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Photos from July 4.

City terminates negotiations with California Roadhouse for new Pier restaurant



SMDP Photo

VACANT: The City of Santa Monica has ended negotiations with a potential new business that would have taken the former Rusty's location on the Santa Monica Pier.

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The city of Santa Monica has called off lease negotiations with California Roadhouse, Inc. for the vacant restaurant space at 256 Santa Monica Pier, City Manager Oliver Chi said, citing the company's attempts to negotiate over worker-protection terms approved by the City Council.

In a letter to Roadhouse ownership laying out the city's position, Chi said California

Roadhouse "rejected the Lease on the terms authorized by the City Council" and instead sought material changes, leaving the city "no option but to move forward with canceling the current procurement process." The city plans to begin a new process to select a tenant for the 4,100-square-foot space, formerly home to Rusty's Surf Ranch.

Sean Ahaus, California Roadhouse's owner and CEO, disputed that characterization and said he believes a deal can still be reached. "We have not rejected the lease," Ahaus wrote

in response to Chi. "We just requested the city negotiate and communicate in good faith, an addendum that, among other things, confirms the city will honor our federally protected employer rights in our lease." He said that if the city agrees to the company's proposed clarifications, "I believe we have likely already agreed on all terms."

The breakdown centers on two provisions in the city's proposed lease: a Labor Peace provision and an Employee Retention provision. Chi said both are required under

the city's Pier Leasing Guidelines and were part of the terms the City Council authorized in April. According to Chi, Ahaus stated at that meeting that he was willing to accept worker protections previously negotiated with city staff.

Ahaus, in his response, said his agreement extended only to providing "a fair opportunity for all eligible former Rusty's Workers to join our team," which he called "the only or

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smdp
 Santa Monica Daily Press

Santa Monica artist turns mermaids and octopuses into ocean advocacy



Courtesy of Andie Dinkin/Artists Support

OCEAN: Local artist Andie Dinkin launches ocean-themed prints and apparel benefiting Oceana through Labor Day.

MAAZ ALIN
 SMDP Staff Writer

A hometown artist is enlisting a dancing octopus and a sunlit mermaid in the fight to save the oceans.

Andie Dinkin, who grew up walking distance from the beach here, has teamed with the nonprofit Artists Support to release a collection of limited-edition prints and apparel benefiting Oceana, the largest international organization devoted solely to ocean conservation. The collection, called “Friends of the Ocean,” launched June 8 on World Oceans Day and will be available through Sept. 7, Labor Day, at oceana.org/friendsoftheocean.

The campaign, timed to Ocean Action Month, arrives as marine ecosystems face mounting pressure from climate change, overfishing, pollution and coastal destruction. Each year, fishing gear kills or injures millions of marine animals as bycatch, while plastic pollution, ocean acidification and rising sea temperatures threaten entire ecosystems.

For Dinkin, the cause is personal. The artist, who was born in Los Angeles in 1991 and graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2014, said her bond with the water took root in childhood.

“I grew up in Santa Monica, walking

distance from the ocean. From a young age, I developed a love affair with the water and the species that inhabit and surround it,” Dinkin said. “The ocean’s ecosystems and species are so resilient. We just have to give them a sliver of a chance, we have to fight for the ocean.”

That connection has been tested. Dinkin said she avoided the coastline after the January 2025 wildfires, unsure of what she would find, and grew concerned about persistently poor air quality. A recent visit changed her outlook.

“We saw dolphins, which reminded me that I need to stop avoiding the beach and start doing what I can to protect it,” she said.

For the collection, Dinkin created three limited-edition prints and designed two silkscreen T-shirts and a large canvas beach bag. The imagery is mythical and whimsical — one print shows an octopus dancing in high-heeled boots, another a mermaid enjoying a drink in the sun. Each print is signed, numbered and produced in an edition of 100, priced at \$350 and printed by Press Friends of Los Angeles.

The apparel, made by Grand Palace in Nashville, Tennessee, is more affordable. A short-sleeve T-shirt depicting a mermaid on the shore under moonlight sells for \$60, and a long-sleeve shirt with a black-and-white

SEE ARTIST PAGE 4

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GUEST COMMENTARY

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We don't respond to fireworks complaints

Every summer and again at New Year's, an organized group works the beach and the streets beside it, setting off explosive devices in a dense residential neighborhood. These are not simple misdemeanor-level fireworks. These appear to be M-80 and quarter-stick-class devices, sometimes misnamed as fireworks. Their unlawful possession is a felony under Health and Safety Code section 12305. If possession is near a home, it is a further felony under Penal Code section 18715, carrying up to six years.

The cost falls on residents, their pets, and wildlife. The blasts run deep into the night, and households go without sleep for nights on end. Radar studies have tracked hundreds of thousands of birds taking sudden flight during fireworks, abandoning roosts en masse at night when they would otherwise be at rest (Shamoun-Baranes et al., Behavioral Ecology 2011; Wayman et al., Scientific Reports 2023). On coastlines, that means protected shorebirds driven from nests. A 2025 study of a New Year's Eve display over a South African harbor found firework noise propagated underwater and disrupted threatened marine species, constituting unlawful harassment of protected wildlife (Probert et al., Scientific Reports 2025). The devices are also directly toxic: veterinary toxicology

describes serious poisoning in dogs from the barium, chlorates, and other compounds in fireworks and explosives (Gahagan and Wismer, Veterinary Clinics of North America 2012, 2018).

On July 4, the explosions ran for nine hours without pause until 5 AM, close enough that the whole house shook. My two dogs spent those hours shaking in terror; my son held one and I held the other, and none of us slept. Tonight we are bracing for the same. One of my dogs is nearly thirteen. There is no medication that covers a nine-hour barrage, and no way to explain to a terrified animal that the concussions overhead are someone's entertainment.

My neighbors and their dogs are tormented too, and they voice the same frustration with the Watch Commander's "we don't respond to fireworks" mandate.

A felony that recurs in the same place, on the same calendar, year after year, is not an unsolvable mystery. It is a staffing decision the city keeps declining to make. I am asking the Police Department, the City Manager, and the City Council to treat organized felony explosives as what they are, and to put officers in the known beach perimeter during the windows everyone can predict.

Sally Frautschy, Santa Monica



Surf report WATER TEMP: 66.9

TUESDAY | **SURF:** 3-4ft
FAIR | Waist to chest

NW windswell bumps up and new SPAC swell creeps in through the day. Wind looks ok for the AM. Surf gets peaky and fairly fun through the morning low tide. A blend of SW/SSW swells offers fun zone size and NW windswell bumps up a peg from Monday. Average breaks run waist-chest high and the combo/summer focal points west of Dume pull in some peaks into the shoulder high range. Shape is the most broken up it has been for the beachbreaks. Variable to light E/SE wind and semi/mostly clean conditions for the morning. Moderate W wind in the afternoon - don't count on it being clean.

WEDNESDAY | **SURF:** 3-4ft+
FAIR | Waist to shoulder

Fun pulse of SW/SSW swell peaks. Morning wind is ok and there's enough NW windswell for corners. A strong storm deep in the SW Pacific put up impressive numbers with peak seas in the 40-45' range. There was some partial shadowing by French Polynesia - that takes a little off the size/consistency, but we still get a nice pulse of swell. There is some NW windswell to help beachbreak shape west of Dume. Surf in the waist-chest high range is expected at decent exposures, best summer focal points head high+ at times. Wind looks light SE/S in the AM, shifting low-end moderate W in PM.



Tuesday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, cloudy through mid morning, then gradual clearing, with a high near 72.

Tuesday Night: Increasing clouds, with a low around 64. West southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east southeast after midnight.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 73. Light and variable wind becoming southwest 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 65.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)High/Low
2026/07/07	Tue	02:27 AM	3.47	H
2026/07/07	Tue	08:39 AM	1.31	L
2026/07/07	Tue	3:50 PM	4.92	H
2026/07/07	Tue	10:55 PM	1.70	L
2026/07/08	Wed	04:17 AM	2.98	H
2026/07/08	Wed	09:26 AM	1.79	L
2026/07/08	Wed	4:39 PM	5.36	H
2026/07/09	Thu	12:12 AM	0.92	L
2026/07/09	Thu	06:13 AM	2.89	H
2026/07/09	Thu	10:28 AM	2.18	L



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

<p>Draw Date: 7/4 17 38 46 50 69 Power#: 20 Jackpot: 416 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 7/5 11 16 17 19 36</p>
<p>Draw Date: 7/3 5 9 29 47 57 Mega#: 16 Jackpot: 576 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 7/5 EVENING: 3 2 3 Draw Date: 7/5 MIDDAY: 9 7 1</p>
<p>Draw Date: 7/4 11 18 21 23 38 Mega#: 10 Jackpot: 35 M</p>	<p>Draw Date: 7/5 1st: 05 - California Classic 2nd: 04 - Big Ben 3rd: 08 - Gorgeous George Race Time: 1:48.65</p>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Pico

Morgan-Wixson Theatre Stages 'Shrek The Musical' This Summer

The Morgan-Wixson Theatre will present "Shrek: The Musical" in Santa Monica this summer as part of its 80th anniversary season, opening June 27 and running through July 26.

The production arrives 25 years after the original "Shrek" movie premiered at the Mann Theatre in Westwood. The musical, with a book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire and music by Jeanine Tesori, follows the grumpy ogre Shrek, who sets out to confront Lord Farquaad and reclaim his swamp after banished fairy-tale creatures appear there. To do so, he agrees to rescue Princess Fiona, locked in a tower guarded by a dragon, and is joined on the journey by the talkative Donkey.

Director and scenic designer Michael Heimos said the show carries a message that "everyone deserves love and acceptance exactly as they are," pointing to the anthem "Freak Flag," which celebrates individuality. He said the production reminds audiences that "our differences are not flaws to overcome — they are often the very things that make us unique, worthy of connection, and deserving of love."

Spencer Johnson, who plays Shrek, said he related to the character on a visceral level. "He is stuck in the mud because both his parents and the world around him have convinced him that is where he belongs," Johnson said. He added that the real love story is "Shrek learning that being self-sufficient isn't the same thing as being happy."

Co-producer Ann Villella, whose daughter is in the cast, said the show teaches "what's inside matters far more than the exterior — and that we're all working through many layers, just like an onion."

The production features Roni Dvir as Princess Fiona, Tyler Marshall as Lord Farquaad and Daniel X Scipio as Donkey, among a large ensemble. Lori Merkle is music director, Lauren Blair is choreographer, and Ann Villella and Cori Goldberg are co-producers.

In recent years the Morgan-Wixson has staged "Sister Act" and "Footloose," both summer hits at the theater.

Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. at the Morgan-Wixson Theatre, 2627 Pico Blvd. Tickets are \$39 for adults and \$29 for seniors and students, plus fees. Group rates are available. Reserved seats are available at morgan-wixson.org, by phone at 310-828-7519 or by email at boxoffice@morgan-wixson.org. Free parking is available a block west of the theater.

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

PUBLISHED BY NEWLON ROUGE, LLC
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Santa Monica Daily Press

Santa Monica Daily Press

Classifieds

DBA Abandonment

NOTICE OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME File No. 2023036033. The following person(s) has (have) abandoned the use of the fictitious business name(s): ALADDIN US; ALADDIN COMMUNICATIONS; ALADDIN CS CENTER; ALADDIN COMMUNICATIONS; ALADDIN USED BOOKS; BOOKMONSTER; ALADDIN US; ALADDIN USED BOOKS; ALADDIN CS CENTER; BOOKMONSTER, located at 621 S Western Ave #300, Los Angeles, CA 90005, County of Los Angeles. The fictitious business name was originally filed in the office of the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on February 16, 2023. Registered Owner(s): BOOKMONSTER.COM, INC., 621 S Western Ave #300, Los Angeles, CA 90005, a Corporation, incorporated in CA. This abandonment was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 06/05/2026. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS PUBLISH DATES: 06/16/2026, 06/23/2026, 06/30/2026, 07/07/2026

Summons

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL) Case No. 25STCV27676. NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: Gerald L. Davis, Old Republic National Title Insurance Company, DOES 1-20, and All Persons Unknown, Claiming Any Legal or Equitable Right, Title, Estate, Lien or Interest in the Property Described in the Complaint Adverse to Plaintiff's Title, or Any Cloud upon Plaintiff's Title Thereto. YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: Gia Ventures LLC. NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. The name and address of the court is: Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 North Hill St., Los Angeles, CA 90012. The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney is: Steven J. Mirsky, Esq., Mirsky Corporate Advisors, APC, 901 Dove St., Ste. 120, Newport Beach, CA 92660, (949) 200-6837. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 07/07/2026, 07/14/2026, 07/21/2026, 07/28/2026

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026122841. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: CURTOM-DUNSMUIR, A JOINT VENTURE, 1128 N. LA BREA AVENUE, INGLEWOOD, CA 90302, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): CURTOM BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT CORP., 1128 N. LA BREA AVENUE, INGLEWOOD, CA 90302 (a Corporation); DUNSMUIR CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION, 1122 N. LA BREA AVENUE, INGLEWOOD, CA 90302 (a Corporation). This business is conducted by: a Joint Venture. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 06/2026. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ JACQUELINE THOMAS, GENERAL PARTNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 06/04/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 06/16/2026, 06/23/2026, 06/30/2026, 07/07/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026125012. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: LOS ANGELES CIVIL LITIGATION LAWYERS, 633 W 5TH ST 287H FLOOR- STE 2867B, LOS ANGELES, CA 90071, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): WEINER LAW: TRUST, PROBATE & LITIGATIONS LAWYERS, APC, 12626 HIGH BLUFF DR STE 440, SAN DIEGO, CA 92130. This business is conducted by: a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 08/2025. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ DANIEL WEINER, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 06/08/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 06/23/2026, 06/30/2026, 07/07/2026, 07/14/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026133838. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: CAYTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM, GROW WILD, 395 SANTA MONICA PLACE #374, SANTA MONICA, CA 90401, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): SHAREWELL, a Corporation, 395 SANTA MONICA

DBA

PLACE #374, SANTA MONICA, CA 90401. This business is conducted by: a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 10/2019. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000)). /s/ THOMAS SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 06/18/2026. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 06/30/2026, 07/07/2026, 07/14/2026, 07/21/2026

Petition to Admin Estate

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF IAN SIMON DEAN Case No. 26STPB02703. To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of Ian Simon Dean. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Peggy Gilder in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Elliott R. Speiser be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. A HEARING on the petition will be held on August 3, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. in Dept. 67 located at Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 N. Hill Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, or 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. Attorney for Petitioner: Elliott R. Speiser, Elliott Law, APC, (310) 201-5093, ers@espeiser.com. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 06/23/2026, 06/30/2026,

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Meters should be readable—or seniors should get a pass

As a frequent visitor to Santa Monica and Los Angeles, I have become increasingly frustrated with the readability of many parking meter screens. In my experience, there are three common problems.

First, many meter screens are dirty. Dust, grime, fingerprints, and weather exposure often make the display difficult to read.

Second, sunlight frequently reflects off the screens. Southern California's bright sunshine creates glare that can make the display nearly invisible.

Third, even when the screen is clean and there is no glare, the numbers and text are often lack sufficient contrast. Many older adults, whose eyesight naturally declines with age, have difficulty reading the displays.

A few years back, I contacted the City of Los Angeles to express my frustration about dirty parking meter screens. I suggested that parking enforcement officers could simply wipe the screens clean during their rounds. I was told that cleaning meters was not part of their job responsibilities.

Not willing to stop there, I proposed another solution to the meter department. Before the Pacific Palisades fire, I offered to organize a group of fellow Rotarians to clean the parking meters in the Palisades monthly. Once again, I was told no. Because we were not city employees, we were not permitted to clean the meters.

That response left me puzzled. The city would not clean the meters through

its enforcement personnel, and it would not allow community volunteers to help. Yet the problem remained. Not in the Palisades at the moment, but in Brentwood where I am now living and in Santa Monica where I occasionally shop.

This is not merely an inconvenience. For many seniors, unreadable parking meters create a real challenge. Older adults cannot always determine whether the meter has accepted payment, how much time remains, or what instructions are being displayed. Expired meter fines are in the neighborhood of \$75.

The cities of Santa Monica and Los Angeles should take this issue seriously. They should maintain clean screens, install displays that are readable in bright sunlight, and use larger, higher-contrast lettering that accommodates aging eyes.

If the cities are unwilling or unable to make their parking meters consistently readable, then they should consider an alternative: exempt senior citizens from meter payments. It is unfair to require payment through equipment that many older residents and visitors cannot reliably read.

At a minimum, a parking meter should not require perfect eyesight, ideal lighting conditions, and a spotless screen in order to function. If cities expect compliance, they have an obligation to make compliance reasonably possible.

The solution is simple: make the meters readable, or give seniors a pass.

Perry S. Akins, Brentwood

ARTIST

FROM PAGE 2

and celebrity partnerships, tied the effort to the group's broader mission. underwater scene sells for \$80. Both are 100% cotton in editions of 150. A \$100 canvas tote, an edition of 100, features a masked mermaid reading a book inside a shell.

Proceeds will support Oceana's advocacy work, including protecting whales and turtles threatened as bycatch in the Pacific Ocean and defending California's coastline from oil and plastic pollution.

Ashley Blacow-Draeger, a field campaign manager for Oceana, said Southern California waters hold extraordinary biodiversity but face serious risks.

"Ocean animals are vulnerable to many threats including getting inadvertently captured in fishing gear, ingestion of single-use plastic, and increased oil spill risk from the threat of a federal proposal to expand offshore drilling," she said. "While we've made great progress, there remains so much to do to turn the tide."

The collaboration is the second between Dinkin and Artists Support to benefit Oceana. Last year's campaign, "Untangled," offered nine paintings and a limited-edition print. The pair first joined forces in 2024, raising more than \$65,000 for emergency services responding to the California wildfires.

Jon Frank, Oceana's director for corporate

and celebrity partnerships, tied the effort to the group's broader mission.

"This collection launches during Ocean Action Month, our rallying cry for communities everywhere to come together and protect and restore healthy, abundant oceans," Frank said. "For 25 years, Oceana and our allies have championed impact through action, and Friends of the Ocean shows how each of us can help safeguard the seas."

Clara Zevi, founder and director of Artists Support, said the goal is both financial and cultural. Since 2020, her organization has worked with more than 70 artists to raise over \$1 million for causes ranging from emergency care in conflict zones to global nonprofits.

"We're trying to raise as much as possible to directly benefit Oceana's campaigns, but we're also trying to get the message out that if we want to live in a world with whales, turtles, seals, corals, and generally healthy oceans, we need to advocate," Zevi said. "Wearing a mermaid T-shirt, or gifting someone an octopus print is a fun, authentic way to show that you care about ocean and marine wildlife conservation."

Dinkin said the work has reshaped how she sees her art. "The more work I do for the environment, the more inclined I feel to do more," she said.

maaz@smdp.com

HOURS MONDAY - FRIDAY 9:00am - 5:00pm
LOCATION 2219A Main St Santa Monica, CA 90405

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

California spends a lot on education, yet teachers can't afford to live near their schools

When I was a teacher in Oakland, I made a decent salary but lived in an apartment with rats. It was what I could afford.

The gap between what we pay teachers and how they actually live is characteristic of the education system: California spends a lot on its schools, but those dollars don't buy what they should.

We are the national leader in average teacher pay (\$103,552) and rank 16th in per-student spending (\$20,898). Yet most California teachers worry about paying rent or a mortgage. And we still have some of the nation's largest class sizes.

The housing market helps explain why. Earning six figures is still not enough for 84% of California's teachers to live near their schools, according to a survey commissioned by the California Teachers Association. It's also hard for schools to afford as many teachers as they need, because districts are effectively paying a housing "tax" to employ their workforce.

A mid-tier California home costs about \$775,000, more than twice the typical mid-tier home elsewhere in the United States, the state Legislative Analyst's

Office reports. Meanwhile California's rents are highest in the nation, about 54% above the national average, the Bureau of Economic Analysis says.

That math plays out differently in other states.

Texas — California's big, red state counterpart — has rents below the national average, pays teacher salaries \$40,000 lower and spends \$8,000 less per student. It has six fewer students per teacher, performs about as well as California on national tests and its fourth-graders do better in math.

Massachusetts, a blue state education leader, has rents about 17% lower than California's, pays its teachers \$10,000 less, and spends \$7,000 more per student. It has 10 fewer students per teacher and significantly outperforms California on tests — no doubt a combined function of increased spending and an environment that helps funding go further.

Housing is not the only reason school dollars stretch differently across states, but it is a major reason California's high

SEE CALIFORNIA PAGE 8

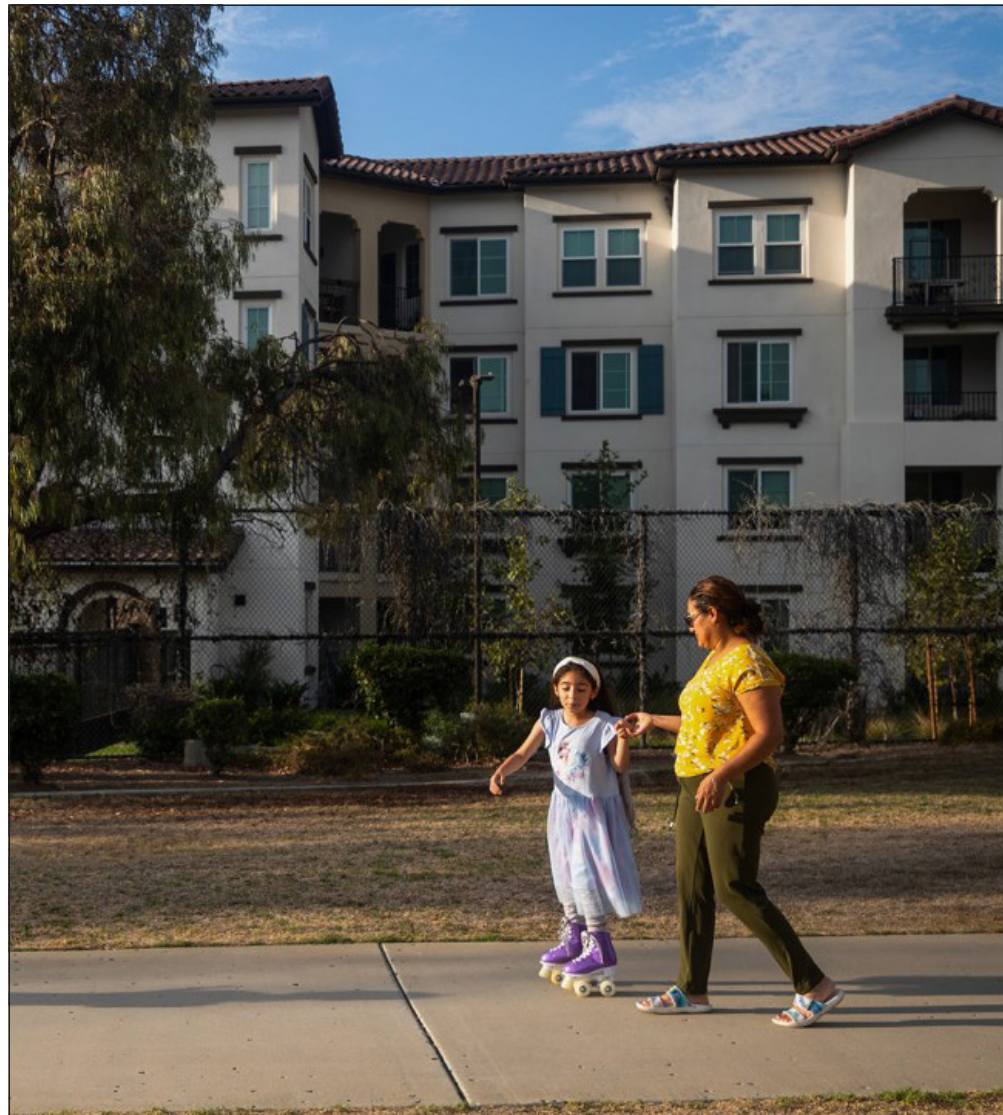


Photo by Zoë Meyers for CalMatters
SAN DIEGO: Preschool teacher Carolina Sanchez Garcia walks with her daughter, Berthalinda Hernandez, 6, and son Kanye Hernandez, 9, near their home in San Diego Unified School District housing on Aug. 7, 2024.

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Small businesses say they're having a good summer as Americans travel closer to home

Small business owners in U.S. tourist destinations say they're seeing more Americans sticking closer to home this summer, trading overseas travel for road trips, choosing daylong sojourns over extended beach stays, and cooking instead of eating out while on vacation to save money.

The reported boost to domestic tourism, though anecdotal, comes as higher airfares and gasoline prices have made vacations more expensive. The FIFA World Cup soccer tournament and celebrations of the nation's 250th birthday have given some U.S. residents additional incentives to create summer memories without going far.

Motor club federation AAA estimated that 72.2 million Americans would travel at least 50 miles from home between June 27 and this Sunday. That's 0.5% more than the number who got away during last year's July Fourth travel period, but the forecasted increase is almost all due to people taking cruises, buses and trains; AAA expects no change in the number driving or flying to their destinations.

A meaningful reduction in summer globetrotting might have an upside for businesses that depend on tourists, said Tarik Dogru, an associate professor at Florida State University's Dedman College of Hospitality. Fewer U.S. residents heading abroad or flying across the country means more of their vacation budgets are staying local too, Dogru said.

"The current economic and tourism

dynamics are likely to redirect spending toward small businesses, such as regional restaurants, local attractions, Airbnb hosts, and roadside businesses along drive routes that serve budget-conscious and close-to-home travel," he said.

If the trend holds through the summer and the rest of the year, it could reduce a travel and tourism trade deficit the United States has run since the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year since 2020, Americans spent more on foreign travel than international visitors spent on travel-related goods and services in the U.S., according to the National Travel and Tourism Office.

Morgan Kain, a teacher in Baltimore, said her family is among the ones keeping their travel bugs in check for financial reasons. Kain, her husband and three children usually take multiple trips each summer, including a weeklong stay at a Virginia lake house. Last year, they spent six weeks traveling around Italy.

"This summer, we're still doing a couple overnights and the lake house, but nothing else," Kain said. "Things are crazy expensive, from travel costs to food costs to gas."

VACATIONERS ARE TAKING TRIPS WITHIN DRIVING DISTANCE

Despite gasoline costing more than it did a year ago, 85% of Independence Day week travelers were expected to drive to their destinations, AAA said, noting that car trips

still are cheaper than flights for the most part.

Around Lake Tahoe, which straddles California and Nevada, several businesses reported spotting more visitors driving in from cities along the West Coast.

Ron Williams, who owns Tahoe Sports, said he worried at the beginning of the season that customers might not show up to rent boats and Jet Skis due to economic concerns. Like the gasoline that powers cars, the price of boat fuel went up during the Iran war.

But Williams so far is "pleasantly surprised with how well the business is doing across the board." His future bookings are 10% higher compared to the same time last year, he said.

"I think people are probably sticking close to home, and being in Lake Tahoe, we have such a huge drive-up market," Williams said.

Increased demand for the three Lake Tahoe area rental properties that Jerry Bindel manages for Pyramid Global Hospitality also came as a relief. Ski season bookings petered out along with the snow during an unusually warm winter, but "we just saw that flip" with the arrival of hiking and boating weather, he said.

Bindel, an area general director for the property management company, said he spotted a possible sign of Tahoe visitors watching their spending: more of them skipping restaurants and using the kitchens in their rental units or outdoor barbecue grills to prepare their own food.

"We're seeing a lot of additional use on

those items this summer," he said.

LOCALS STILL WANT TO HAVE MEMORABLE SUMMER EXPERIENCES

In Asheville, North Carolina, small business owners have hoped tourism would rebound since Hurricane Helene and flooding from days of torrential rain caused widespread destruction to the city's landscape, buildings and infrastructure in September 2024.

Aubrey Anderson, who owns a river tubing outfitter in Asheville, reduced her summer staff from 100 people to 25 after Helene. After reservations picked up earlier this year and she noticed "a lot new people coming into town," Anderson felt encouraged enough to hire 50 workers for Zen Tubing's current season.

The unfamiliar faces include day-trippers driving in from South Carolina, Tennessee and other parts of North Carolina to spend several hours floating down the French Broad River for around \$30 per person, Anderson said. After tubing, customers from around the region often grab a meal, stop at a brewery, shop or visit other local attractions before heading home, which is "a win for Asheville as a whole," she said.

"We're definitely seeing a lot of locals, so to speak," Anderson said. "People are maybe skipping the long drive to the beach this year, and they're kind of doing just something close

SEE ECONOMY PAGE 8

HEAL THE BAY BEACH GRADES



Santa Monica celebrates Independence Day!



SMDP Photos

PARADE: The annual July 4 Parade took over Main Street to celebrate the Nation's 250th birthday and the anniversary of Route 66. SMDP was in the parade and on the route taking photos of each parade entry. To see the complete photo gallery, visit www.smdp.com.

CALIFORNIA

FROM PAGE 5

spending buys less staffing than taxpayers might expect.

Some districts are addressing the problem by building their own housing.

Jefferson Union High, a small district in the Bay Area, built a 122-unit complex that now houses a quarter of district staff and is credited with reducing teacher turnover. Meanwhile, San Francisco Unified spent nearly seven years permitting and building 135 units for more than 1,200 district applicants.

Projects like these have an impact on teachers who get a unit, but they're unlikely to happen on a scale needed to help most teachers or to shift the cost landscape so districts can hire more teachers.

Of course, school funding and education policy matter, too. Evidence shows increased state spending in the past decade has boosted achievement and that community schools improve student outcomes. California is moving in the right direction to strengthen education governance, improve reading instruction and serve English learners well.

Still, school budgets would go further in making this happen if there were enough cheap housing around for staff, students and families. The next governor will need organized pressure and a broad coalition to make a difference in housing policy.

The education community should be active supporters. School boards, unions, PTAs, advocacy groups and prominent voices should back housing production the way they back any education priority: through bill endorsements, public statements and coalition advocacy.

There also needs to be political support on the ground. When local opposition attacks new apartments, faster construction approvals or denser development near transit, education leaders should back the projects up with some version of, "These reforms are part of what it takes to staff schools, stabilize families and sustain public education."

California cannot fund its way to great schools without building the communities those schools require. That makes housing an education issue.

Sam Finn is the executive director of the California Newcomer Network and taught elementary school in Berkeley, Oakland and Washington, D.C.

ECONOMY

FROM PAGE 6

by so that they can save a little money and still enjoy a family outing."

Factory tours offered by French Broad Chocolate have surged this summer, according to Jael Skeffington, the Asheville chocolate maker's CEO and co-founder. Tour-takers often stop in the on-site cafe for ice cream or coffee and buy a box of chocolate bars or bonbons before they leave, she said.

"So it's good for business, but it also seems to be what people are looking for is something to do, not just something to eat — something to experience," Skeffington said.

CITIES ARE GETTING A WORLD CUP BOOST

Soccer enthusiasts have poured into Kansas City, Missouri, just like other North American cities hosting World Cup matches.

Made in KC, a chain of four cafes and 11 shops that sells locally made sauces, Kansas City-themed gifts and T-shirts for fans of the city's professional sports teams, has gotten "really noticeable spikes of traffic" at all its locations during the tournament, co-owner Keith Bradley said. World Cup-related merchandise, including \$40 hats featuring the

team colors of this year's competitors, have been a big hit, he said.

American tourists from other Midwestern cities — Des Moines and Omaha both are within a three-hour drive from Kansas City — seem to outnumber U.S. visitors from farther away, Bradley noted.

"We have a couple locations that are in tourist parts of Kansas City. ... But then we also have little shops that are just in suburban neighborhoods in Kansas City, and those have also seen World Cup traffic of people going to watch parties, people coming in town to go to the games, and then tourists just exploring Kansas City on their own."

Mollie Lothman, co-owner of McLain's Bakery, a family-owned cafe with five locations, said she thinks the cost of food and lodging in Kansas City compared to bigger or better known host cities has helped.

"We're one of the smaller markets who got the World Cup in Kansas City, but we're also probably one of least expensive markets, in terms of family budgeting, to try to come and experience the World Cup," Lothman said. "So I think that's been a huge draw for people."

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

COMMUNITY NEWS

Los Angeles

LA28 Day of Sport Goes National, Draws Record 13,000 Young Athletes

More than 13,000 young athletes took part in LA28's Day of Sport on June 23, the highest participation since the event began in 2023 and the first time it expanded beyond California.

Held in recognition of National Olympic and Paralympic Day, the celebration reached 180 sites, including 120 PlayLA locations in Los Angeles and venue cities such as Carson, Inglewood, Long Beach, Pasadena, Pomona, Arcadia and Anaheim. For the first time, activities also took place in Oklahoma City and in cities hosting LA28 Olympic soccer matches, including Nashville, Tennessee; Columbus, Ohio; and San Jose.

"LA28's Day of Sport going national reflects the growing excitement across the country as we prepare for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to return to the U.S. in just two years," said Janet Evans, LA28 chief athlete officer.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said expanding access to sports is a priority as the city prepares to host the 2028 Games. "LA28's Day of Sport and programs like PlayLA have played an important role in empowering the next generation of athletes," she said.

LA28 worked with more than 30 community organizations on the activities. At the Salvation Army's LA Red Shield Community Center in Pico-Union, Evans joined more than 200 young athletes alongside Olympians Nadia Comaneci, Bart Conner, Reginald Jagers, Nick Itkin and Mariah Bell and Paralympians Jamal Hill and Ileana Rodriguez.

The day began with a Parade of Nations and opening ceremony before participants rotated through basketball, flag football, soccer, track and field, para swimming and water polo. A closing ceremony awarded select athletes commemorative medals, and each participant received gifts including a ball, an LA28-branded Nike T-shirt and a swim cap from DICK'S Sporting Goods.

The initiative supports LA28's pledge to expand youth sports access, anchored by PlayLA, a city program backed by a \$160 million investment from LA28 and the International Olympic Committee and delivered through the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department.

June 23 also marks International Olympic Day. This year the IOC is running its Let's Move campaign under the theme "You Can Do This," encouraging young people worldwide to try sport.

Day of Sport celebrations continue through the week.

“LA28’s Day of Sport going national reflects the growing excitement across the country as we prepare for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to return to the U.S. in just two years

- Janet Evans, LA28 chief athlete officer

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy Image

ATHLETES: LA28 Day of Sport draws record 13,000+ young athletes across 180 sites nationwide.

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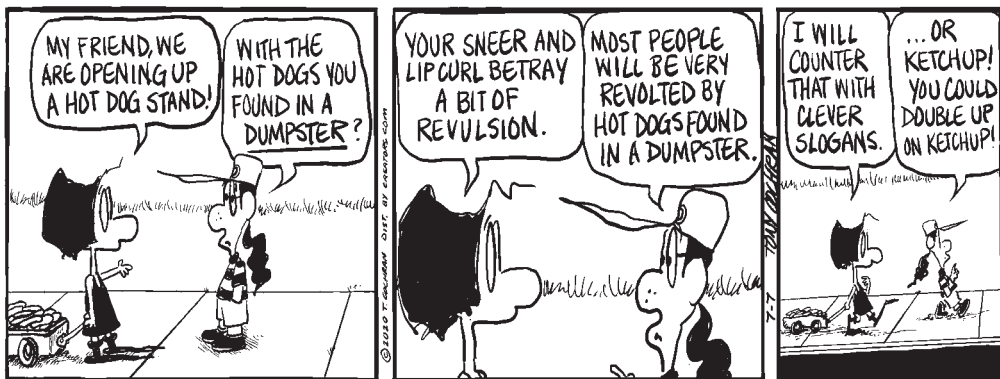
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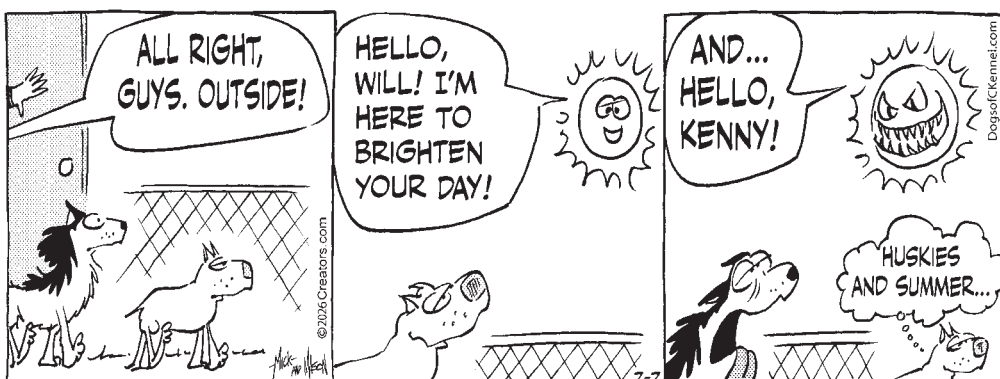
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



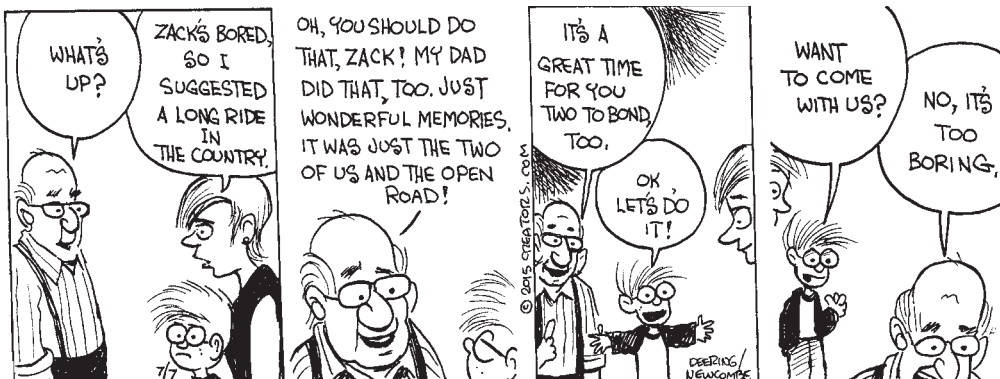
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



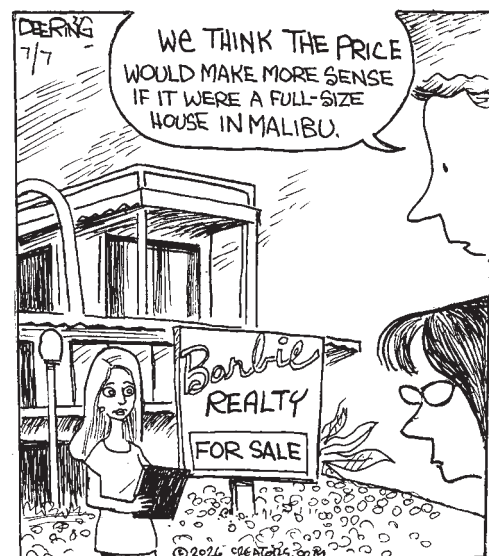
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

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

© australianwordgames.com.au 6994

Cafe rendezvous



- | | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Bill | Eggs | Overspend | Salt |
| Bisque | Facial | Pate | Snack |
| Cafe | Family | Pawpaw | Steaks |
| Cake | Gift | Peas | Strawberries |
| Chat | Goose | Play | Suit |
| Cheese | Heat | Port | Syrup |
| Chips | Host | Quiet | Timbale |
| Corn | Latte | Rage | Waiter |
| Crab | Mints | Rice | Winner |
| Dawn | Mousse | Rissoles | Yoghurt |
| Dear | Muesli | Roast | |
| Dine | Music | Signature | |
| Duck | Newspaper | dish | |

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 7)

It's your Year of the Lotus. The lotus rises from muddy water to bloom magnificent. What begins in unlikely conditions will develop into something remarkable. More highlights: Loved ones show up for you in unforgettable ways. A door opens in a prestigious way that suits you. A smart investment from long ago pays in a timely and abundant way. Capricorn and Scorpio adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 19, 26, 30, 2 and 7.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Peace is not always created through agreement. Sometimes it comes from addressing the issue everyone else avoids. Your gift is courage. Love grows when people know where they stand with you and trust that you'll speak honestly.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You create peace through steadiness. Others relax when they know what to expect and can rely on your word. Love is built from repeated actions, small comforts and promises kept long after the excitement fades.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Many conflicts begin as misunderstandings. Your gift is curiosity. Before deciding what someone meant, ask another question. Love grows when people feel heard, understood and free to explain themselves without being rushed.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You create peace by helping people feel safe enough to be themselves. A warm welcome, thoughtful gesture or shared meal can accomplish more than debate. Love flourishes wherever belonging is offered without conditions attached.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Recognition is one of the most overlooked forms of generosity. You create peace by noticing what others contribute and saying so aloud. Love grows when people feel appreciated, valued and celebrated for who they are.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You create peace by paying attention. While others discuss problems, you're already spotting practical solutions. Love is expressed through usefulness, follow-through and care for details that make another person's life easier and smoother.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Peace comes naturally when people feel included in the conversation. Your gift is helping others find common ground without forcing agreement. Love grows through fairness, consideration and a willingness to see more than one perspective.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Resentment thrives in silence. Peace begins when truth is spoken with care and received with courage. Your gift is emotional honesty. Love deepens when people trust that difficult subjects can be discussed without fear.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You create peace through perspective. Not every disagreement requires a winner, and not every difference requires correction. Love grows when people are allowed room to learn, change and arrive at wisdom in their own way.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Stability is a gift. You create peace by doing what you said you would do and following through when others depend on you. Love grows in the presence of reliability, commitment and steady effort over time.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You create peace by making room for differences. Harmony does not require sameness. Your gift is seeing value in many kinds of people and helping others feel welcome exactly as they are.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Compassion changes the atmosphere around you. You create peace by imagining what another person might be carrying beneath the surface. Love grows whenever empathy softens judgment and kindness becomes the first response.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Newsday Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Fishing vessels
- 6 Computer storage measure
- 10 Reach across, as a bridge
- 14 See eye to eye
- 15 Lane of Superman stories
- 16 In good health
- 17 Trick or ___ (Halloween phrase)
- 18 Parent's sister
- 19 Acme
- 20 Large, nutritious morning meal
- 23 More or ___ (approximately)
- 24 Explosive letters
- 25 Pay attention
- 29 Insect in a hive
- 30 Closely monitored hosp. ward
- 33 Strong smell
- 34 Ocean's rise and fall
- 37 TV awards
- 39 No-meat afternoon meal
- 42 Raring to go
- 43 Hang ___ (keep)
- 44 Garden pest that burrows
- 45 Crafty
- 46 Big coffee dispenser
- 48 Perfume sample bottle
- 50 ___-mo replay
- 51 Adolescent
- 53 Reduced-price evening meal

DOWN

- 61 Great joy
- 62 Internet diary
- 63 Crystal-lined rock
- 64 Bit of heredity
- 65 Roof overhang
- 66 Hairs on horses' necks
- 67 Edinburgh native
- 68 Changed the color of
- 69 Do not exist
- 1 Session in a tub
- 2 Fairy tale beast
- 3 Square footage
- 4 Rip (up)
- 5 Reach an agreement
- 6 Exposes a secret
- 7 With 40-Down,

letter-ending phrase

- 8 Fork prong
- 9 Many-acre residence
- 10 Elevator passageway
- 11 Biggest of the Three Bears
- 12 Beerlike beverages
- 13 First in line
- 21 Busybody
- 22 Prepare to propose
- 25 Cares for deeply
- 26 Best possible
- 27 Overly wet
- 28 Oak or elm
- 29 Defeated
- 30 "___ making this up!"
- 31 Ride a bike
- 32 Theater aisle worker
- 35 Metal in barbells

MEAL PLAN by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- 36 Annoying noise
- 38 "___ the word!" ("Don't tell anyone")
- 40 See 7-Down
- 41 Made mention of
- 47 Stole from
- 49 Baffling puzzle
- 50 Frozen rain
- 51 Stash of treasure
- 52 Double-___ sword
- 53 Henhouse output
- 54 Actor Baldwin
- 55 Nevada casino city
- 56 "Now ___ me down to sleep..."
- 57 In the vicinity
- 58 Nary a soul
- 59 Genesis paradise
- 60 Take a break

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

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

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

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20						21					22			
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61					62					63				
64					65					66				
67					68					69				

CREATORS SYNDICATE ©2026 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 07/07/26

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

ROADHOUSE

FROM PAGE 1

primary worker protection that we negotiated together and definitively agreed to.” He said his concerns about the other sections have been “well documented since 2025.”

According to Chi’s account, the city sent California Roadhouse a final version of the lease on June 1. After Ahaus asked the city on June 11 to confirm Chi’s authority to sign it, Chi responded on June 12 that he was prepared to execute the lease in its June 1 form but was not authorized to sign any version that materially deviated from it. Rather than accept those terms, Chi said, Ahaus sought the deletion of the Labor Peace provision and changes to the Employee Retention provision that would have reduced the protections directed by the council, while also raising the prospect of litigation against the city.

Ahaus said that on June 12, California Roadhouse submitted a proposed addendum titled “California Roadhouse Lease Clarifications and Definitions,” seeking clarity on lease definitions and on employer rights the company believed it might be forfeiting by signing the lease as presented.

Chi said he spoke with Ahaus by phone on June 15 to ask directly whether he would accept the June 1 lease terms. According to Chi, Ahaus said his position had already been laid out in prior email correspondence and that he was not prepared to sign without changes to the worker-protection language. Ahaus offered a different account of the call, saying he told Chi he was waiting for a written, detailed response to the proposed addendum so the company could understand “exactly what employer rights we might be jeopardizing” before signing.

Chi said he subsequently sought direction from the City Council, based on his understanding that Ahaus no longer accepted the lease terms approved on April 28, and that the council reaffirmed its position, declining to alter the worker-protection provisions. Ahaus called that characterization “a falsity,” saying he never agreed to terms. He said the company has “every intention of moving forward with leasing 256 Santa Monica Pier, under lawful terms” and noted California Roadhouse has already invested money and resources into improving the space.

Chi said he called Ahaus again on June 24 to relay the council’s reaffirmed position and ask once more whether he would accept the lease as transmitted June 1. Ahaus declined to say yes or no, according to Chi, saying he first needed written answers to the questions the company had been raising for weeks. Ahaus reiterated he neither agreed to nor rejected the lease during that call and was still waiting for an official response to the company’s addendum. He said Chi told him the request for clarifications “was just a bunch of noise,” a characterization Ahaus called shocking coming from a city official. Ahaus said some former Rusty’s workers have been unemployed for more than a year and a half, and he asked why the city would not spend “a few hours clarifying terms, definitions, and which employer rights we will be able to retain” rather than continue the impasse.

The dispute caps a lease process that has stretched more than a year. Ahaus submitted a winning proposal in 2025 through a competitive process, and the Santa Monica Pier Corporation Board approved it twice, once in an initial vote that was later challenged and again in December following a re-notice. City staff had recommended a five-year lease with a five-year extension option, monthly rent of \$26,728 based on \$6.25 per square foot,

and incentives of approximately \$725,000 in tenant improvements, building repairs, and waived rent.

The item was pulled from a scheduled March council vote without public explanation after labor union UNITE HERE Local 11 secured an emergency meeting with senior city staff to oppose the lease. City Council members later pushed for a labor peace agreement and right-to-recall provisions after their attempts to force the ideas upon the Roadhouse via a city ordinance failed.

Ahaus has said the prolonged process has drained his financing, cost him staff and business opportunities, and left roughly 150 potential jobs unfilled. He has also sent the city a formal legal notice, dated June 14, accusing officials of labor collusion, coercion, violations of federal labor preemption doctrine and potential civil rights violations under color of state law, and demanding the city preserve related records and communications. The notice stems from a Dec. 19, 2025, meeting at California Roadhouse’s offices where a UNITE HERE Local 11 organizer allegedly said, in front of a city Economic Development Department staffer, that the city had agreed with the union to withhold a lease unless California Roadhouse hired the entire former Rusty’s workforce.

Ahaus has said the evidence of collusion with the union has increased in recent weeks. According to Ahaus, Pier Corporation officials informed him that the Santa Monica City Council had advised the board that the next restaurant tenant on the Santa Monica Pier “will have to be represented by the union.” According to Ahaus, the statement was not surprising because it corroborates representations previously made by UNITE HERE Local 11 and further corroborates his accusation that the city has been working with the union to thwart his application.

Ahaus said that in his opinion the entire negotiation process was an attempt to appease the union rather than protect workers.

“These jobs are being held hostage by the city while pretending they are trying to protect these jobs,” he said. “All these people could go back to work tomorrow if the city would just agree to everyone’s federally protected rights.”

He said his last communication with Oliver went unanswered and if the city believes it can abridge his legally protected rights, they should be specific about that at the negotiation table.

“It’s not about jobs, if it was about jobs we could rehire everyone immediately,” he said. “This is about union infiltration of private business.”

In a separate email, Ahaus raised the possibility that if the city cancels what he described as the company’s “vested rights” in the property and reassigns them to a tenant benefiting UNITE HERE Local 11, the council could be in violation of additional laws. He said he believes the parties “can still come to terms” and suggested mediation if an agreement cannot be reached directly.

The City reiterated the process is closed from their perspective.

“In light of these circumstances, the City has concluded that the parties will be unable to reach agreement, and accordingly, the City will pursue a new use for the space,” said City Hall in a statement. “The City values the time the California Roadhouse operator invested in this process, and we wish the operator well in his future endeavors. This location drew more than a hundred inquiries and nine competing proposals, and the City is confident it will attract an excellent operator.”

editor@smdp.com



TUESDAY | JULY 7

MEMORIES & MOVEMENT SENIOR CLUB

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park 2200 Virginia Ave. Santa Monica. Come, learn, and have fun every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM in The Patio room at Virginia Avenue Park. Each week there will be something new: Exercise, Talking with Friends, Learning, Guest Presenters, Health & Wellness! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/memories-movement-senior-club/14853634/2026-07-07T10>

WALK-IN TUTORING WITH LAURIE

2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard Los Angeles. Walk-In Tutoring With Laurie Walk-in tutoring is available for any adult who needs help with internet searches, filling out forms, English conversation, reading, writing, resumes, and applications. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/walk-in-tutoring-with-laurie/17128550/2026-07-07T14>

ELEMENTARY ART STUDIO 3:30-4:20PM

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Palisades Community Renewal Center 3212 Nebraska Ave Santa Monica. Open to all skill levels, sparking creativity through drawing, color work, collage, and mixed-media techniques. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/elementary-art-studio-3-30-4-20pm/18825639/2026-07-07T15>

WEEKLY WALKING CLUB

4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Near Palisades Recreation Center Toyopa Drive and Alma Real Drive Pacific Palisades. A weekly walking club will meet on Tuesdays for approximately one hour to walk 1.5 to 2 miles. The group will meet at the corner of Toyopa and Alma Real. All levels are welcome. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/weekly-walking-club/19106860/2026-07-07T16>

FIRE DISASTER SUPPORT GROUP

6:00 p.m. - 2:30 a.m. Palisades Community Renewal Center 3212 Nebraska Ave Santa Monica. Please visit www.pccrsm.org/counseling. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/fire-disaster-support-group/19066072/2026-07-07T18>

PUBLIC SAFETY REFORM AND OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jul 7 Santa Monica. The Public Safety Reform and Oversight Commission meetings are held in City Council Chambers at 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/public-safety-reform-and-oversight-commission-meeting/16518331/2026-07-07T18>

IMPROV 101: INTRO TO IMPROV (TUESDAY NIGHTS)

7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. 1424 4th Street Santa Monica. Jump into Improv! Learn the basics, spark creativity, & your boost confidence with fun exercises and expert guidance. 6 weeks + a Showcase! \$345.00. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/improv-101-intro-to-improv-tuesday-nights->

/18996059/2026-07-07T19

WEDNESDAY | JULY 8

CASTANEA SICILIAN CAFE - PETS N' COFFEE

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Castanea Cafe 1307 Ocean Front Walk Venice. Join us every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 9 AM – 12 PM at our Castanea Cafe Venice Beach store for a pet-friendly morning! Bring your furry friend and enjoy a complimentary coffee on us. A cozy community moment you won't want to miss. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/castanea-sicilian-cafe-pets-n-coffee/18526604/2026-07-08T09>

TODDLER STORYTIME AND SONGS

10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard Los Angeles. Toddler Storytime and Songs Join us for storytime on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. We share stories, songs, and movement activities to build early literacy skills for toddlers aged 18 months to 3 years. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/toddler-storytime-and-songs/18526513/2026-07-08T10>

MOBILE COMMUNITY MEDITATION CENTER - GUIDED MEDITATION

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Santa Monica Beach lot 5 South 2600 Bernard Way Santa Monica. Please join Mobile Community Meditation Center aka Buddhist Boondockers Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 10 am for a 45 minute fully guided mindfulness meditation - on the grass, under the shade of the trees, with a stunning view of the sparkling ocean. Whether you're new to meditation or a seasoned practitioner, everyone is welcomed. Bring your own chair or cushion and try to arrive 5 minutes early and be ready to enjoy a truly peaceful moment as we relax, be present and make new friends; giving ourselves the love and attention we deserve by quieting our minds, finding peace and creating community. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/mobile-community-meditation-center-guided-meditation/16994548/2026-07-08T10>

LAUGH FOR THE HEALTH OF IT

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Wise and Healthy Aging 1527 4th Street Santa Monica. Kim Selbert, Certified Laughter Yoga Leader and Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist will facilitate this class. We all need more laughter in our lives, right? Through clapping, guided breathing and gentle movement with music, we will learn how to reduce stress, become more energetic and playful and connect positively with other seniors. It's easy, fun and very uplifting. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/laugh-for-the-health-of-it/19300395/2026-07-08T11>

ADULT ART STUDIO 4:30-5:30PM

11:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. Palisades Community Renewal Center 3212 Nebraska Ave Santa Monica. Unleash your creativity and connect with your community! In case this event has been updated, please visit <https://www.pccrsm.org/event/adult-art-studio-4-30-5-30pm-25264> for full details before arriving. Thank you! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/adult-art-studio-4-30-5-30pm/18461158/2026-07-08T11>



*Grazie mille
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