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Volume 25 Issue 170

THURSDAY 7/16/26

smdp.com

In a policy paradox, council pushes density into single family neighborhood to delay statewide housing law

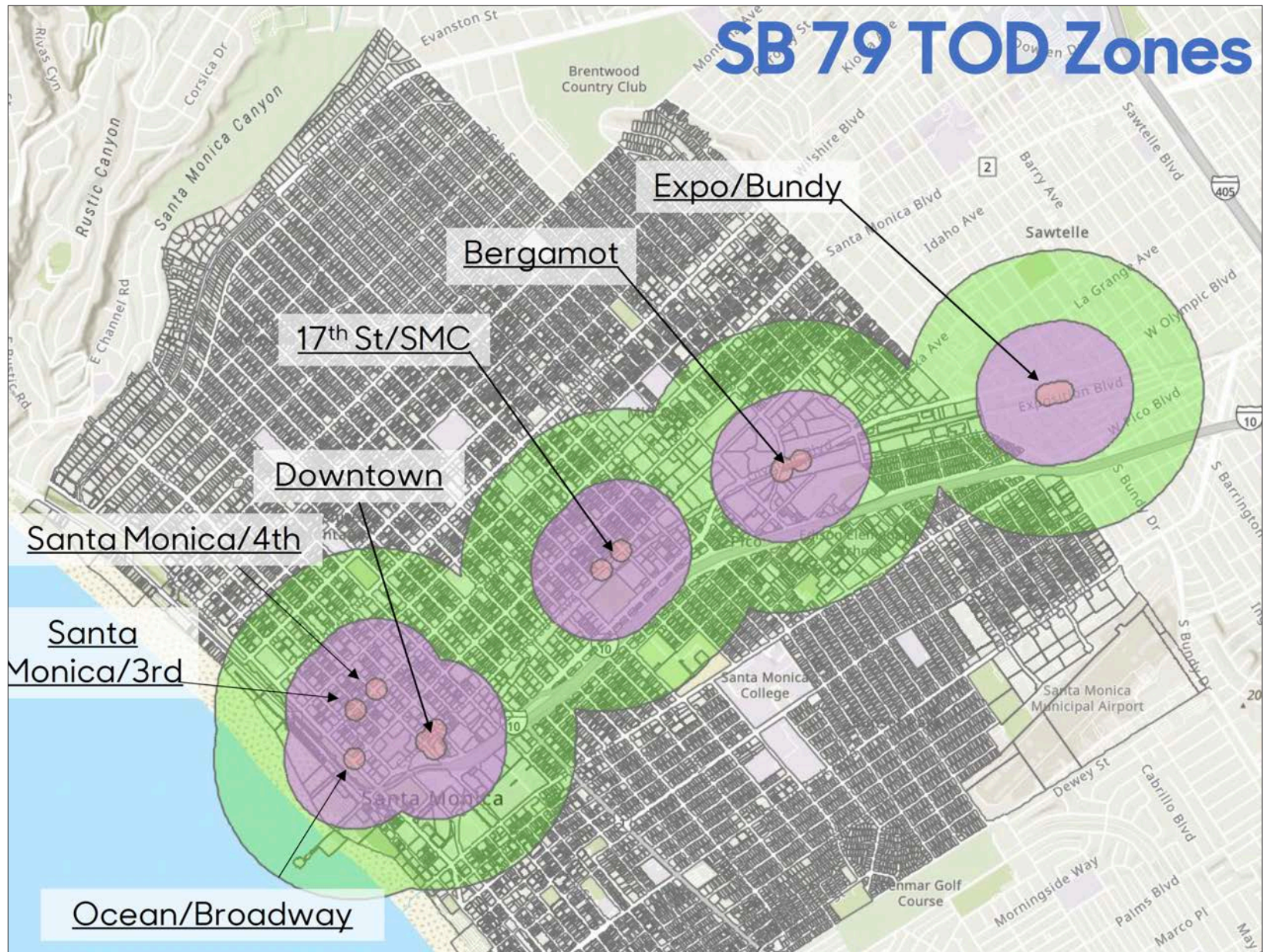
MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The Santa Monica City Council voted 5-1 early Wednesday to pursue upzoning of single-family neighborhoods near the Metro E Line's Expo/Bundy station rather than adopt a planning staff recommendation that would have increased density on multifamily parcels, reversing course on how the city plans to temporarily shield the area from a new state housing law.

The council's decision, reached after nearly an hour of technical debate over acreage, density formulas and displacement risk, directs city planners to return with options for upzoning some or all of the roughly 212 R1-zoned parcels near the Expo/Bundy station — property records show many are around 5,500 to 6,500 square feet — rather than the 65 parcels zoned R2 and R3 that planning staff and the Planning Commission had recommended for increased development standards.

R1 designates single-family residential zoning, permitting one detached dwelling unit per lot. It typically sets standards for lot size, setbacks, height limits, and density, prohibiting multi-family or commercial use. Beyond R1, common designations include R2 (duplex/two-family residential), R3 (multi-family, low-density apartments or condos), R4 (high-density multi-family), and RMH (mobile/manufactured home parks), with each successive category generally permitting greater density and building intensity than the last.

Councilmember Ellis Raskin said he settled on the single-family approach because it carries little practical effect on how much housing could ultimately be built



Courtesy image

MAP: Santa Monica has a density corridor running through the center of the city.

while avoiding what he called the greater displacement risk of upzoning apartment-zoned parcels.

"In those R1 parcels you don't have the displacement risk because it's the owners of those buildings —

for the most part those are owner-occupied," Raskin said, adding that the change amounts to "really just paper upzoning anyway," since state laws already in effect, including SB 684 and SB 9, allow similar density

on single-family lots.

Planning Director Jing Yeo confirmed under questioning from Raskin and Councilmember Natalia Zernitskaya that R1 upzoning would need to apply to all 212

qualifying parcels, rather than a smaller subset, because singling out individual lots could not be legally justified. City Attorney's office

SEE SB79 PAGE 11

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GUEST COMMENTARY

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What Californians could lose betting on life through prediction markets

California has seen what happens when technology platforms grow faster than public understanding.

Social media companies have long argued their products are neutral tools. But parents, schools, attorneys general and young people describe a different reality. They say these platforms are designed to hold attention, reward repeated checking and keep users engrossed.

California's legal system is catching up. Attorney General Rob Bonta co-led a multistate lawsuit against Meta alleging that Facebook and Instagram were designed with addictive features that harmed young users. And in March, a Los Angeles jury found Meta and Google liable in another closely watched social media addiction case.

That history should matter as prediction markets move into the American mainstream.

Polymarket, for instance, is not Instagram or Snapchat. It's not a social media feed. And, to be fair, it is not operating without rules. Polymarket US is listed by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission as a designated contract market and has published rules against insider trading, fraud and market manipulation.

Those safeguards matter. They help protect the fairness of the market.

But market integrity is not the same as civic integrity.

Prediction markets allow users to trade contracts on the outcome of future events, such as elections, interest rates, court decisions, government actions, international conflict and economic indicators.

In theory, these markets can aggregate information and show what people believe is likely to happen. That is the strongest argument in their favor, and it should not be dismissed.

The problem is what happens when public life becomes tradable entertainment.

An election is not just a price signal. It decides who holds power. An interest-rate decision is not just a contract outcome. It affects mortgages, credit

cards, small businesses and household budgets. A public crisis is not just a market opportunity. It affects families, communities and real people.

When everything becomes a wager, it becomes easier to detach from the human stakes.

California should not wait for that detachment to become normal. State lawmakers, the attorney general and consumer protection officials should start setting expectations now for products that sit somewhere between financial markets, gambling platforms and civic information tools.

That does not mean banning every prediction market or to pretend forecasting has no value. It means asking whether rules against cheating are enough when the product itself may change how people relate to democracy, public crises and shared civic life.

A sensible California framework should start with the basics: strong age verification, clear risk disclosures, deposit limits and cooling-off periods.

Platforms should be restricted from marketing prediction markets as easy money or civic entertainment. And they should monitor and report suspicious trading, insider information risks and market manipulation.

California should also consider whether certain markets should be off-limits, especially those tied to violence, disasters or public tragedy. There is a difference between forecasting the weather and creating a market around human suffering.

Elections deserve special attention. Betting on politics risks changing how people relate to democracy.

A voter should see an election as a collective decision about the future, not primarily as a chance to profit from volatility. If political event contracts grow without clear rules, public trust may become another casualty.

The goal should be a prediction market that is transparent enough to be useful, limited enough to be safe and regulated

SEE CALIFORNIA PAGE 8



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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

California is making progress on fire prevention. Federal retreat, shaky funding put it at risk

The Altadena and Palisades fires that swept through Southern California last year were just the latest in an escalating series of wildfires that have scorched the state.

The damage has been far-reaching: Californians have lost homes, community and — in some tragic cases — their lives. Wildfires are also raising insurance premiums and threatening the state's giant sequoias and the headwater regions that provide most of California's water supply.

This year threatens to be another above-average fire season. As we've seen in recent years, fires can emerge quickly — even after wet winters. And if it feels like wildfires are increasing in size and scale, that's because they are: The area of land burned in severe wildfires in the Sierra Nevada has tripled since 1990, while annual wildfire damages have more than quadrupled during that same period.

Californians are understandably weary of this cycle. Decades of fire suppression have allowed vegetation to build up, increasing the risk of damages from high-severity wildfires. And now, a changing climate is intensifying the conditions that drive severe wildfire.

The good news is that the state is engaged in an unprecedented multi-agency effort to reduce severe wildfire hazard on 1 million acres of wildlands each year. It's an ambitious target, guided by a state-led task force, and one that meets the scale of the problem.

In a new report, the Public Policy Institute of California analyzed data from the task force that's coordinating and tracking these efforts. We found the progress toward the goal accelerated between 2021 through 2024, with an average of 591,000 acres undergoing work to reduce wildfire hazard each year.

The task force's recently released five-year action plan doubles down on the need to prioritize the most at-risk landscapes with a call to "treat the worst first." Our analysis shows that they're doing just that: 83% of the forest and wildland areas treated — through thinning, prescribed burns or other methods — were in areas with high severe wildfire potential, in areas where communities and wildlands overlap, or both.

One of the task force's biggest wins was how it's helped accelerate the return

of beneficial fire to California's landscapes. For a millennia, Native peoples used low-intensity fire to manage the landscape. Beneficial fire nearly doubled from 2021 to 2024, rising from about 100,000 to 200,000 acres per year.

This increase in cultural and prescribed burns represents an economical and environmentally sound way to restore forests and woodlands to health.

However, we are in a moment when federal agencies are reconsidering commitments to reduce wildfire hazard. Shifting federal policies and cuts at the Forest Service and its federal partners — which manage more than half of California's forests — are introducing uncertainty about California's ability to limit severe wildfire.

In addition, the state's annual budget for wildfire mitigation work could drop by hundreds of millions as key funding sources dry up. State officials recently voted to change a program that charges polluters for their emissions, resulting in \$200 million less for wildfire mitigation each year.

Without dedicated funding, this crucially important work — which touches on public health, housing, water supply and more — will not occur at the scale the state needs.

In our report, we identified ways the task force can further enhance its efforts to protect landscapes and communities. For instance, it should refine its tracking of how long these treatments last and build the capacity of small and under-resourced partners to both conduct and report wildfire reduction efforts on private lands, which may not be captured right now.

Most importantly, this effort relies on a robust state and federal partnership that is already yielding results. Preserving this collaboration must be a priority.

Risks are rising, but the task force is making real progress. Now is not the time to lose momentum.

Kyle Greenspan is a research associate with the PPIC Water Policy Center, where he focuses on topics ranging from groundwater to carbon sequestration. Bradley Franklin is a research fellow at the PPIC Water Policy Center. He is an agricultural and environmental economist who focuses on ways to inform the design and implementation of public policy in natural resource management.



Surf report

WATER TEMP: 64.4

THURSDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
 Knee to thigh

A little more NW windswell in the mix for more small beachbreak peaks. Points textured in AM. Eyeing a little bump in size as windswell comes up. Still a smaller wave gear kind of day with the potential for more waist-high waves than Wednesday for the beachbreaks west of Dume. A negative low tide guts the dawn patrol window, and easterly winds texture the points while spots west of Dume are on the cleaner side. Beachbreaks get a little seabreeze texture in the afternoon, but that shouldn't keep you out of the water. Points clean up for the back half of the day.

FRIDAY
POOR TO FAIR
SURF: 1-2ft
 Knee to thigh

SE wind looks to spoil modest waves. Afternoon worth watching for the points. Shaping up to be a junky mix of minor Southern Hemi swell plus some short-period NW swell and a little southerly windswell. End result looks like low quality knee-high high waves for most spots, standouts out west maybe pulling in some waist-high surf. Southerly wind should mellow out some in the afternoon. It'll probably stay pretty junky for the beachbreaks west of Dume, but the points stand a chance at cleaning up for the lower tide window later in the day.



Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 80. East wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south southwest in the afternoon.

Thursday Night: Increasing clouds, with a low around 70. South wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east southeast after midnight.

Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 73. East southeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south in the afternoon.

Friday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 68.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2026/07/16	Thu	05:46 AM	-1.23	L
2026/07/16	Thu	12:15 PM	4.50	H
2026/07/16	Thu	5:20 PM	1.87	L
2026/07/16	Thu	11:23 PM	6.30	H
2026/07/17	Fri	06:25 AM	-0.73	L
2026/07/17	Fri	12:57 PM	4.66	H
2026/07/17	Fri	6:18 PM	1.88	L
2026/07/18	Sat	12:13 AM	5.53	H
2026/07/18	Sat	07:01 AM	-0.09	L
2026/07/18	Sat	1:40 PM	4.79	H
2026/07/18	Sat	7:21 PM	1.93	L



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Draw Date: 7/13
 5 25 36 40 48
 Power#: 3
 Jackpot: 498 M



Draw Date: 7/14
 12 23 26 29 38



Draw Date: 7/14
 2 4 10 48 56
 Mega#: 22
 Jackpot: 672 M



Draw Date: 7/14
 EVENING: 4 8 9
 Draw Date: 7/14
 MIDDAY: 5 1 0



Draw Date: 7/11
 1 4 21 36 44
 Mega#: 20
 Jackpot: 37 M



Draw Date: 7/14
 1st: 12 - Lucky Charms
 2nd: 01 - Gold Rush
 3rd: 06 - Whirl Win
 Race Time: 1:47.96

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

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DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026112920. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: TK WEST ARTS, 1401 HAVENHURST DRIVE #4, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90046, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): TAKESHI KUDO, 1401 HAVENHURST DRIVE #4, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90046. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. 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/ TAKESHI KUDO, OWNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 05/21/2026. 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: 06/25/2026, 07/02/2026, 07/09/2026, 07/16/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026125512. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: SHAW CREATIVE GROUP, 5750 WEST CENTINELA AVE 103, LOS ANGELES, CA 90045, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): JASMINE SHAW, 5750 WEST CENTINELA AVE 103, LOS ANGELES, CA 90045. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. 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/ JASMINE SHAW, OWNER. 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: 06/25/2026, 07/02/2026, 07/09/2026, 07/16/2026

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026144374. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: LAINEY’S WORLD, 1327 WEST HOLT AVE, POMONA, CA 91768, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): KASSANDRA MARIE PHAM, 1327 WEST HOLT AVE, POMONA, CA 91768. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 07/2026. 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/ KASSANDRA MARIE PHAM, OWNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 07/02/2026. 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: 07/09/2026, 07/16/2026, 07/23/2026, 07/30/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026144804. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: TICK TOCK STABLES, 1314 17TH ST UNIT 2, SANTA MONICA, CA 90404, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): TICK TOCK STABLES, LLC, 1314 17TH ST UNIT 2, SANTA MONICA, CA 90404. This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. 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/ PATRICIA RONTEN, MANAGING MEMBER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 07/02/2026. 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: 07/09/2026, 07/16/2026, 07/23/2026, 07/30/2026

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26SMCP00280. . Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Maryah Elizabeth Thompson for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Maryah Elizabeth Thompson filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Maryah Elizabeth Thompson to Maryah Elizabeth Thompson Whitfield. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING: Date: 07/24/2026, Time: 8:30 AM, Dept: K. The address of the court is same as noted above. A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS. Date: 06/16/2026. Lawrence H. Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 06/25/2026, 07/02/2026, 07/09/2026, 07/16/2026

Lien

NOTICE OF PUBLIC LIEN SALE Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700et. seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction, on July 22nd, 2026 personal property including but not limited to business equipment, electronics, furniture, clothing, tools and/or other miscellaneous items located at: A-AMERICAN SELF STORAGE (formerly known as Affordable Mini Storage) 2157 Murchison Ave., Pomona, CA 91768 @ 12:00PM, via Storageauctions.net STORED BY THE FOLLOWING PERSONS: EriqueOlvera Manuel Amador Yester Andrade Munguilla Catrina Balderrama Tracy Keller Juan Landeros Misty Molano Orinda Phillips Jones (2) Ramona Weeks Martin Woods Yvette Zaragoza All sales are subject to prior cancellation. Terms, rules and regulations available at sale. By A-American Storage Management Co. Inc. (310)914-4022. Publish on July 16th, 2026.

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AROUND TOWN

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Massive COAST World Cup Event, National Ice Cream Day, & More!

SMDP’s Weekly Guide to Food & Entertainment Goings-On In & Around Town includes the massive COAST 2026 World Cup finale, expanded downtown entertainment zones, fresh culinary debuts, and hot summer concert series, and much more!



Courtesy photo

FESTIVAL: COAST 2026 open streets festival returns July 19 as finale to Santa Monica’s World Cup celebrations.

Annenberg Beach House Sunset Picnic - Route 66 Edition: Bring your own picnic and enjoy a relaxed night by the ocean. Come with friends, family, or on your own and join a communal table. There’s live music, ocean views, complimentary s’mores (while supplies last) & board games. Thursday, July 16, 5-8p.m., 415 PCH eventbrite.com/e/sunset-picnic-route-66-edition-tickets-1987961278699

Fun Guy Summer Series: Have fun with your health at this wellness party at Likeminded Studios, where you can detox with communal sauna, cold plunge, local DJs, and free doses of Fun Guy Flow or Chill. Thursday, July 16, 8-10p.m., 116 Washington Blvd., Venice [instagram.com/p/DZay6gGyVXX](https://www.instagram.com/p/DZay6gGyVXX)

Fridays at Calamigos Ranch’s Gentry Market: A new Jazz Night is coming to Malibu for the summer. 🎷🍷 Every Friday evening you can expect wood-fired pizza, drinks from the bar, and live music under the Malibu sky. Fridays, 6 - 9p.m., 327 S Latigo Canyon Road, Malibu [instagram.com/p/DamD-TdJeVV](https://www.instagram.com/p/DamD-TdJeVV)

Luft x Forta - 5k, Matcha, & Make-Up: Join a 5k run/walk followed by pastries, matcha, and charms. Sunday, July 19, 9a.m., 1930 Lincoln Blvd., Venice [luftlosangeles.com/products/luft-x-forta-5k-matcha-make-up](https://www.luftlosangeles.com/products/luft-x-forta-5k-matcha-make-up)

COAST 2026: The revival of the COAST Open Streets festival will serve as the grand finale for Santa Monica’s soccer celebrations. Spanning from the Promenade and Metro E Line station across to Ocean Park, Colorado, Arizona and the iconic Santa Monica Pier, the city will come together for an unforgettable day of music, food and culture. Sunday, July 19 [santamonicacup.com/events/coast-2026-0zc31](https://www.santamonicacup.com/events/coast-2026-0zc31)

State of the City Event: The City is breaking tradition by turning this into a free, open-street celebration directly on Main Street. This is expected to be a fun celebration of community, with live entertainment, kids’ activities, food, drinks and more, this year at Ocean Park Branch Library and Main Street. Thursday, July 23, 4 – 7 p.m., 2601 Main St. <https://www.santamonica.gov/events/4kt3ycyd022dxr8xah6fsy4fcr/202607231600>

ONGOING: Museum of Illusions; The CUBE VR; Splatter Studio; Wellness & Waves @ the Pier (Saturdays through 10/17)

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

COMMUNITY NEWS

Los Angeles

13 Independent Bookstores to Launch First Los Angeles Indie Book Crawl

Thirteen independent bookstores across greater Los Angeles will join forces July 24-26 for the inaugural Los Angeles Indie Book Crawl, a free weekend event inviting readers to explore the region's literary scene.

The crawl, held during regular store hours, stretches from Manhattan Beach to Montrose and from West Hollywood to Pasadena, with stops in Studio City, Santa Monica, Culver City and beyond. Organizers modeled the event on popular book crawls in San Diego and Seattle.

To participate, readers visit any of the stores between July 24 and 26 and make a first purchase of at least \$10. That earns a Book Crawl Passport and a first stamp. Visitors then travel to the remaining stores, in any order, making a purchase of \$10 or more at each stop. Prizes and exclusive merchandise are available at every location.

The more stores participants visit, the more prizes they collect. Those who get their passports stamped at all 13 stores will receive a goodie bag of bookish treats, including a grand prize of \$25 gift cards at each store — a total value of \$325.

Each store has listed nearby Los Angeles landmarks and neighborhood gems that visitors can add to their itineraries.

"Independent bookstores are having a resurgence," said Jennifer Caspar, founder and owner of Village Well Books & Coffee, a bookstore and cafe in downtown Culver City that opened in 2020. "They are the third places people need more than ever in this era of digital optimization which can be very alienating and lead to loneliness."

Organizers said supporting independent bookstores keeps money in the local economy and sustains vital community spaces that offer human-curated recommendations and serve as hubs for local authors, book clubs and civic engagement.

Participating stores are Annabelle's Book Club LA, The Book Jewel, Book Soup, Chevalier's Books, Children's Book World & CBW Teens & Adults, diesel, A Book Store, Malik Books, Once Upon A Time, pages: a bookstore, The Ripped Bodice, Skylight Books, Village Well Books & Coffee and Vroman's Bookstore.

Participants are encouraged to use public transit. Store hours, descriptions and weekend schedules are at <https://www.laindiebookcrawl.com/about-5>. More information is at <https://www.laindiebookcrawl.com/> and on Instagram @laindiebookcrawl.

“Independent bookstores are having a resurgence

- Jennifer Caspar, founder and owner of Village Well Books & Coffee

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



LOS ANGELES
INDIE
BOOK
CRAWL

Discover the independent bookstores of Los Angeles

Welcome to the **LA Indie Book Crawl**, an adventure that spans the diverse Los Angeles literary scene. Discover your new favorite spot to get properly lost in...

@laindiebookcrawl 

Courtesy Image

BOOKS: Los Angeles Indie Book Crawl unites 13 bookstores July 24–26 for a free weekend literary tour.



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EVENTS THIS WEEK JUL 16 - JUL 23

Friday, July 17, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Zibby's Bookshop 1113 Montana Ave Santa Monica.

Kathryn Stockett IN PERSON Signing! THE CALAMITY CLUB

Meet bestselling author Kathryn Stockett at Zibby's Bookshop for a special IN PERSON signing of THE CALAMITY CLUB! \$38.76. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/kathryn-stockett-in-person-signing-the-calamity-club/19295038/2026-07-17T15>

Thursday, July 16, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Shoreside® Restaurant and Bar 1515 Ocean Avenue.

Jazz Night | Full Band | Oceanfront Santa Monica

Our weekly Jazz Night returns with our four piece live band from 6-9pm. Enjoy smooth jazz, great food, and an elevated evening. \$23.18. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/jazz-night-full-band-oceanfront-santa-monica/19395455/2026-07-16T18>

Sunday, July 19, 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

1424 4th Street Santa Monica.

STAND UP 101: Find Your Voice (Sundays)

Jump into Stand Up! Discover your own comedic sensibility and shape it into a clear and unique point of view! 6 weeks + a Showcase! \$365.00. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/stand-up-101-find-your-voice-sundays-/18902363/2026-07-19T14>

Friday, July 17, 9:00 p.m.

The Crow 2525 Michigan Ave #Unit F4 Santa Monica.

Good Cause Comedy

Laugh for a Good Cause at LA's newest comedy benefit show! Want something fun to do solo? Night with friends? Date night? Look no further! \$23.11. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/good-cause-comedy/18890830/2026-07-17T21>

Saturday, July 18, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Main Stage Theatre Arts Complex, SMC Main Campus, 1900 Pico Blvd Santa Monica.

The Spongebob Musical

Theatre for Young Audiences Edition
Directed by Perviz Sawoski. When a crisis hits Bikini Bottom, SpongeBob and friends set out on an unexpected adventure that proves even the smallest sponge can make a big difference. Packed with humor, heart, and songs by artists including David Bowie, Sara Bareilles, and Cyndi Lauper, The Spongebob Musical: TYA celebrates friendship, optimism, and showing up for your community when it matters most. A joyful, fast-moving show for audiences of all ages. \$18 SMC Students, Staff, Faculty. \$25 Seniors. \$28 General. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-spongebob-musical/18846456/2026-07-18T19>

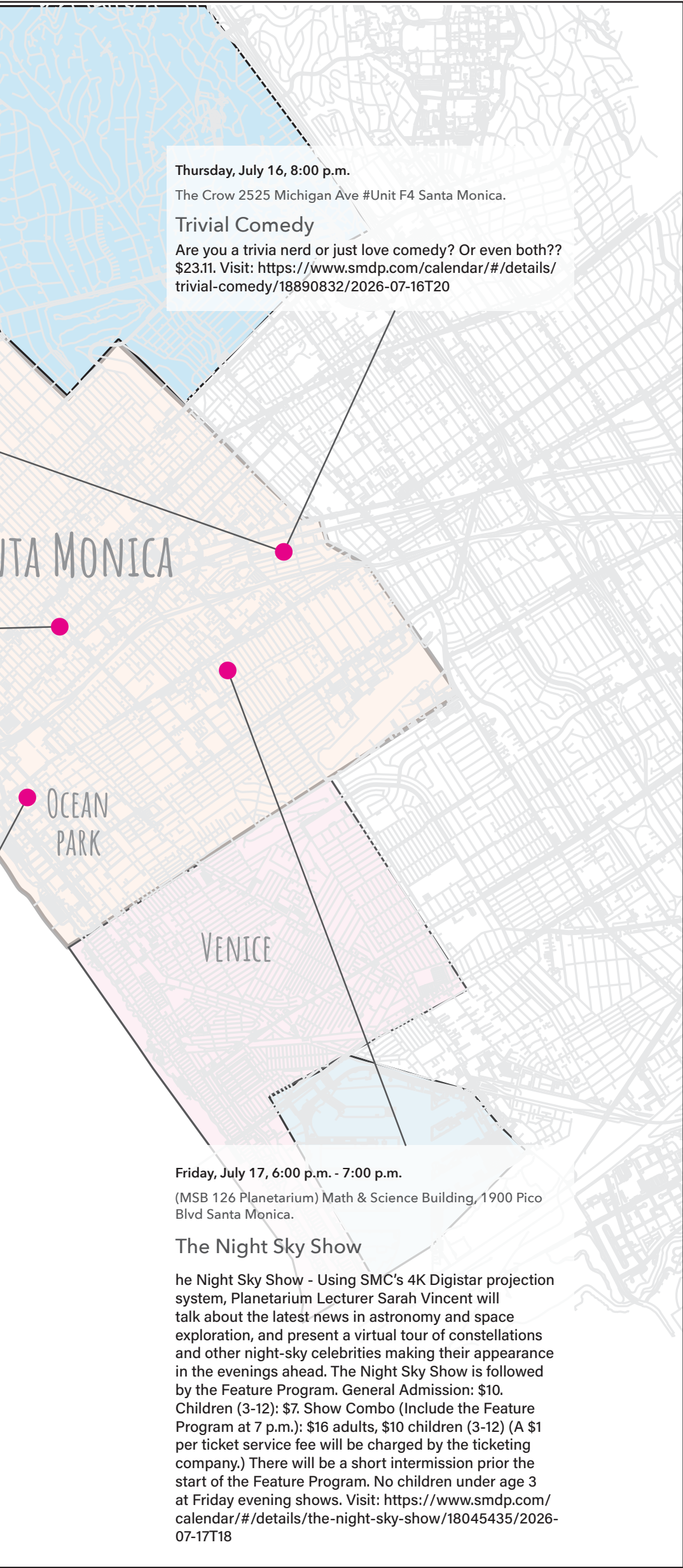
Saturday, July 18, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Regent Santa Monica Beach 1700 Ocean Avenue Santa Monica.

Strong As A Mother Event with Katie Austin

Kick off the morning with a 45 minute low-impact Pilates class with Katie Austin, followed by a Q+A panel and other exciting activities! \$44.52. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/strong-as-a-mother-event-with-katie-austin/19308053/2026-07-18T09>

Check out
more events at:
[smdp.com/events](https://www.smdp.com/events)



Thursday, July 16, 8:00 p.m.

The Crow 2525 Michigan Ave #Unit F4 Santa Monica.

Trivial Comedy

Are you a trivia nerd or just love comedy? Or even both?? \$23.11. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/trivial-comedy/18890832/2026-07-16T20>

Friday, July 17, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

(MSB 126 Planetarium) Math & Science Building, 1900 Pico Blvd Santa Monica.

The Night Sky Show

he Night Sky Show - Using SMC's 4K Digistar projection system, Planetarium Lecturer Sarah Vincent will talk about the latest news in astronomy and space exploration, and present a virtual tour of constellations and other night-sky celebrities making their appearance in the evenings ahead. The Night Sky Show is followed by the Feature Program. General Admission: \$10. Children (3-12): \$7. Show Combo (Include the Feature Program at 7 p.m.): \$16 adults, \$10 children (3-12) (A \$1 per ticket service fee will be charged by the ticketing company.) There will be a short intermission prior the start of the Feature Program. No children under age 3 at Friday evening shows. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-night-sky-show/18045435/2026-07-17T18>



THURSDAY | JULY 16

LOW IMPACT GROUP EXERCISE CLASS

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. American Legion Ronald Reagan-Palisades Post 283 15247 La Cruz Drive Pacific Palisades. Power up your Thursday with our free, low-impact group exercise classes — open to all members of the Legion Family, designed for every fitness level, and held from 11:00am to 12:00pm at Palisades Post 283. Come move, recharge, and feel great heading into the rest of your day! Sign up here to receive emails about upcoming exercise classes and cancellations: [post283.com/exercise](https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/low-impact-group-exercise-class/18566926/2026-07-16T11). Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/low-impact-group-exercise-class/18566926/2026-07-16T11>

CLUB LATINO PARA ADULTOS MAYORES

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Virginia Avenue Park 2200 Virginia Ave. Santa Monica. Venga, aprenda, y diviertase cada jueves de 11 AM a 1 PM el el salón 3 del parque Virginia. Cada semana será algo nuevo: Ejercicio, Hablando con amigos, Aprendizaje, Presentadores Invitados, Salud y Bienestar. Hay comida para los adultos mayores que participan durante las dos horas. Para más información llame al (310) 458-8688. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/club-latino-para-adultos-mayores/13943928/2026-07-16T11>

ELEMENTARY ART STUDIO SUMMER CAMP

1:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Palisades Community Renewal Center 3212 Nebraska Ave Santa Monica. Join us for our summer art workshops for elementary age kids! In case this event has been updated, please visit <https://www.pcrasm.org/event/elementary-art-studio-summer-camp-6d445> for full details before arriving. Thank you! Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/elementary-art-studio-summer-camp/19066074/2026-07-16T13>

THE GLITTERING GATE

1:15 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Pacific Resident Theatre 703 Venice Blvd., Venice. An experiment in theatrical improvisation moving seamlessly from music into the GLITTERING GATE, by Lord Dunsany. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/the-glittering-gate/19383720/2026-07-16T13>

ANATOMY OF A BACK

3:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Electric Lodge Electric Lodge 1416 Electric Ave Los Angeles. A physical musical. Live percussion, movement, and song. 1962. A sitcom. An Oscar winner. An unknown actor. The surprising breakout star. \$16.74. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/anatomy-of-a-back/19383746/2026-07-16T15>

NO REGERTS: A STORY OF BAD TATTOOS...COVERED UP BY WORSE ONES

5:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m. Electric Lodge Electric Lodge 1416 Electric Ave Los Angeles. “NO REGERTS” is a story about bad tattoos...covered up by worse ones. From “tribal” tats as a (queer, ADHD, Filipino) teenager in Appalachia to human canvas on a tattoo reality show, writer/standup/ex-rapper Claire Luisa (@clairerluisabiz) gives a tour of the mistakes a former bad girl made with—and on—her body. With elements of storytelling, cabaret, and audience participation...so we can see your bad ones, too! Because nothing is truly permanent, so just go for it! \$16.74. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/no-regerts-a-story-of-bad-tattoos-covered-up-by-worse-ones/19383748/2026-07-16T17>

HAMA SUSHI - MUSIC OPEN MIC (THURSDAYS)

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. 352 Westminster Ave Venice. Thursday nights in Venice! Open Mic at Hama Sushi. Exciting things are happening at Hama Sushi! Open Mic every Thursday 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. Come on down to Hama. The world is waiting! - 07/16/2026. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/hama-sushi-music-open-mic-thursdays/18526607/2026-07-16T18>

FRIDAY | JULY 17

PALISADIAN COFFEE AND CHAT

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Palisades Garden Cafe 15231 La Cruz Dr Pacific Palisades. An informal hello run by Palisadian resident Rebecca Martin. No Agenda, no powerpoint, just a chance to say hello for those who have moved back to the Palisades, or are working on it. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/palisadian-coffee-and-chat/19242128/2026-07-10T09>

MARION DAVIES GUEST HOUSE TOUR AT ACBH

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Pacific Coast Highway Santa Monica. Santa Monica Conservancy docents will be on hand to share the rich history of the Annenberg Community Beach House site from the 1920s to the present day. Our free 20-minute docent tours are available every weekend on a walk-up basis for individuals and groups of up to six people. Just head to the Marion Davies Guest House, where you will be greeted by a docent. To learn more about the history of the Annenberg Community Beach House, click here. For groups of twelve or more, please get in touch with guest services at (310)-458-4904 or beach.house@santamonica.gov. View parking details on the City website. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/marion-davies-guest-house-tour-at-acbh/19340399/2026-07-10T12>

BUNDY TRIANGLE NIGHT MARKET

5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Bundy Triangle 1500 S Bundy Drive Los Angeles. Cayton Children's Museum will offer free, weekly hands-on activities for children and families at the Bundy Triangle Night Market in Sawtelle every Friday from March 27 through the end of October, the museum announced. The programming, offered in partnership with Los Angeles City Councilwoman Traci Park, will run from 5 to 8 p.m. each Friday at the Bundy Triangle, a public space at Ohio Avenue and Bundy Drive. The broader night market, presented by Raw Inspiration, runs from 5 to 9 p.m. The Bundy Triangle events are free and open to the public. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/bundy-triangle-night-market/18490079/2026-07-10T17>

SUMMER FAMILY MOVIE NIGHTS AT THE CAYTON

Join us every Friday this summer for family movie night! Featuring after-hours museum access, themed activities, snacks, and favorite films. Perfect for little ones who can't sit through a full movie! (Movie nights run from 5-8PM) Summer Movie Schedule: 6/26 Space Jam, 7/3 Homeward Bound, 7/10 Encanto, 7/17 Lyle, Lye Crocodile, 7/24 Honey, I Shrunk the Kids, 7/31 Happy Feet, 8/7 Ratatouille, 8/14 Hook, 8/21 Coco, 8/28 Matilda. Private Movie Screenings. Bring movie night to your next celebration. Private screenings are available for birthday parties, group events, and special gatherings Contact our team to create a custom movie experience at Cayton Children's Museum.



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Includes the Participating (in GA: Designated) Providers and Preventive Benefits Rider. Product not available in all states. Acceptance guaranteed for one insurance policy/certificate of this type. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solicitation. This specific offer is not available in CO, LA, NY; call 1-800-969-4781 or respond for similar offer. Certificate C250A (ID: C250E; PA: C250Q); Insurance Policy P150 (GA: P150GA; NY: P150NY; OK: P150OK; TN: P150TN); Rider kinds B438/B439 (GA: B439B).
6255

CALIFORNIA

FROM PAGE 2

enough to earn public trust.

California does not need to be anti-technology to be pro-guardrail. It can support innovation while asking the question: Are we building tools that help people understand the world, or tools that train people to bet on it?

The state has been through this cycle

before. First comes the exciting new platform. Then comes mass adoption. Then come the harms, lawsuits and years of regret.

This time, California should not wait for the lawsuit. It should write the rules while the market is still young enough to shape.

William Lu is a San Diego-based public policy graduate student, public sector operations professional and nonprofit board member.

AROUND TOWN

FROM PAGE 4

WHAT TO EAT & DRINK?

Khan Saab Desi Craft Kitchen Grand Opening: The Michelin Bib Gourmand-recognized restaurant is coming to Santa Monica. Created by Chef Imran Ali Mookhi, the restaurant showcases elevated Pakistani and Indian cuisine, handcrafted mocktails, and bold South Asian flavors made with exceptional attention to detail. Thursday, July 16, 7p.m., 115 Santa Monica Blvd. khan saaboc.com

The Lobster Celebrates 27th Anniversary: Enjoy freshly-made pizzas by Chef Govind Armstrong, a live DJ, drink specials, and happy hour pricing all night as the iconic oceanfront restaurant toasts 27 years in Santa Monica. Thursday, July 16, 6 - 9p.m., 1602 Ocean Ave. thelobster.com/events

The Infatuation’s “The Best Ice Cream In LA” includes multiple SaMo Spots: It says many of the scoops at Rori’s Artisanal Creamery (910 Montana Ave.) “are so crammed with chunky mix-ins that they’re almost miniature sundaes.” Also included are Bacio Di Latte (331 Santa Monica Blvd.) and McConnell’s (1456 3rd St. Promenade) along with multiple Venice spots (Jeni’s, Wanderlust, Salt & Straw). <https://www.theinfatuation.com/los-angeles/guides/best-ice-cream-los-angeles>

Sunday, July 19 is National Ice Cream Day: Yes, this is a thing! And it’s just the escapist thing we may need right now!

Rori’s Artisanal Creamery: Buy any single scoop and get it upgraded to a double scoop for FREE. 910 Montana Ave. instagram.com/roriscreamery

McConnell’s: Get a free extra scoop when you buy a single cone or cup. 1456 3rd Street Promenade mcconnells.com

Salt & Straw: “Serving Scoops for Local Charities”: A portion of the day’s proceeds will go to the organization that receives the most mentions. 1357 Abbot Kinney Blvd. saltandstraw.com/blogs/news/national-ice-cream-day-serving-scoops-for-local-charities

Origins Culinary Series: Shake, Sip & Savor with Ghost Tequila: Discover the story behind Ghost Tequila while learning the inspiration, techniques, and flavors that make each cocktail unique. Throughout a hands-on mixology class, you’ll shake, sip, and craft multiple signature cocktails while enjoying thoughtfully paired bites created by Chef Gemma. Wednesday, July 22, 6 - 9p.m., 13534 Bali Way Marina del Rey eventbrite.com/e/origins-culinary-series-shake-sip-savor-with-ghost-tequila-tickets-1992866811279

LA Mag Profiles New West Side Oyster Club: “A new addition to Santa Monica’s dining scene is putting a fresh spin on coastal seafood. Expect an approachable menu centered around oysters, shellfish, caviar, and seasonal cocktails, all served in a space inspired by classic beach-town charm. 🍷🦪” 1355 Ocean Ave. instagram.com/p/DaLaDi-E9gH

Further Afield: The Great Ice Cream Fair at Smorgasburg: In celebration of National Ice Cream Day, the weekly Sunday food-fest is hosting The Great Ice Cream Fair as part of their ongoing Ice Cream Alley celebration. The event will feature sweet treats from specialty vendors including SadGirl Creamery, Bernie’s, Moom Maam, Churros El Bochito, Boutcha Gelato, Sweet Lady Jane, Swrlies, and Innamorata Gelato. Sunday, July 19, 10a.m. - 4p.m., 777 Alameda St., LA instagram.com/smorgasburgla

Looking Ahead: National Night Out (8/4); SaMo Oceanfront Arts Festival (8/8); A Pierfect Benefit (9/19)

If there’s something you think is worth highlighting, you can reach out directly to me at sean@smdp.com. Let me know if you have any feedback on Around Town: Around Town: Massive COAST World Cup Event, National Ice Cream Day, & More!

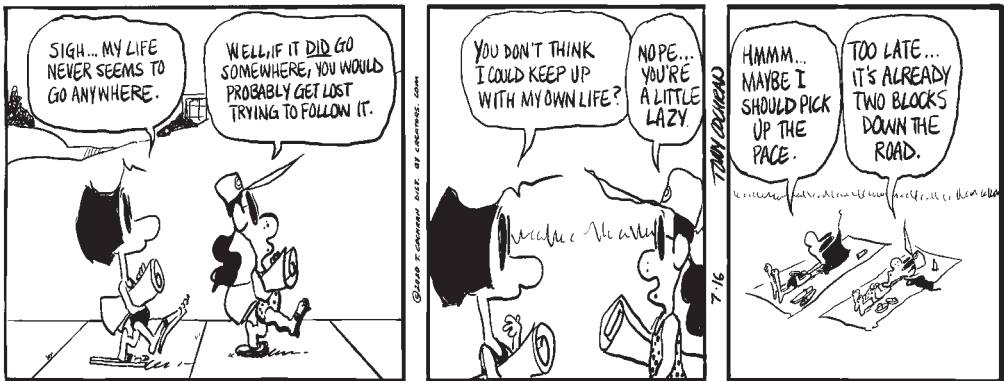
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Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



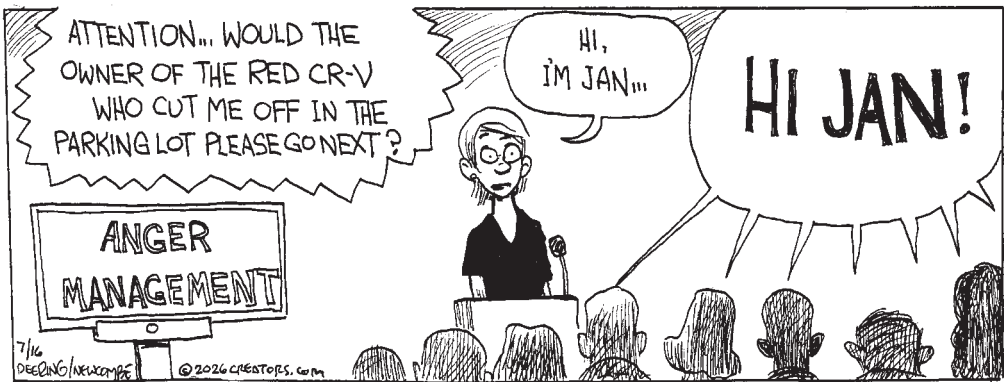
Dogs of C-Kennel

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

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Circus performers

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

Artist	Feat	Mime	Roller
Band	Fool	Money	coaster
Bikes	Funny	Noise	Seal
Cats	Giant	Perform	Show
Children	Girls	Pierrot	Take
Clem	Grinder	Pretend	Tame
Clown	Humour	Rapport	Tickets
Conjure	Joey	Red nose	Tightrope
Corn dog	Josh	Ride	walker
Danger	Kids	Riotous	Trip
Event	Lion	Risks	Tune
Fair	Loony	Roar	Zany

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

Mid-year merriment

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (July 16)

ARIES (March 21-April 19). The image of an overhead shot is interesting because overhead views reveal relationships between things that are hard to see from ground level. When you're in the maze, you see walls. When you're above the maze, you see the route.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You think you know what you want, but since humans are famous for wanting what's detrimental to their well-being, you're open to suggestions from the wise. Hold desire firmly enough to pursue it and loosely enough to learn from it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Even pleasant surprises can be off-putting when what you really want is stability. Given recent events, your desire for a more straightforward, no-nonsense, predictable sequence is understandable and the universe will comply.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's worth it to build freshness and novelty into your plans because new environments will bring out a different side of everyone. Much can unfold in the spirit of discovery, including opportunity, growth, expansion, bonding and plain ol' fun.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). A relationship is stuck in a back-and-forth pattern. Such a pattern requires participation. If you can't yet see how you are contributing, a realization will change that. Though you don't control the entire dance, you still control your next step.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Someone is getting in the way of your work by unnecessarily complicating things. They are not trying to solve the same puzzle as you. They are trying to solve the puzzle that is you. They are trying to impress you instead of understand you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You're still learning a place. There's more to be interested in than is readily apparent in these early stages. This environment will reveal itself to you over time. It's as though you're pressing on walls to find the secret doors.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You know so much and yet your mind is still open. That's why you're so valuable to a group. You model an ideal attitude and your input is vital. You'll figure out how to help people work together.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You want a person to take a step, so make it easy. Before asking for movement, make sure there's a clear, inviting next step available. People are more likely to advance when they can see where to place their foot.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It's not what you say but the way you say it that determines what happens next. You're very good at sensing the tone someone will respond to and delivering it just right. You're nothing short of inspired.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You've felt as though you needed closure from someone before you could move forward. Consider that maybe this closure is less about getting your due or getting answers and more about dropping the expectations and questions.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If you were floating down a river on a raft, you could leave the steering to the current. But this is no river. It's pavement to be pounded. It's signs to read. It's decisions about right or left. Your instincts are golden.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

Newsday Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Was ahead of
- 4 Ish
- 9 Fits (with)
- 14 Fiery feeling
- 15 Small ensembles
- 16 Abundance metaphor
- 17 Lads
- 19 Slow tempo
- 20 Turkey, mostly
- 21 Chilling
- 23 Was too slow to act
- 30 Nickname like Bill
- 31 Verdi opera based on the Bard
- 32 WWII fleet
- 35 ___-Roman wrestling
- 38 Sistine Chapel subject
- 39 Being the big kahuna
- 43 Bus driver for 1-Down
- 44 Calls, long before cells
- 45 Turndowns
- 46 Grapefruit kin
- 49 Mimic a mouse
- 51 Bad news for commuters
- 55 Pool owner's concern
- 56 Skin softener
- 59 It's not a good look
- 62 Oprah's bestie
- 66 Kin of Kim and Kourtney
- 67 Online finance company
- 68 Powerful suit
- 69 Command on a triangle
- 70 Blackens with soot
- 71 It means "most"

DOWN

- 1 *Simpsons* saxophonist
- 2 Youngest Greek god
- 3 Certain sneaker fabric
- 4 Muddy space
- 5 Shelley's sphere
- 6 Sambadrome locale
- 7 Tinkered (with)
- 8 Positive point
- 9 Chicago suburb
- 10 Mascot on a slushy drink cup
- 11 Founding Father nickname
- 12 Erode
- 13 ___-Caps (candy brand)

- 18 Get perfect
- 22 Letter on Greek euros
- 24 Oblige with an autograph
- 25 Delhi wrap
- 26 Change for the better
- 27 Long past
- 28 Landmark near the Crockett Hotel
- 29 Heavy reading
- 32 Scotch stat
- 33 Aquarium swimmer
- 34 Lute kin
- 36 Pixar software
- 37 Inedible 46-Across
- 40 Left camp improperly
- 41 Bird's wing bone
- 42 Unpaid TV spots

- 47 Like lemon sharks
- 48 Part of the UK
- 50 Watered down
- 52 What marine biologists watch sharks in
- 53 Bailiwick
- 54 Piece of the action
- 57 Safe stack
- 58 Steven Spielberg achievement in February 2026
- 59 Soar spot?
- 60 Phi follower
- 61 Fiesta cry
- 63 The person addressed
- 64 Pull-up muscle
- 65 Recent USCGA grad

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16				
17			18							19				
20							21		22					
		23		24	25	26						27	28	29
			30						31					
32	33	34		35			36	37			38			
39			40						41	42				
43						44						45		
46				47	48			49			50			
51						52	53					54		
			55							56		57	58	
59	60	61				62		63	64	65				
66						67						68		
69						70						71		

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

SB79

FROM PAGE 1

staff said zoning law generally requires that similarly situated parcels be treated alike, calling it a bar to what would otherwise resemble spot zoning.

Councilmember Lana Negrete cast the lone dissenting vote, saying she preferred the Planning Commission's original recommendation to upzone the multifamily parcels instead. She argued the single-family approach could invite speculative buying.

“My concern is that it actually creates a more speculative process, and properties become more vulnerable to be sold by corporate predators that come in

- Lana Negrete, Councilmember

“My concern is that it actually creates a more speculative process, and properties become more vulnerable to be sold by corporate predators that come in,” Negrete said, adding she wants staff to research which R1 parcels have ever been subject to rent control before a final decision.

SB 79 AND THE EXCLUSION OPTION

The debate stemmed from Senate Bill 79, the Abundant and Affordable Homes Near Transit Act, which took effect statewide July 1 and requires cities to allow greater height, density and floor-area ratio for qualifying housing developments within a half-mile of designated transit stops. In Santa Monica, the law applies near six qualifying “Tier 2” stops: three Metro E Line stations, three downtown bus stops, and, partially, the Expo/Bundy station in Los Angeles whose transit-oriented development zone extends into the city.

Under SB 79, cities may temporarily exclude sites from the law's requirements until one year after adoption of their 7th Cycle Housing Element, expected in Santa Monica around 2029 — meaning eligible sites could be shielded from SB 79 standards until roughly 2030. To qualify for that exclusion, a TOD zone must have at least a third of its parcels already permitting at least half of SB 79's density and floor-area standards, among other criteria.

City planners told the council that five of the city's six TOD zones already meet that threshold and can be excluded outright. The Expo/Bundy zone falls short: only about 19% of its 381 parcels currently meet the capacity test, largely because a majority of the zone

lies in Los Angeles and because commercially zoned parcels on the Santa Monica side are unusually large, leaving fewer individual sites to count toward the 33% requirement.

THE DEBATE OVER HOW TO CLOSE THE GAP

Planning staff had recommended increasing density standards on 59 R2-zoned and six R3-zoned parcels — 65 total — raising them to roughly 1.25 floor-area ratio and 40 dwelling units per acre, a level staff compared to the city's existing R3 and R4 standards. Staff said an analysis found low or no displacement risk for most of those parcels, citing existing rent-controlled and affordable units, ownership housing, and vacant lots.

Council members pressed staff on alternatives. Yeo said planners had also studied whether upzoning could be limited to parcels within a quarter-mile of the station, which would offer a “rational basis” tied to geography, but that option fell well short of the 33% threshold. Staff said including nearby Los Angeles parcels in the calculation would not close the gap either, since the city's Technical Assistance request to the state housing department found Los Angeles parcels sat just over 34% on their own — not enough combined benefit to help Santa Monica.

Zernitskaya noted that on a typical 5,500-square-foot R1 lot, SB 79 could allow about five new units, only marginally more than what state laws such as SB 9 or AB 1123 already permit, while carrying far less displacement risk given that most R1 properties are owner-occupied.

Mayor Caroline Torosis and Councilmember Dan Hall raised the possibility of narrowing which R1 parcels would be upzoned by distance to the station entrance or by using streets as boundaries, though staff and the city attorney's office cautioned any such approach would need further legal review to avoid arbitrary distinctions between neighbors.

Raskin also linked the debate to longstanding concerns about the Ellis Act that governs evictions from rent controlled units, saying the city has seen properties removed from the rental market and left vacant for years, and argued that delaying SB 79 implementation on multifamily parcels reduces the incentive for property owners to begin that process early in anticipation of future upzoning.

THE VOTE

The motion directed staff to introduce for first reading an ordinance excluding the five qualifying TOD zones plus the downtown bus stops from SB 79 requirements, while withholding action on the Expo/Bundy zone. Staff was instructed to return with options for upzoning R1 parcels — potentially fewer than all 212, if a legally defensible geographic boundary can be identified — sufficient to meet the 52-parcel threshold needed to qualify the Expo/Bundy zone for exclusion. Zernitskaya asked that staff retain the option of upzoning all 212 R1 parcels as a fallback in case a narrower boundary cannot be justified.

The roll call passed 5-1, with council members Zernitskaya, Snell, Raskin, Hall and Torosis voting yes and Negrete voting no. Councilman Jesse Zwick abstained from the discussion due to a conflict with his employer.

Staff said any resulting ordinance affecting the Expo/Bundy zone would need to return to council for further action before it could take effect.

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