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Rent Control Board asking for expanded tenant rights to fight citations

MADELEINE PAUKER
Daily Press Staff Writer

The Rent Control Board is considering allowing tenants to challenge citations from code enforcement officers after a longtime renter was evicted for installing a trellis on her patio.

It's a unique case, the board's general counsel J. Stephen Lewis said, but vice chair Nicole Phillis wants to prevent it from happening again. In May, she asked the board to consider recommending that City Council prevent code violations from being used as a basis to evict rent-controlled tenants and grant tenants the ability to seek variances from the code. The board will vote Thursday whether to make such a recommendation.

"I recommend writing a strongly worded letter to City Council ... calling on them to stand firmly with us and honor the city's tradition of renter's rights," Phillis said in May.

The renter's landlord received a citation after a code enforcement officer noticed the trellis that the renter had installed years before to shield her patio from the street. The officer found that the trellis violated Santa Monica's zoning ordinance because it exceeded three and a half feet in height.

The landlord ordered the tenant to remove the trellis. When she refused, he took it down himself. She put it back up because she thought the citation had no grounds and believes the

SEE **RENT** PAGE 6

Coastal Commission to hear Michelin starred Chef's application for a hot dog restaurant

MADELEINE PAUKER
Daily Press Staff Writer

A hot dog restaurant from a local fine dining chef that's been in the works since 2017 is about to take a step toward opening.

The Coastal Commission will consider renovations to the building at 2428 Main St. where chef Josiah Citrin is planning to open a location of his hot dog chain, Dave's Doghouse. The commission will debate an interior remodel and a covered patio behind the building, which previously housed the Santa Monica Electric Company.

Citrin, a two-star Michelin chef, is known for the French-New

SEE **MICHELIN** PAGE 6

C.S. Lewis play chronicles author's conversion to Christianity



Photo courtesy of Peter Goldman

PLAY: The new play at The Broad Stage chronicles the life of C.S. Lewis as he found faith.

ANGEL CARRERAS
Daily Press Staff Writer

Many C.S. Lewis fans are familiar with the author's popular 'The Chronicles of Narnia' saga, a sprawling fantasy epic that chronicles (sorry) a journey of four kids and their adventures in the fantasy world of Narnia during World War II.

What most Lewis fans may not be familiar with is the author's personal saga— one with Christianity.

'C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert' will debut in Santa Monica this week, July 11 at the Broad Stage. The play runs until July 22. The play has toured in New York, San Francisco and has plans to eventually appear in Southeast Asia. This will be the play's first time in the LA area.

Max McLean, an actor and founder/artistic director of Fellowship for Performing Arts — a New York City-based nonprofit production company that creates Christian-tinged entertainment — will portray the author in a play that's adapted from Lewis' own personal writings.

SEE **LEWIS** PAGE 6


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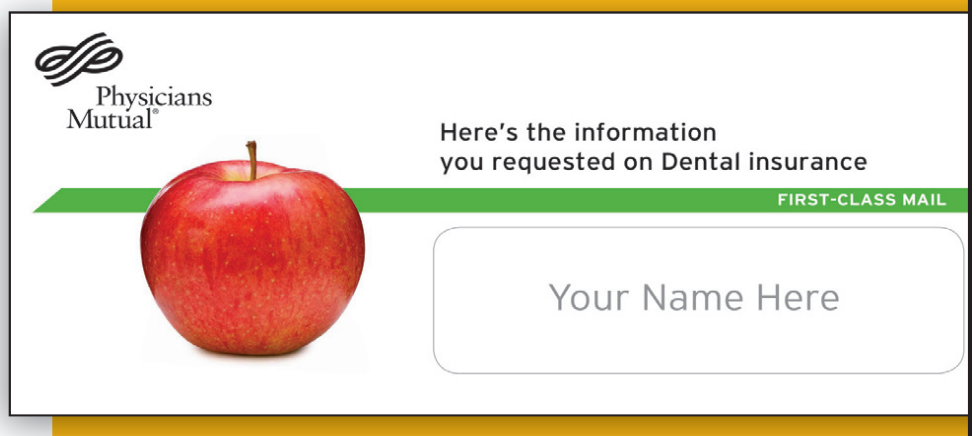


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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Wednesday, July 10

Soundwaves Concert: Desert Magic
Camera Obscura Artist in Residence Alex Wand performs with his experimental pop band. http://desertmagic.org/ Main Library, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

The Commission on the Status of Women Meeting
The Commission on the Status of Women regular meeting scheduled for 7/10/2019, 7 p.m. at Ken Edwards Center has been canceled. Instead, a special meeting will be held on the same date, 7/10/2019 at 6 pm, at the Pico Branch Library, the Annex, at 2201 Pico Blvd.

Montana Mystery Book Group: Blind Goddess
A small-time drug dealer is found battered to death on the outskirts of Oslo. A young Dutchman, walking aimlessly in Oslo, covered in blood, is taken into custody but refuses to talk. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Doodlebugs
Meet animal and insect friends, including reptiles and bugs. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Drive-In Movie Box Car Matinee
Transform a box into a drive-in movie car and enjoy the show! Bring your snacks or enjoy popcorn from the concession stand. Limited space; register at the library. Ages 4-10. Pico Branch Library

Thursday, July 11

Santa Monica Rent Control Regular Board Meeting
The Rent Control Board meets to conduct business associated with the Rent Control Charter Amendment and Regulations. City Hall, 7 p.m.

Mat Pilates Class For Beginners With Raghavan
Develop core strength and coordination, this class draws traditional Pilates exercises with breath and correct alignment. Including resistance to body weight training and core isolation. Helping the body to increase movement to joints and tone the abdominal muscles. Pico Branch Library, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Appy Hour Device Workshop for Seniors
Bring your smartphone or tablet and receive small group help to get you started with using your device. Fairview Branch Library, 4 - 5 p.m.

Friday, July 12

Sunset Swim
Ages 18+ - Enjoy a fun evening at the pool, exclusively for adults. $10 adults, $5 senior (60+). No reservations required. Annenberg Community Beach House, 7 - 10 p.m.

Craft, Swap, or Create
Do you have leftover yarn, extra buttons, or scraps of ribbon you haven't used in months? Join us at the library to share your crafting supplies or find new crafting treasures, and while you are at it, make some time to create, invent and learn a new craft or skill. Sewing machine, crochet tools, and other items available for your use. Pico Branch Library, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Annie Banannie's Wacky Alien Talent Show
Watch as creatures from planets across the galaxy show off their strange talents with balloons, magic, music, and comedy. For ages 4-11. (45 min.) Fairview Branch Library, 2:30 - 3:15 p.m.

SM Reads: Blackout Poetry
Unleash your inner poet by bringing new life to old book pages. Create a poem by selecting certain words on a page and covering the rest with a permanent marker. When only these words are visible, a brand-new story is created. For adults and teens. Main Library, 2 - 3 p.m.

Painting Workshop for adults and youth
In conjunction with the 'And then there is California.' exhibit, exhibition artists lead a drop-in painting workshop. No experience required, but participants should wear clothes they don't mind getting stained. Limited seating is available, first come, first served. Annenberg Community Beach House 2 - 5 p.m. Register online at https://www.annenbergbeachhouse.com/beachculture

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide

Notifications Underway After Contractor Data Breach Exposes DHS Patient Data

A Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS) contractor, the Nemadji Research Corporation, is notifying patients about a "phishing attack" that exposed the personal information of 14,591 patients. Nemadji's work for DHS consists of identifying and verifying patient eligibility for programs that will reimburse for care provided by DHS.

There is no evidence that DHS patient information specifically was the target of the phishing email, sent to a Nemadji employee, and no indication that any patient data has been misused. The hacker had access to the employee's email account for several hours on March 28, 2019, and records from several of Nemadji's clients, including DHS, were exposed during that time.

The personal information for DHS patients present in the email account at the time of the incident varied by individual, but may have included first and last names and one or more of the following data elements: address, date of birth, phone number, patient account number, medical record number, admission and discharge dates, Medi-Cal identification number, month and year of service. The Social Security Number of two patients and diagnostic codes of four patients were also identified.

Nemadji began notifying individuals potentially affected by the breach via first class mail on July 8, 2019. The notifications include detailed information on the recommended steps individuals may take to protect their information. Although Nemadji is unaware of any actual or attempted misuse of information as a result of this incident, Nemadji is offering potentially impacted individuals access to free credit monitoring and identity protection services.

Upon discovering this incident, Nemadji took steps to confirm the security of its systems, including employee email accounts. Nemadji reviewed existing security policies and implemented additional measures to further protect information, including enhanced email security and employee training. Nemadji also reported this incident to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and notified necessary state and federal regulators.

Nemadji has established a dedicated assistance line for individuals seeking additional information regarding this incident. Individuals may call 1-800-491-4740 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. PT, Monday through Friday with questions or if they would like additional information. Additional information can also be found on Nemadji's website, nemadji.org. Potentially affected individuals may also consider the information and resources outlined below.

Nemadji encourages potentially impacted individuals to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft and fraud and to review account statements, credit reports, and explanation of benefits forms for suspicious activity. Under U.S. law, individuals with credit reports are entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus. To order your free credit report, visit annualcreditreport.com or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. Individuals may also contact the three major credit bureaus directly to request a free copy of their credit report. The credit reporting agencies may be contacted as follows:

Experian, PO Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013, 1-888-397-3742, www.experian.com.

TransUnion, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016, 1-888-909-8872, www.transunion.com.

Equifax, PO Box 105788, Atlanta, GA 30348-5788, 1-800-685-1111, www.equifax.com.

SUBMITTED BY LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Citywide

Blood emergency: Red Cross issues urgent call for blood and platelet donors

Following a difficult Fourth of July week for blood and platelet donations and ongoing challenges finding new blood donors, the American Red Cross now faces a blood shortage and has issued an emergency call for eligible individuals of all blood types to give now and prevent delays in medical care.

About 450 fewer blood drives were organized by businesses and other community groups last week than during a typical week as people across the country celebrated the holiday with activities and travel. This led to about 17,000 fewer blood donations than needed for patients in a single week, causing the Red Cross to now have less than a three-day supply of most blood types available – and less than a two-day supply of type O blood – for patients. At least a five-day supply is desired.

"Medical emergencies and critical treatments don't stop for holiday celebrations. Patients depend on lifesaving blood transfusions every day," said Cliff Numark, senior vice president, Red Cross Blood Services. "Right now, the Red Cross only has less than a three-day supply when we need a five-day supply to be prepared for all situations that require blood products. To help meet this need, we've added about 8,000 additional appointments at blood donation centers and community blood drives over the next few weeks to accommodate more donors. But we need people to fill those appointments, please join us today."

In June, the Red Cross launched the Missing Types campaign to encourage donors – especially new donors and those who have not donated in the past years – to give blood or platelets during the challenging summer months. Through the campaign, the letters A, B and O – letters that make up the main blood groups – disappeared from popular brands to symbolize what happens when blood goes missing from hospital shelves during blood shortages.

Despite an encouraging response to the campaign, blood donations still fell short of expectations in June, resulting in more than 24,000 fewer donations than needed about 1,900 fewer here in the Southern California Blood Services Region, and causing a significant draw down of the Red Cross blood supply.

"Blood is only available when generous blood and platelet donors roll up a sleeve to give, and right now, all donors – especially those give have never given or haven't given in a while – are urged to make an appointment to give today," Numark added.

Donors of all blood types, especially type O, are urged to make an appointment to donate using the Blood Donor App, at RedCrossBlood.org or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Donation appointments and completion of a RapidPass online health history questionnaire are encouraged to help reduce the time it takes to donate.

Those interested in hosting a blood drive can learn more and sign up to sponsor a drive this summer by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/HostADrive.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities July 9-31

CULVER CITY

7/10/2019: 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Corporate Pointe, 300 Corporate Pointe
7/11/2019: 2 p.m. - 7 p.m., American Legion Post 46, 5309 Sepulveda Blvd
7/18/2019: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., Culver Palms United Methodist Church, 4464 Sepulveda Blvd
7/25/2019: 2 p.m. - 7 p.m., American Legion Post 46, 5309 Sepulveda Blvd

LOS ANGELES

7/22/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 10100 Santa Monica Blvd, 10100 Santa Monica
7/23/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., BH GLAAR, 6330 San Vicente Boulevard
7/25/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., USC Village, 3015 S Hoover St, Building 1-189
7/29/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., California State University Los Angeles Lot 4, 5151 State University Dr

PLAYA DEL REY

7/15/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Del Rey Church, 8505 Saran Drive

SANTA MONICA

7/12/2019: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Community Center, 2500 Broadway
7/15/2019: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., American Red Cross Santa Monica Chapter, 1450 11th St
7/22/2019: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., American Red Cross Santa Monica Chapter, 1450 11th St
7/29/2019: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., American Red Cross Santa Monica Chapter, 1450 11th St

VENICE

7/11/2019: 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Venice Skills Center, 611 5th Ave

WEST LOS ANGELES

7/13/2019: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., American Red Cross Greater Los Angeles Chapter, 11355 Ohio Ave

7/27/2019: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., American Red Cross Greater Los Angeles Chapter, 11355 Ohio Ave

SUBMITTED BY CHRISTINE WELCH, AMERICAN RED CROSS, CALIFORNIA BLOOD SERVICES REGION

LOS ANGELES

California military base still closed following big quakes

A sprawling military base in the Southern California desert remains closed to non-essential personnel as damage assessments continue following last week's powerful earthquakes.

Spokeswoman Margo Allen said Tuesday that teams have so far surveyed just 10% of the 1,200 facilities at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. It's unclear when personnel and their families will be able to return.

Two strong quakes – a 6.4 and a 7.1 – struck Thursday and Friday near Ridgecrest, just outside the 1.2-million-acre base in the Mojave Desert.

Water and gas service have been restored, but engineers are making sure buildings are safe to enter. Allen says the shaking cracked walls in a chapel and school and brought down commissary shelves.

She says one person suffered a minor foot injury.

Some personnel were evacuated to the naval base in Ventura County.

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Curious City

Charles Andrews
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Music is for Fighters


Courtesy photo
MUSIC: Let music get you through it.

HEY! THIS IS WEDNESDAY

The music column (NOTEWORTHY) is on Thursdays, right?

Yeah but do you breathe only on alternate days? — no! Music should be in your life always, it's a refuge, an uplift, and sometimes it makes more sense than other ways to understand and deal with the world.

In my freshman year of college I enrolled as a pre-med student, because ever since I was a little kid I only wanted to be a doctor. Ha. Then I encountered the harsh reality of the courses even a freshman had to conquer on the long slog to an MD and it was not my cuppa tea. So I switched to a double major in Political Science and Psychology, two things that had always interested me. I did well, got good grades, but after most of a year something bothered me. These two fields together, the inner mind and the outer workings of power, should certainly explain the world, to me, but they didn't. In fact, they both seemed patently false, misleading, downright baloney.

So I finally stopped trying to philosophize my university studies and opted for what I was suited for and might make me a living. As someone whose teachers had always told me I could write — oh, ye snake oil salesmen — it came down to an English or Journalism major. English? I didn't want to teach! Good pay, tenure security, three months vacation, benefits, retirement, campus life as a respected professor, no, who would want all that? — but I was young and foolish and I chose Journalism. Worse, drifted into music journalism, sure path to the poorhouse.

BUT NO REGRETS

I would've stayed in the Land of Enchantment growing, I'm sure, increasingly disenchanted, never would have met my perfect life partner of 37 years Diane (in a club in North Hollywood), spent almost all that time in Santa Monica (most of that before it got ruined), was gifted with my amazing daughter Nicole, and the music! I never would have witnessed as my first Angeleno concert (with son Chris, he loved them) The Boomtown Rats at the SM Civic, early U2 at the Palladium, Fela with 40 musicians on stage, New Years Eve with X-Los Lobos-Blasters at the Cowboy, young Red Hot Chili Peppers wearing only socks at the Lingerie, 30 feet from Ray Charles in a Pasadena park, Solomon Burke on his throne at Amoeba, too many hundreds more to mention that never would have galloped into Albuquerque. No regrets. I came here for the music and LA delivered. Big time.

So what's blipping like crazy on the radar for me today? Sad to say, it's the destruction of our sacred democracy. As a history and news junkie since early grade school (in fifth grade I knew the name of every cabinet member), I understand what we are losing, and it pains me. It's a daily struggle to keep my peace of mind, with the nagging voice that says, Do something! I know many of you experience this same frustration daily, and it has become a thing, something I've never experienced before through politics I favored and politics I hated, to come to terms with it.

DO WHAT?

I feel blessed to have this column (and I also worked for it all my life), to express myself and ponder questions and solutions and speak for many who think likewise. Does it make a difference? Doesn't seem to. Right, Bill Bauer? But everything you put out there does make a difference. The pebble in the huge pond. It takes a while for the ripples to spread and you may not be able to see where it all washes out, or still be around for it.

But one thing I've learned is that the successful fighters don't give up. In the face of repeated failures, overwhelming odds and opposition and very little support, they carry on for what they know is right. You must.

I know it's right to respect all people. I know the strength of this country is its immigrants and their diversity. I know a city government should prioritize the needs of its residents. I know it's a big world and travel is the best way to learn and grow. I know money corrupts government, from DC to SM. I know we were gifted with a flawed but visionary system of government in America 230 years ago and it is worth fighting for. I know war is always wrong, and horrific. I know the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. I know love is the answer (but boy, that's a hard one to figure out these days, innit?)

Marianne Williamson is getting a lot of mockery for her run for the presidency. Three weeks ago in this column I summarized a talk she gave in LA. "Some people think it is naive to think peace is possible. But it is the only survivable option for the human race. It's naive to think this planet will even be habitable for humans in another 50-100 yrs. We will not survive as Americans if we continue to allow ourselves to be fooled, distracted, played." She's right, but I think we need a tough puncher to defeat the Bully-in-Chief in 2020. But whichever Democrat wins, I think they should create a Secretary of Peace cabinet post and put her in it.

And in the meantime — let music get you through it all. Dance and sing to fight another day.

Charles Andrews has lived in Santa Monica for 33 years and wouldn't live anywhere else in the world. Really. Send love and/or rebuke to him at therealmr-music@gmail.com

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Amazon, Microsoft wage war over the Pentagon's 'war cloud'

MATT O'BRIEN
AP Technology Writer

Amazon and Microsoft are battling it out over a $10 billion opportunity to build the U.S. military its first "war cloud" computing system. But Amazon's early hopes of a shock-and-awe victory may be slipping away.

Formally called the Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure plan, or JEDI, the military's computing project would store and process vast amounts of classified data, allowing the Pentagon to use artificial intelligence to speed up its war planning and fighting capabilities. The Defense Department hopes to award the winner-take-all contract as soon as August. Oracle and IBM were eliminated at an earlier round of the contract competition.

But that's only if the project isn't derailed first. It faces a legal challenge by Oracle and growing congressional concerns about alleged Pentagon favoritism toward Amazon. Military officials hope to get started soon on what will be a decade-long business partnership they describe as vital to national security.

"This is not your grandfather's internet," said Daniel Goure, vice president of the Lexington Institute, a defense-oriented think tank. "You're talking about a cloud where you can go from the Pentagon literally to the soldier on the battlefield carrying classified information."

Amazon was considered an early favorite when the Pentagon began detailing its cloud needs in 2017, but its candidacy has been marred by an Oracle allegation that Amazon executives and the Pentagon have been overly cozy. Oracle has a final chance to make its case against Amazon — and the integrity of the government's bidding process — in a court hearing Wednesday.

"This is really the cloud sweepstakes, which is why there are such fierce lawsuits," said Wedbush Securities analyst Daniel Ives.

Ives said an opportunity that was a "no brainer" for Amazon a year ago now seems just as likely to go to Microsoft, which has spent the past year burnishing its credentials to meet the government's security requirements.

For years, Amazon Web Services has been the industry leader in moving businesses and other institutions onto its cloud — a term used to describe banks of servers in remote data centers that can be accessed from almost anywhere. But Microsoft's Azure cloud platform has been steadily catching up, as have other providers such as Google, in both corporate and government settings.

With an acronym evoking Star Wars and a price tag of up to $10 billion over the next decade, JEDI has attracted more attention than most cloud deals. A cloud strategy document unveiled by the Defense Department last year calls for replacing the military's "disjointed and stove-piped information systems" with a commercial cloud service "that will empower the warfighter with data and is critical to maintaining our military's technological advantage."

In a court filing last month, Lt. Gen. Bradford Shwedo said further delays in the Oracle case will "hamper our critical efforts in AI" as the U.S. tries to maintain its advantage over adversaries who are "weaponizing their use of data." Shwedo said JEDI's computing capabilities could help the U.S. analyze data collected from surveillance aircraft, predict when equipment needs maintenance and speed up communications if fiber and satellite connections go down.

Amazon was considered an early front-runner for the project in part because of its existing high-security cloud contract with the Central Intelligence Agency. It beat out IBM for that deal in 2013.

Worried that the Pentagon's bid seemed tailor-made for Amazon, rivals Oracle and IBM lodged formal protests last year arguing against the decision to award it to a single vendor.

In an October blog post , IBM executive Sam Gordy wrote that a single-cloud approach went against industry trends and "would give bad actors just one target to focus on should they want to undermine the military's IT backbone."

The Government Accountability Office later dismissed those protests, but Oracle persisted by taking its case to the Court of Federal Claims, where it has pointed to emails and other documents that it says show conflicts of interest between Amazon and the government. Oral arguments in that case are scheduled for Wednesday. The case has delayed the procurement process, though the Pentagon says it hopes to award the contract as early as Aug. 23.

Oracle's argument is centered on the activities of a Defense Department official who later went to work for Amazon. Amazon says Oracle has exaggerated that employee's role in the procurement using "tabloid sensationalism."

Some defense-contracting experts say the conflict allegations are troubling.

"No one seems to deny that these were actual conflicts and the players affirmatively attempted to conceal them," said Steven Schooner, a professor of government procurement law at George Washington University. "That simply cannot be tolerated."

But Goure, whose think tank gets funding from Amazon but not from its cloud rivals Microsoft, Oracle or IBM, said the criticism is "coming from the also-rans." He says rivals like Oracle "missed the boat" in cloud technology and are trying to make up lost ground through legal maneuvers.

The Pentagon has repeatedly defended its bidding process, though the concerns have trickled into Congress and onto prime-time TV. Fox News host Tucker Carlson devoted a segment last month to the cloud contract

SEE **WAR CLOUD** PAGE 11

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MICHELIN

FROM PAGE 1

American restaurant Melisse. The fine dining restaurant closed in March for renovations and will reopen this fall with a new concept.

Citrin opened Dave's Doghouse's first Los Angeles location in 2015 at the Staples Center, a few months before he launched casual restaurant Charcoal in Venice.

Citrin's cousin David Cheren started the hot dog chain several years earlier at the Arizona State University campus in Tempe, Arizona. Since then, it has spread to sports arenas in Atlanta and Phoenix, as well as the BNP Paribas Open near Palm Springs earlier this year, according to its website.

"Dave's Doghouse is (Citrin's) most affordable and approachable food, and he is excited to bring this concept to Main Street in Santa Monica," the restaurant's application states.

The restaurant's signature hot dog is topped with mac and cheese and bacon, but it serves six others, too, including a Reuben dog and a chili dog. It also serves sliders, fries, onion rings and a chicken sandwich.

Dave's Doghouse began the process to open in Santa Monica in 2017 but has stalled since then. The storefront next to seasonal Californian restaurant Little Prince still bears the signage of the Santa Monica Electric Company.

Plans for the location show that the back patio will seat 18 people. The interior of the 661 square foot restaurant will hold a service counter, kitchen and bathrooms, but no seating. The site does not include parking.

The Commission meets on July 10 at 9 a.m. in San Louis Obispo. Meetings can be viewed online at www.coastal.ca.gov.

madeleine@smdp.com

LEWIS

FROM PAGE 1

The 70-minute-long-or-so play is a half-sketch, half-one-man-performance that tells the story of Lewis' evolution from atheist to theist. McLean says the play came about due to being enamored with Lewis and his story of conversion.

"[Lewis] was once asked if he was frightened during World War I," McLean said in a phone call with the Daily Press. "He responded that he was frightened, but never sank so low as to pray. That's where he was."

A Christian-convert himself, McLean developed the play after previously adapting the author's other works, 'The Screwtape Letters' and 'The Great Divorce.' McLean's experiences with the two works — the former being a religious satire, the latter an allegorical tale dealing with theological questions — encouraged him to take a closer look at Lewis' conversion story from the author's autobiography and letters.

McLean's play begins at a pre-Narnia point in Lewis' life, picking up right after his mother's death. 'C.S. Lewis Onstage' will feature pivotal moments in the author's life including his friendship with Lord of the Rings author J.R.R. Tolkien, his thoughts of God as a "transcendental interferer" to full acceptance of God while riding on a motorcycle.

"It's this constellation of ideas that leads a vigorous debunker to complete acceptance that Jesus is the son of God," McLean said. "[Lewis] was a vigorous debunker of Christianity, similar to Christopher Hitchens and he had the same gifts as Hitchens. To have someone like that become one of the most influential Christian writers this century is a pretty big deal."

C.S. Lewis Onstage: The Most Reluctant Convert runs at the Broad Stage July 11 - 22. For more information, including ticket prices, visit CSLewisonStage.com or call 866-811-4111.

angel@smdp.com

RENT

FROM PAGE 1

trellis is necessary for her privacy and safety.

When the landlord was cited again for the trellis, he gave the renter a three-day notice to take it down or be evicted. The renter fought the eviction for several months in court, but a judge ruled in favor of the landlord in May and she lost her apartment.

Shortly before the ruling, Phillis asked the board to consider prohibiting code violations from being used as grounds for eviction and let renters seek variances from the code.

"While there's nothing we can change about the outcome of that judicial decision, I think this does raise the issue of whether code violations can be misused to get tenants out of rent-controlled properties," he said. "It would make sure that tenants have standing to clear violations they may have caused."

The board could recommend that City Council allow tenants to challenge citations, Lewis wrote in a report. He said if the renter who wanted to keep her trellis had a way to dispute the citation, she could have settled the question of whether it was illegal or not before getting caught up in an eviction case.

"It may be that the trellis on the tenant's patio really was a code violation, and it may be that the tenant should, in all fairness, have been required to remove it," he said. "If the tenant had had the chance to challenge the citation's validity, that question could have been settled well before ... her entire tenancy was at risk."

The city could require a citation be sent to both the property owner and the tenant, he said. Both parties would be able to dispute it.

Lewis did not support or oppose such a policy but cautioned the board to weigh its potential consequences.

"Every new law, or change to existing law, carries with it the danger of unintended consequences, and policymakers would be wise to consider whether the risk of such consequences is outweighed by the need to solve a problem that rarely occurs," he said.

However, Lewis recommends against allowing tenants to seek variances. He said state law does not allow cities to grant variances because the code burdens a resident or owner of a property.

"Under well-settled state law, the government may grant a zoning variance only for an exceedingly narrow set of reasons," he said.

The RCB will meet on July 11 at 7 p.m. in City Hall.

madeleine@smdp.com

California takes on surprise bills, over hospital objections

ADAM BEAM
Associated Press

Jiggy Athilingam was riding a bicycle in San Francisco five years ago when suddenly she was on a bed in the hallway of a hospital.

"What happened?" she asked.

A cracked helmet told the story of her memory loss: She had been hit from behind by a car. She spent 22 hours in a hospital emergency room, getting CT scans and painkillers before they sent her home. Four months later, as a Ph.D student living on a $35,000 stipend, she got a bill for $41,000.

She had the same question: What happened?

Athilingam had two forms of health insurance and assumed it would pay for most of her bills. Plus, California has laws protecting patients from surprise medical bills. But there is a loophole for emergency rooms. And because Athilingam was treated at a hospital that was outside of her health insurance company's network, she got hit with a surprise bill — a common story in the country's complex health care system.

Lawmakers in Congress and state legislatures across the country have proposed bills to fix problems like this, especially in emergency situations where patients often cannot choose what hospital treats them. While most people agree patients should not have to pay in these situations, there's little agreement on who should.

It's a debate now playing out in the California Legislature that's pitting insurance companies and hospitals against each other.

A bill by Assemblyman David Chiu, a San Francisco Democrat, would make sure emergency patients never pay more than their copays or deductibles, even if they are treated at an out-of-network hospital. But the bill would cap what hospitals can charge insurance companies, because advocates and some lawmakers view hospitals as a monopoly with too much power over prices. Chiu said his goal is to keep insurance rates from skyrocketing.

"It's not enough just to say the patient won't get a whopping bill if the hospital is going to send an enormous bill to the insurer, who then simply turns around and raises your premiums a few months later," Chiu said.

The California Hospital Association strongly opposes that approach, and advocates worry their position could doom the bill's chances of passage this year. A key test will be Wednesday, when the Senate

SEE **HOSPITAL** PAGE 11

Uber offers riders more leg-room, less chatting at a price

CATHY BUSSEWITZ
AP Business Writer

Uber passengers can now get a more spacious ride and a less talkative driver — if they're willing to shell out a few extra dollars.

The ride-hailing giant launched "comfort" rides in dozens of cities Tuesday. Riders are guaranteed 36 inches of legroom in "newer" cars — meaning those that are under five years old — and they can request a preferred air temperature. Riders can also use the app to tell drivers they don't want to chat, avoiding what some consider an awkward exchange.

Uber is responding to requests from business travelers and others who say they just want to work or rest quietly when they're on their way to the airport.

"It's a way to set up an expectation up front...it takes some guess work out of the process," said Aydin Ghajar, senior product manager at Uber.

In the early days of ride-hailing, when drivers for Uber and its main U.S. rival Lyft began picking up riders in their personal cars, riders were often chatty, asking the drivers lots of questions.

"It was so new and innovative that a lot of people were curious about other things they (drivers) did," said Harry Campbell, founder of The Rideshare Guy, a blog and online community for drivers. "Over the years, it's gotten more transactional."

Uber rolled out a "quiet mode" for Uber Black — its premium car service — in May, which left some drivers feeling like robots.

"Some drivers like it, they don't want to have to look at social cues," Campbell said. "Other drivers feel that it's a little dehumanizing...I do feel like in our society, everything is turning into an app, and we're losing the lost art of conversation."

Comfort rides cost 20% to 40% more for time and distance charges than standard Uber X rides.

The move could help Uber boost revenue, which could nudge the company closer to profitability.

"I think it would help maybe to boost those numbers up a little bit and maybe give some of the analysts on Wall Street something more to hang their hat on to remain bullish on the stock, based on the fact that the company still is not profitable," said Daniel Morgan, vice president of Synovus Trust Company.

Uber has yet to turn a profit and lost $1 billion in the first quarter of 2019. Executives have said it could take years to make money.

It's unknown whether the benefits offered by Uber Comfort will be enough to convince riders to cough up more cash. A five-year-old car is not really "newer," it's more "middle aged," said Morgan. And at 6 feet, 5 inches tall, the additional legroom wouldn't really be enough for Morgan — but it might be sufficient for people who are average height, he said.

SEE **UBER** PAGE 11





TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (JULY 10)

No one works harder or produces more than you. Your work ethic has been a source of pride and luck. This year, it's changing. You'll still deliver consistently, but tremendously excellent fortune befalls you as you focus on the feelings you generate and what you create, and as you make sure you're doing what matters. Gemini and Capricorn adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 25, 3, 33, 48 and 1.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Pushing all the right buttons may make the thing go, but life is about more than effectiveness. The wins will happen beyond the bounds of the mechanical. Personality doesn't just count; it overshadows the rest.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). When you're used to having a person's full attention, it's a little jarring to suddenly have to share it. Of course you understand that others have a life outside of knowing you, but there are times when the realization is more jarring.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Don't settle for whatever mood befalls the environment. Take charge. Set the emotional temperature. You know how to do this. Sometimes you just forget to command that talent.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Doing the same thing repeatedly can make you masterful, but it's a process. Dips happen. In the lows it may seem that the role has lost its luster. Reinvigorate. Seek inspiration. Or just take a break.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Just when you think you've seen it all, you'll be delighted by what falls into your field of vision. This happens more to you than to others because you're paying such close attention.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). This thing going on in your life right now is really precious, but it's not announcing itself as such. If it were condensed in a movie scene, it would happen in one beautiful, breathtaking moment.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Though the cosmic backdrop is complicated, so are you, and something felicitous is likely to form out of the unique chemistry of this day. You'll magnetize a new friend.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Discomfort is a requirement of growth. When a pursuit is extremely attractive, the discomfort is less noticeable. You move through it unthinkingly as the goal draws you ever nearer.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Financial debts are the easiest kind to figure out. It's the emotional and karmic tabulations that can seem like impossible math to solve. It's about to get a whole lot easier on you, though. A debt will be forgiven.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When you love someone, you figure out ways to help, support and maybe, once in a while, dazzle that person. The last effort takes the sort of planning that is favored for you today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You've an interest that could be retired. Were you to decide to go in this direction, a clutter of material possessions would go, too. Paring down will liberate new energy.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Even the simplest action is executed through a multistep process. Instinct kicks in first, uncontrollably so. Next is thought. Some thoughts are also uncontrollable, but most can be managed when you assert yourself.

Neptune's Thoughts on Thoughts

Like a blink, a thought can be involuntary or voluntary. You can decide what to think. The thoughts of the world will still drift like clouds through the sky of your mind while you willfully pay attention to your own agenda. Another way, encouraged by a trine of the sun and Neptune, is to picture the future and let thoughts fall in line with that vision.

DEVELOP YOUR INTUITION, TAURUS

The first Earth sign of the zodiac embodies what it means to be grounded. From this grounding – which is so much a part of who Taurus is that the bull doesn't even see it as being any special talent or state – comes a connection to all living things. That connection is a source of deep intuitive knowing, as well as energy for healing and developing in other ways. Taurus has a power like Queen Tara, the character Beyonce Knowles voiced in the family film "Epic." Queen Tara is the life of the forest. Where she walks, the branches, vines and flowers organize themselves to build a path. Her touch makes things grow. Her presence is felt or missed from endless miles away. Obviously, the plants won't really move to make a path for the human Taurus (though that would be super cool), but when Taurus is grounded, it will be as though providence is rushing to make the path easier – which is probably better than a plant walkway, anyhow. In many Taurus people, this gift is lying dormant and needs to be awakened. Awareness of the gift is the first step. Next, dancing, exercise, running, walking, yoga and more will activate and balance the root chakra that grounds Taurus.

CELEBRITY PROFILES

From pop star to reality star to superstar designer of a billion-dollar brand, Jessica Simpson is a moonchild using her famous Cancer intuition to create big things in the world. Maternal instincts come with her Cancer sun, and Simpson's greatest joy is her growing family. Mars, the action and ambition planet, is in the highly aesthetic sign of Libra. Libra energy often figures strongly in charts of fashionistas. **Write Holiday Mathis at HolidayMathis.com.**

WORD UP!

Donnish
adjective [don-ish]
bookish; pedantic.

Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"I AM NOT CLEANING THOSE!"

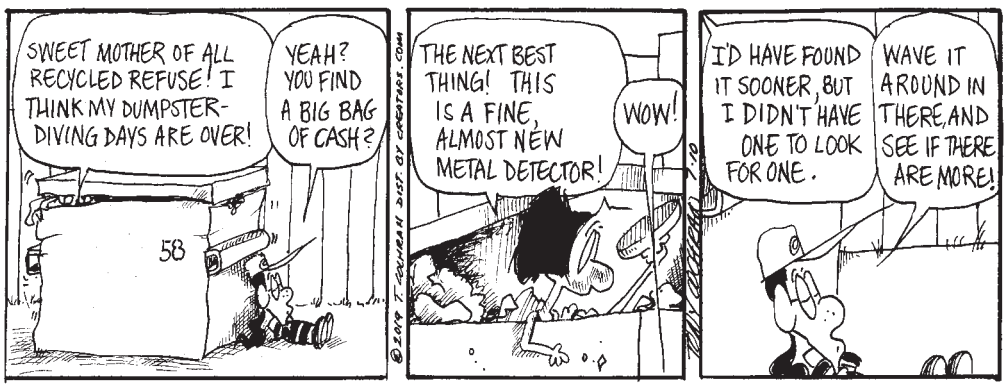
Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



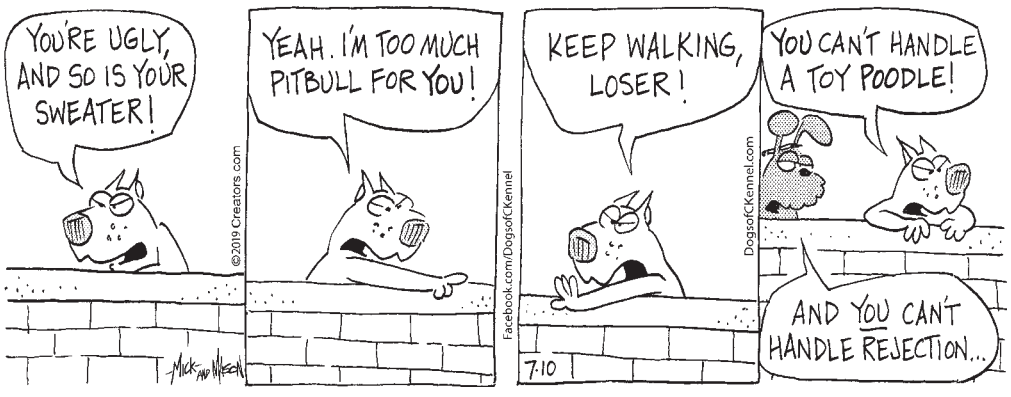
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



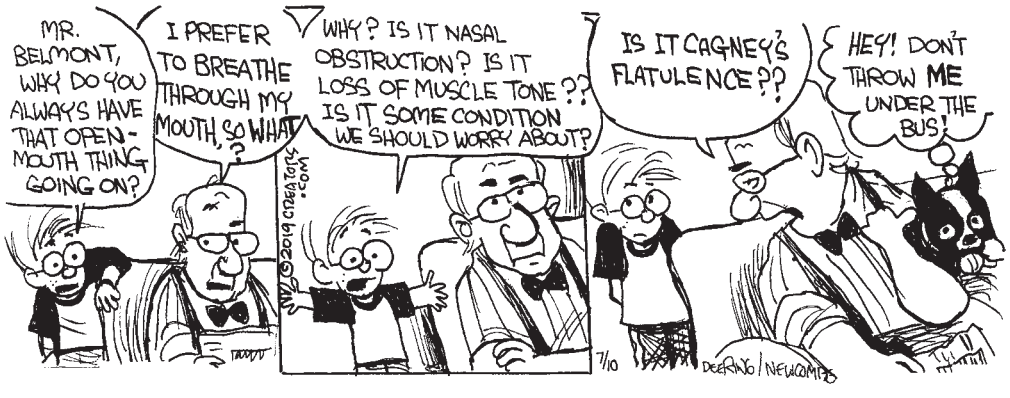
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



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DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL calottery
Draw Date: 07/06
4 8 23 46 65
Power#: 1
Jackpot: $180 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 07/05
6 38 47 57 63
Mega#: 12
Jackpot: $107 M

Super LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 07/06
3 22 28 35 46
Mega#: 16
Jackpot: $60 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 07/08
4 13 17 19 22

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 07/08
Midday: 0 5 3
Draw Date: 07/08
Evening: 1 0 0

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 07/08
1st: 04 - BIG BEN
2nd: 07 - EUREKA
3rd: 08 - GORGEOUS GEORGE
RACE TIME: 1:44.44

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



SURF REPORT

SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 69.1°

WEDNESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft waist to chest high
SSW swell continues - most size for long period focal points.

THURSDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ waist to stomach high
SSW swell eases. NW windswell picks up in the PM.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

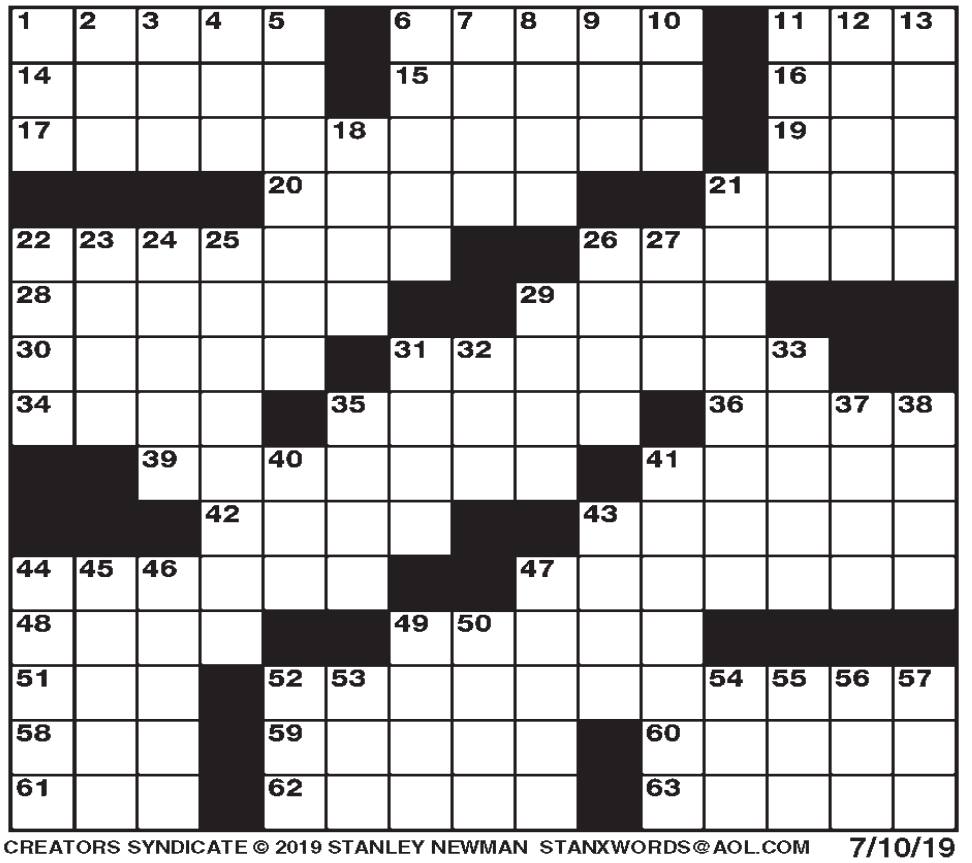
				1		6		4
	8		9				3	
5		6			8			2
	5			9		8		
			2		1			
		3		7			6	
6			8			5		7
	7				9		4	
9		8		5				

Newsday Crossword

NOT YET by Mark McClain
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Italy's fashion center
6 Hoofbeat sounds
11 Tabby or Siamese
14 Pay hike
15 Money of India
16 Brewpub selection
17 Not yet
19 Neither here __ there
20 Spherical roofs
21 What an adjective modifies
22 Slow, high throw
26 Drives too fast
28 Ringed with an angel's light
29 Deceptive trick
30 Molecule parts
31 Side-to-side measure
34 Pita sandwich
35 Not yet
36 Nest-building stinger
39 Metal-plated, as some trucks
41 Slow music tempo
42 Difficult to find
43 Fade away
44 Candy bar nut
47 Table linens
48 Erupted
49 Wild guesses
51 Mammal with wings
52 Not yet
58 Australian bird
59 Be very fond of
60 Prefix meaning "nerve"
61 Talk too much
62 Kid's plastic bricks
63 Felt concern

DOWN
1 Hospital scan letters
2 Actor McKellen
3 Ignited
4 Fireplace residue
5 Sewing tools
6 Tiny cracker fragment
7 Minstrel's stringed instrument
8 Numbered composition
9 According to
10 Lay eyes on
11 Paddled boat
12 For all to hear
13 Gull cousins
18 Nourishment
21 Not yet
22 Plush carpeting
23 Tasting like granola bars
24 Plants of a region
25 Not yet
26 Fly high
27 Athlete's knee protector
29 Pay attention to
31 Unadorned
32 Numbered rd.
33 Capital of Vietnam
35 Title for an earl
37 Astound
38 Cooking vessels
40 Fellow
41 Mouth the lyrics
43 Computer fodder
44 London's Westminster __
45 Camel's Andean kin
46 Got together
47 Connection points
49 Unhealthful haze
50 Protagonist
52 Common Italian male nickname
53 Poetic tribute
54 Briny expanse
55 ". . . that __ flag was still there"
56 Raw mineral
57 Silent show of approval

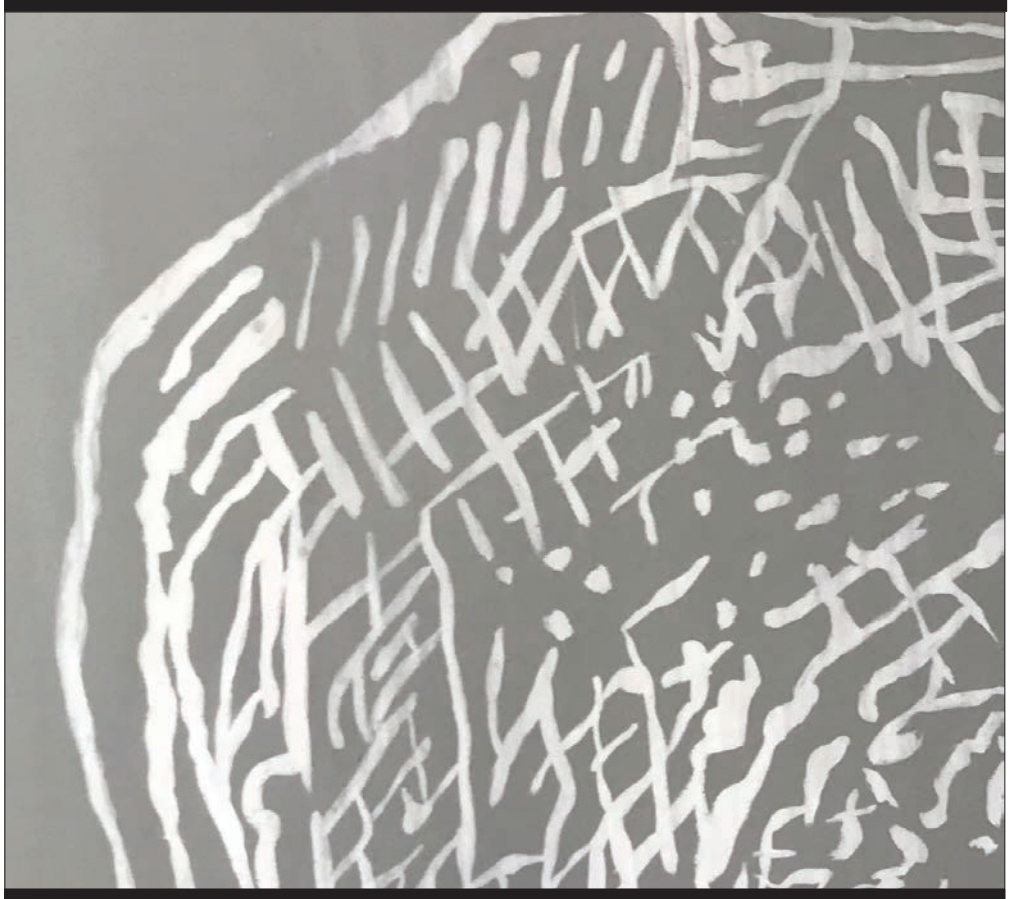


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MYSTERY PHOTO

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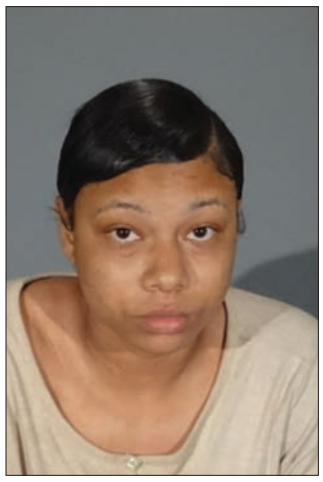
CRIME WATCH

BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Crime Watch is culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department. These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

ON JULY 3 AT ABOUT 6:06 P.M.

Officers responded to the area of 2nd St. and Broadway regarding a strongarm robbery that had just occurred. The male and female suspect deceived the victim into thinking they were arguing. The female suspect later asked the victim if he could walk her to her car. She lured him to an underground garage where the male suspect was lying in wait. They proceeded to assault him, take his belongings, and run out of sight. He provided a description of the suspects to the police. A witness located the female suspect and informed the officers on scene where the female suspect was hiding. The officers located her hiding in a stairwell of the garage. A field show up was conducted and she was subsequently placed under arrest. The male suspect is still outstanding. Crystal Jasmine Moch, 21, from Los Angeles, was arrested for robbery. Bail was set at $50,000. The outstanding suspect is a black male, 25-30 years old, average build, beard, white tank top, blue denim shorts.



File photo
CRYSTAL JASMINE MOCH

DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 312 CALLS ON JULY 8

Vandalism 500blk Colorado Ave 2:08 a.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries city prop involved 3000blk Airport Ave 6:22 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 200blk Pico Blvd 6:51 a.m.
Theft of recyclables 600blk Marguerita Ave 7:31 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 2600blk Lincoln Blvd 7:44 a.m.
Petty theft 300blk Santa Monica Pier 8:11 a.m.
Hit and run Neilson Way / Bicknell Ave 8:23 a.m.
Hit and run 2900blk 4th St 8:35 a.m.
Petty theft 2000blk Lincoln Blvd 8:41 a.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries 200blk Palisades Beach Rd 8:55 a.m.
Traffic collision - no injuries city prop involved 2500blk Wilshire Blvd 8:57 a.m.
Vehicle with excessive parking violations 800blk 22nd St 9:08 a.m.
Grand theft 600blk Strand St 9:12 a.m.
Violation of temporary no parking signs 2000blk Broadway 9:21 a.m.
Grand theft auto 1500blk Pacific St 9:31 a.m.
Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 600blk Pier Ave 9:53 a.m.
Fraud 400blk Colorado Ave 10:09 a.m.
Fraud 800blk Pico Blvd 10:56 a.m.
Lewd activity 15th St / Wilshire Blvd 11:01 a.m.
Public intoxication 1800blk 9th St 11:02 a.m.
Hit and run Pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 11:07 a.m.
Vehicle with excessive parking violations 600blk Bay St 11:07 a.m.
Hit and run pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 11:10 a.m.
Missing person 300blk Olympic Dr 11:12 a.m.
Identity theft 2600blk 2nd St 11:24 a.m.
Vehicle parked in alley 1100blk 17th St 11:33 a.m.
Petty theft 2200blk Delaware Ave 11:53 a.m.
Threats /s 100blk Santa Monica Pl 12:03 p.m.
Traffic hazard Lincoln Blvd / Broadway 12:17 p.m.
Speeding Lincoln Blvd / Wilshire Blvd 12:20 p.m.
Speeding 2000blk Ocean Ave 12:22 p.m.
Petty theft 2800blk Wilshire Blvd 12:40 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 38 CALLS ON JULY 8.

EMS 3000blk Airport Ave 1:10 a.m.
EMS 700blk Pico Blvd 1:11 a.m.
EMS 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 3:01 a.m.
EMS 900blk 2nd St 3:06 a.m.
EMS 2200blk Colorado Ave 4:07 a.m.
Automatic alarm 1400blk 3rd Street Prom 7:44 a.m.
EMS 1600blk Main St 8:39 a.m.
EMS 2500blk Pico Blvd 9:19 a.m.
EMS 2400blk Santa Monica Blvd 9:29 a.m.
EMS 2100blk Ocean Ave 9:37 a.m.
Automatic alarm 200blk Hill St 9:57 a.m.
EMS 1200blk 6th St 11:10 a.m.
EMS 1900blk 22nd St 11:16 a.m.
EMS 500blk Colorado Ave 11:56 a.m.
Elevator rescue 800blk 4th St 12:26 p.m.
Odor of natural gas 1200blk Ocean Ave 1:00 p.m.
EMS 600blk Pico Blvd 1:00 p.m.
EMS 1700blk Main St 1:21 p.m.
EMS 1000blk Pico Blvd 1:32 p.m.
EMS 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 1:55 p.m.
EMS 1400blk Ocean Ave 2:30 p.m.
EMS 1400blk 21st St 2:32 p.m.
EMS 2300blk Ashland Ave 3:16 p.m.
EMS 200blk San Vicente Blvd 3:51 p.m.
Traffic collision with injury 23rd St / Pico Blvd 5:12 p.m.
EMS 2100blk Stewart St 5:13 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 4th St 5:24 p.m.
EMS 5th St / California Ave 5:32 p.m.
EMS 400blk Expo Line 5:51 p.m.
EMS 900blk 3rd St 6:12 p.m.
EMS 4th St / Santa Monica Blvd 6:17 p.m.
EMS 2900blk 4th St 7:19 p.m.
EMS 1400blk Ocean Ave 8:56 p.m.
EMS 1700blk Ocean Ave 9:35 p.m.
EMS 2300blk Hill St 9:59 p.m.
EMS 2100blk 7th St 10:42 p.m.

WAR CLOUD

FROM PAGE 5

that questioned an Amazon executive's 2017 meeting with then-Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. Carlson also aired concerns by Republican Rep. Mark Meadows, who said "the allegations are incredible" and should be investigated.

A Wall Street Journal report on Sunday further detailed government emails about that meeting and another one between Mattis and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos later that year. Sen. Chuck Grassley, an Iowa Republican, said in an emailed statement Tuesday that there are so many questions that the Pentagon should "restart the whole process" and wait until its inspector general can thoroughly review for potential conflicts.

Amazon said in a statement Tuesday the meetings "had nothing to do with the JEDI procurement" and blamed "misinformed or disappointed competitors" for trying to imply otherwise.

Pentagon spokeswoman Elissa Smith said while military leaders are expected to engage with industry, no one in the defense secretary's "front office" participated in drafting the contract requirements or soliciting bids.

Ives said it remains to be seen how much the conflict allegations will hurt Amazon or help Microsoft. Microsoft has largely stayed quiet during the dispute. In a statement, it focused on highlighting its 40-year partnership supplying the military with services such as email.

HOSPITAL

FROM PAGE 7

Health Committee has scheduled a hearing on the proposal. This is the last week for bills to clear policy committees if they hope to reach the floor before lawmakers adjourn for the year in September.

Carmela Coyle, chief executive officer of the hospital association, said 38% of California's more than 400 hospitals already lose money. The real monopoly, she argues, are the insurance companies. Four insurance companies control 86% of the large group insurance market, while five companies control 94% of the individual market.

"(The proposal) puts money into the pockets of insurance companies and does not make care more affordable for consumers," Coyle said. "There is nothing in this bill that requires insurance companies to pass any savings associated with rate-setting on to consumers."

California Association of Health Plans spokeswoman Mary Ellen Grant said insurance companies have long opposed these types of surprise medical bills, saying "it's unfair to put consumers in the middle of payment disputes that should be handled by health plans and providers." She said the association, which represents 47 health plans that cover more than 26 million people, looks forward to working with lawmakers on the proposal, though she declined to offer specifics about what changes insurers want to see.

The group has advocated for consumer protections for decades, she said.

The proposal narrowly passed the state Assembly earlier this year. Chiu said CEOs from the state's largest and most profitable hospitals have been calling lawmakers asking them to oppose the bill, an effective strategy because hospitals are major employers in most districts. Plus, records show the California Hospital Association's political action committee spent more than $350,000 last year.

For Athilingam, she said it took two years to resolve her hospital bill, mostly with the help of the University of California-San Francisco, where she had insurance. Now 29, she works for a voting rights organization and has helped ask lawmakers to pass Chiu's bill.

"There was no way that someone can pay that much money when you have insurance," she said. "This is not the way it's supposed to work.

UBER

FROM PAGE 7

"They might try it once and see if it's that much more of an improvement and worth it," Morgan said. "If they can't deliver it and it's not that much more comfortable, then it's like well, I'm not really going to pay up for it."

Uber declined to provide an average age for its drivers' cars, and said age requirements for vehicles vary by city.

Uber's smaller rival Lyft offers "Lyft Lux" rides, which are in high-end sedans or SUVs with leather seats and more legroom. Lux cars are driven by drivers with a 4.85-star rating or above, and cost more than a standard Lyft ride or the company's less-expensive Shared ride.

Uber already has some premium products that cost more than the basic Uber X. For example, Uber Black includes high-end cars driven by professional drivers. Families or groups of six can choose Uber XL to get a van or SUV. Uber Select connects riders with highly rated drivers. On the other end of the spectrum, Uber Pool is the cheapest option, but riders have to share the car with passengers going to other destinations.

Uber says its Uber Black product will generally cost more than Uber Comfort, but specific pricing will vary by city.

Drivers who qualify for can make about 20% more on an Uber Comfort ride than Uber X ride, said Uber spokesman Steve Imm. But some drivers earned less during an Uber Comfort pilot, because their cars qualified for the pricier Uber Select or Uber XL options, and they couldn't easily opt out of the Uber Comfort option, Campbell said. Drivers will now be able to opt out of Uber Comfort using the app, Imm said.

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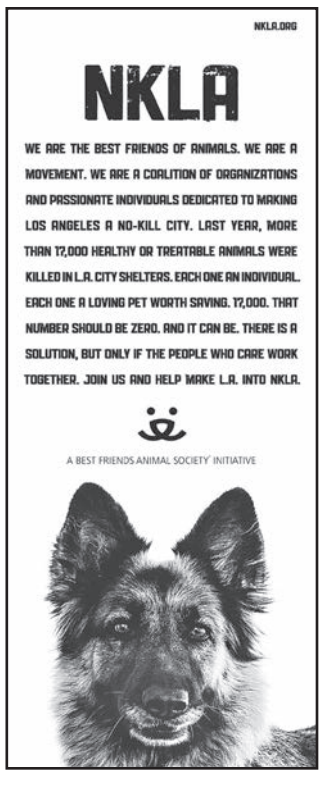
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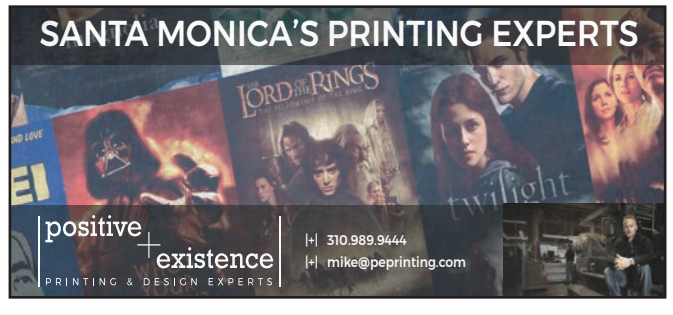






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