home off fossil fuels. QuitCarbon made it way easier overall."

★★★★★



Steven, Pico

"Great idea and great service to homeowners facing a complex array of options and rebates."

★★★★★

QuitCarbon is the only ENERGY STAR® partner providing free assistance with clean energy upgrades.

ENERGY STAR PARTNER

Save time and money upgrading your home to **clean energy.**

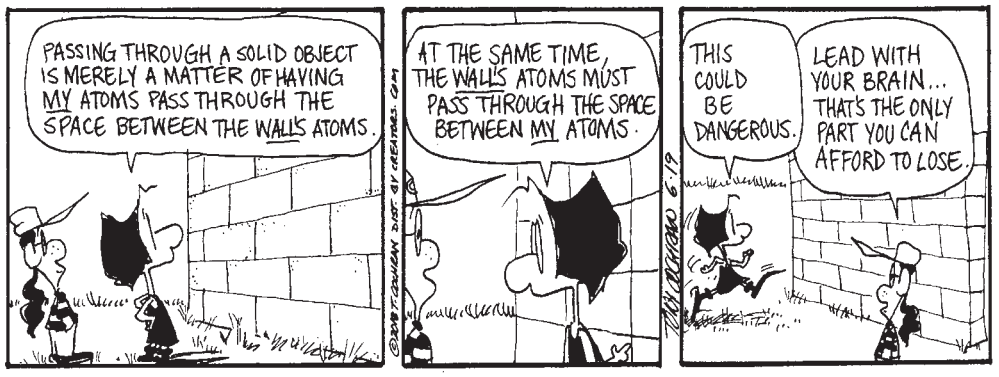
Scan here or visit QuitCarbon.com/SMDP

QuitCarbon

415-446-1620

Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

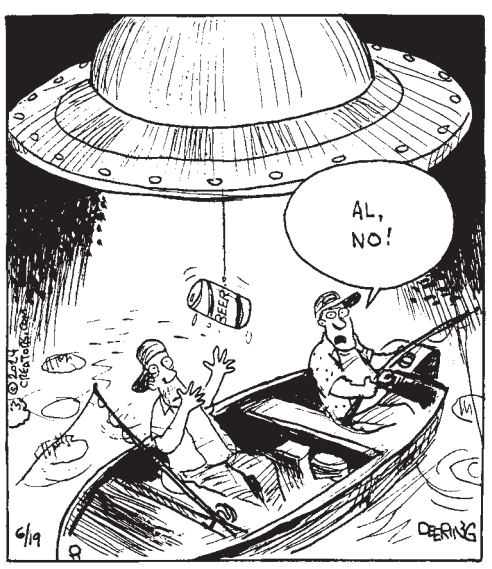
By PETER GALLAGHER



"THIS IS HAM WEATHER."

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 18 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

© australianwordgames.com.au 6246

Rainforest walk

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

Algae
Ants
Aril
Bats
Bees
Berries
Bird
Bites
Branch
Bush
Care
Crustacean
Damp
Fauna
Fertile
Fig
Fish
Flora
Foliage
Frog
Fruit
Ginger
Gums
Humidity
Koala
Leech
Lichen
Lizard
Mist
Moss
Moth
National parks
Orchids
Quiet
Rivers
Smell
Snakes
Soil
Summer
Taste
Tropical
Turkey
Vine
Wallaby

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
...Perfect the next

Covering the city by the bay since 2001.
To advertise, email cindy@smdp.com or call 310.458.7737
smdp Santa Monica Daily Press

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (June 19)

his year brings a three-lettered theme: F-U-N. Even though lightheartedness is your prevailing mood, you'll still navigate life's currents with a steady hand. More highlights: You'll have a whole new set of habits. A financial gain will allow you to explore a new interest. A group creates a role just for you, custom-fitted to your strengths and wants. Cancer and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 35, 27, 12, 17 and 22.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). That tinge of heightened awareness that pings in you like a tiny bell is telling you that you have a hot one on the line - an idea worth exploring, a person who would be good to get to know, a topic of intrigue or a life-changing skill to add to your arsenal.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). There's no underestimating the power of an inviting environment where everything has a place. The attention you give to decluttering your home and workspace will reduce stress and increase your efficiency.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Curiosity will be your guide at first, then fate steps in to sweep you deep into the knowledge. It may even be more than you wanted to know, but think of it as a freebie course. Life is giving you an intensive study as a bonus.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). No need to be overly accommodating. This is your time to fully embody your own style. Doing what works for you will help others understand your boundaries and strengths. It will make relationships better, more comfortable and more real.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Some battles are never really won, but if you stop thinking of them as battles, winning or losing becomes a moot point. What can be put in place to assure everyone a sense of respect and safety? Good answers require a deep understanding of all involved.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Sometimes, good enough really is good enough, but today, good enough is a barely passing grade. Excellence brings a good result, and to get better than that, you can refine excellence until it's stunning.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're careful not to attribute special qualities to people just because you find them attractive. That would be a rookie mistake at this point. You expect it from the newbies, but you hold yourself to a higher standard.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Hot topics abound. Words seem in a hurry to leave your brain through your lips. One deep breath will slow everything down so you can consider more careful responses. Thoughtful communication will be rewarded.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Granular study is favored. Break things down to the finer levels to analyze the pieces. It works especially well with social interactions. Great self-awareness will be gained from considering past discourse from the objective seat you now inhabit.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The same process of self-talk that helps you process the world can also get in the way of processing the world. Exercise, meditation and calming techniques will keep your cognition calm and constructive.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Desire orders your thoughts. If you're uneasy, you are thinking about what you don't want. Maybe what you want isn't juicy enough. Aim higher. More attractive wants magnetize your thoughts so you don't even have to manage them.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Just as explaining the joke spoils it, going back over magic moments can break the spell. Some spells should be broken, such as infatuations that interfere with work, mood or plans.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

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

Newsday Crossword

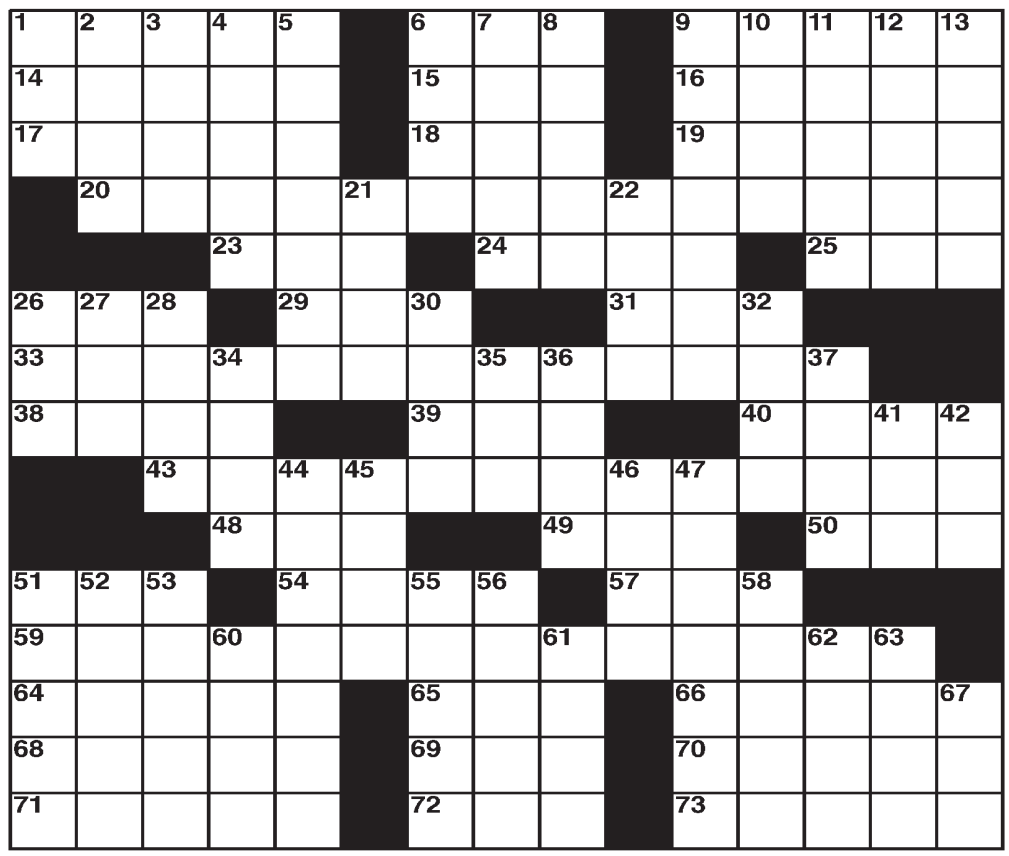
SOUNDS CORRECT by Guilherme Gilioli
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Sound of a sneeze
6 Race in a slalom
9 Computer programmer
14 Shave, as sheep
15 Rustic hotel
16 Make amends
17 Self-confident manner
18 Land parcel for parking
19 Film actor Nick
20 Plane pair Orville and Wilbur
23 __ Paulo, Brazil
24 Root beer or ginger ale
25 Fabric coloring
26 TV remote batteries
29 Phone bk. listings
31 Approximate landing hr.
33 Any important life stage
38 Cereal brand "for kids"
39 Arabian Nights' __ Baba
40 Beloved celebrity
43 Three-sided figure in high school math
48 Half of hex-
49 PC key
50 So far
51 Highest-rated
54 Observed closely
57 Curved line
59 Make brief notes
64 "Your sitcom is starting"
65 Hockey surface
66 Microwave oven signals
68 Strong feeling of regret
69 Hawaii's Mauna __
70 Confess (to)
71 Powder in printers
72 Make a blunder
73 Horn honks

DOWN

1 Egyptian snake
2 Chicken __ mein (Chinese food)
3 Crown prince, for example
4 Desert stop for camels
5 Pizza herb
6 Riverbank sediment
7 Door handles
8 Initial comment, for short
9 Classical choral work
10 Texter's "However..."
11 Handed (out)
12 Contest submission
13 Actress Witherspoon
21 Horse's foot
22 Laudatory poems
26 State-of-the-__ (most high-tech)
27 Broadcast on TV
28 Blend, as cake batter
30 Minor dispute
32 Opposed to, slangily
34 Door to leave through
35 Elev.
36 Thoroughbred's father
37 Feeling anxious
41 Soccer stadium chant
42 Allow
44 More eco-friendly
45 Informal greeting
46 "__ what you did!"
47 Agile circus performer
51 Plot surprise
52 Prefix meaning "straight"
53 Resident near the Leaning Tower
55 Submit tax returns online
56 Home's interior design
58 Short motto of belief
60 Weighty book
61 Be dressed in
62 Showroom sample
63 Barbecue rod
67 They often cross aves.



CREATORS SYNDICATE ©2024 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM

06/19/24

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

BUDGET

FROM PAGE 2

remain in the program.

If the plan becomes law, about 11,000 more community college students would get the grant in 2025-26, which would appear as a cash award of about $1,650 and then cover tuition at a UC or Cal State if the student transfers. Cal Grants are valid for four years of full-time enrollment. The number of new recipients would grow with each subsequent year.

This is a lower number of new recipients, and smaller price tag, than what's in the original Cal Grant expansion plan. That's because the partial roll-out would keep the current 2.0 GPA requirement for community college student eligibility while the original would have removed it.

Still, under this new proposal, students would be able to re-establish eligibility by taking fewer classes through a special program — 12 units instead of the current 16 — and earning a 2.0 GPA. The number of units a student would need to rehabilitate their GPA would drop to nine units in 2026-27 and six units in 2027-28. The plan calls for no GPA requirement by 2028-29.

These details were confirmed by the office of Asssemblymember David Alvarez, a Chula Vista Democrat who is chairperson of the Assembly's budget subcommittee on education.

The rule changes would mean 9,000 new recipients at Cal State in 2025-26, according to information the state's financial aid agency, the California Student Aid Commission, shared with CalMatters.

Also, about 7,300 new students would get extra cash award for those with dependent children. Current recipients get $6,000, but new recipients would receive $3,000 in the first year. The award for new recipients would grow by $1,000 each year until hitting $6,000.

However, UC would see about 1,300 fewer students receiving the Cal Grant in 2025-26 than current projections show — the result of the lowering the income ceiling for who is eligible. UC's share of low-income students has declined in the past decade — a source of worry for some lawmakers.

Advocates pushing for Cal Grant expansion, including student associations from UC, Cal State and community colleges, wrote to lawmakers that they are pleased with the proposal. "We respect that the cost may be too great during this budget cycle, so we agree that a phase-in as you have proposed is the right step," the letter read.

If approved, these details would appear in a separate "trailer bill" sometime in late June or early July.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE FOR UC, CSU?

Newsom's plan imposes cuts and delays funding for UC and CSU in 2024-25 and then restores funding in 2025-26 — but by much less than what lawmakers and the governor promised last year.

Newsom's funding plan has numerous moving parts, but would basically see Cal State receive $75 million less in 2024-25, then bounce up by $171 million the next year, and leap by another $265 million by 2026-27. That would increase Cal State's main state support to $5.35 billion. But Cal State faces numerous budget challenges, including a deficit as high as $831 million in the next two years.

The legislative plan would switch the order of fiscal hurt by proposing to grow the UC and CSU budgets in 2024-25 and apply cuts — if the budget deficit still calls for it — in 2025-26. The logic is that another year of additional state aid, even if it's less than what the systems were promised last year, provides them a year to prepare for the budgetary scythe.

Less funding for the UC and Cal State would mean larger class sizes and more faculty and staff positions that go unfilled. That would limit student services, and, for Cal State, likely result in more academic programs getting the ax.

Under both plans, though, the UC and Cal State systems would see more funding by the third year. For Cal State, that's a jump from $4.99 billion in 2023-24 to $5.35 billion in 2026-27. And for UC, that'd mean state support growing from $4.74 billion now to $5.18 billion in 2026-27.

And both plans want to continue the recent trend of paying the systems to enroll more California residents — a note of sweet relief for students in the state eager to enter some of the most selective public universities in the country.

Laird said that "inflation, deferred maintenance, salary contracts, it is a challenge, but this really is an excellent step forward in a tough budget."

This article was originally published by CalMatters.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Pedestrian safety

Editor:

Only a couple of months ago the City placed 12 pedestrian crossing signs at six different intersections on Ocean Avenue, warning drivers to be careful and to yield as per State law.

These were welcomed by the community, and, from my observation, helped to mitigate some of the dangers that people faced crossing the street to and from Palisades Park. Now, in a few short weeks, only six of them remain, the rest, having been mowed down by errant drivers, proving that their placement was a good idea in the first place...and that they should be replaced.

Is the City going to do that? Or was this a one-time feeble effort to help protect the many hundreds of people who use Palisades Park and who cross Ocean Avenue daily to get there?

A better choice would have been for the City to install flashing lights for pedestrians to operate at those intersections, but they took the cheap route, despite there being numerous accidents, including two fatalities years ago. But the signs were better than nothing, and if that's the best the City can do, they should replace them as often as needed.

Alan Toy, Santa Monica



WEDNESDAY JUNE 19

PEDALS FOR PROGRESS BIKE-A-THON

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park, Pico Blvd. The inaugural Pedals for Progress Bike-a-Thon, hosted by the Santa Monica Black Empowerment Association (SMBEA), will take place in celebration of Juneteenth. The Bike-a-Thon will feature two special rides: A 10 a.m. ride focused on promoting sustainability, clean air and home electrification; and a 12 p.m. ride dedicated to mental health and wellness. Participants are encouraged to ride for their chosen cause and sign up for free at: https://www.ezevent.com/Event/pedals-for-progress-tickets-3336. The event concludes with a resource fair at SMBEA's office, 520 Arizona Ave.

FREE WALK-IN LEGAL CLINIC

Virginia Avenue Park, 2200 Virginia Ave, 4:30 - 7 p.m. Santa Monica residents can meet one on one with a lawyer from Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles for help with HOUSING issues. Third Wednesday of the month 4:30PM-7:00PM at Virginia Avenue Park- Park Center. Immediate assistance is available by calling LAFLA directly at 800-399-4529 or visit lafla.org/gethelp.

PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall, 1685 Main Street, 6 p.m. Established in 1946, the Planning Commission envisions Santa Monica as a city of wellbeing, sustainability, and equity, and seeks to balance the many needs and priorities within our community in accordance with the City's General Plan and Specific Plans. The Commission acts through open and civil discourse that is informed by public input, impartial analysis, and best practices in land use and planning.

RAFAEL PONDE & THE BRAZILIAN REGGAE EXPERIENCE

The Venice West, 1717 Lincoln Blvd, Venice, 8 p.m. $15. This event is 21 and over. Any ticket holder unable to present valid identification indicating that they are at least 21 years of age will not be admitted to this event, and will not be eligible for a refund.

THURSDAY JUNE 20

AUTHOR TALK WITH TIFFANY JEWELL

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. Join organizers as #1 New York Times bestselling author Tiffany Jewell highlights the inequities Black and Brown students face from preschool through college as she presents lessons and knowledge from her new book Everything I Learned About Racism I Learned in School. From preschool to higher education and everything in between, Everything I Learned About Racism I Learned in School focuses on the experiences Black and Brown students face as a direct result of the racism built into schools across the United States. Vree Virtual event. Register at https://libraryc.org/smclibrary/49316/register.

TECH & TASKS

2 - 4 p.m. Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. Volunteer tutors provide help with reading documents or written tasks, using mobile devices, navigating government websites, filling out forms, using email, writing resumes, and more.

SUMMER SOLSTICE AT THE 19TH STREET COMMUNITY FARM

5 - 7 p.m. Join organizers as they celebrate the longest day of the year by creating rock art on the site of the soon to be constructed 19th Street Community Farm and Wellness Center. The rocks so beautifully designed will be included in the site once construction has commenced. Maybe a note of peace, a sign of love or paying heed to the communities that have preceded our presence. This event is Free and Open to the Public.

DRAG BINGO! WITH THE SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE - SOCIAL & FUNDRAISER

5:30 - 9 p.m. Solidarity, 1414 Lincoln Boulevard
Get ready for a fabulous night of Drag Bingo with the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence - it's gonna be a blast! All proceeds from the fundraiser benefit the Trans Equity Scholarship Fund which has helped dozens of trans and gender non-conforming people cover the high cost of completing their name and gender marker change with the State. $20 gets you a bingo card and the chance to play 10 games of bingo and win one of our fabulous gift card prizes. $50 gets you 3 cards and 3 chances to win. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/drag-bingo-with-the-sisters-of-perpetual-indulgence-social-fundraiser-tickets-910995200167.

BIG TALK SUNSET PICNIC

5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Highway. Pack a picnic and gather together to celebrate the longest day of the year, and engage in Kalina Silverman's global movement, Big Talk.

SANTA MONICA SUMMER SOLSTICE POTLUCK

6 - 8 p.m. The Ambrose Hotel Santa Monica, 1255 20th Street. Join organizers for a magical evening with an intimate communal dinner celebrating the start of summer to benefit Heal the Bay! Start the summer off with a magical evening of food and wine at The Ambrose Hotel, benefiting the Santa Monica Community. Discover Santa Monica's culinary bounty with delicious dishes from neighborhood staples, and of course, California wines to pair. $20. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/santa-monica-summer-solstice-potluck-tickets-917468271297.

RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION

City Hall, 1685 Main Street, 6 p.m. The Commission shall act in an advisory capacity to the City Council and Director of Community Services in all matters pertaining to public recreation including playgrounds, music and entertainment. The Commission will consider the budget of the Community and Cultural Services Department and make recommendations to the City Manager and the City Council. The Commission will also assist in the planning and promotion of a recreation program for residents and solicit the cooperation of school authorities and other public and private agencies.

MONTANA AVENUE BRANCH BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

6 - 7 p.m. Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Ave. This community-led, monthly book discussion group currently meets in person. May's selection is "The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness" by Sy Montgomery.


ELITE SUMO COMPETITION
ALL★STAR SUMO
JUNE 22, 2024
LONG BEACH
BUY TICKETS
Over 3,000lbs of fighters
compete in non stop action
Scan to Buy Tickets