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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE ..... PAGE 2
LAUGHING MATTERS ..... PAGE 4
COMICS ..... PAGE 8
CROSSWORD ..... PAGE 9
POLICE / FIRE LOG ..... PAGE 10

Venice leads Westside in homeless population

MADELEINE PAUKER
Daily Press Staff Writer

The number of people experiencing homelessness is rising steeply across the Westside and stabilizing in Santa Monica, although the city still has the second-largest homeless population in the area.

The Westside's homeless population rose about 20% this year to 3,050, the highest growth of any area in Los Angeles County, according to a January point-in-time count organized by the Los Angeles County Homeless Services Authority. The 20% increase in the homeless population reverses a 19% decrease in 2018.

The homeless population of both Santa Monica and the

SEE **HOMELESS** PAGE 6

LA Opera Camp gives kids a stage to learn about life



Taso Papadakis

SONG: Santa Monica youth are participating in the pre-professional Los Angeles Opera Camp this month.

ANGEL CARRERAS
Daily Press Staff Writer

A couple of Santa Monicans are learning about social justice and civil rights history this summer, and it's happening not in the classroom, but on stage.

Sabina Egan and Valentina Shelton, a camper and counselor respectively, are currently at the tail-end of their stay at the Los Angeles Opera Camp. The camp is a pre-professional opera camp for 72 kids and young adults ages 9-17, teaching them the ins and outs of putting together a full-fledged opera.

This Saturday, campers will perform the culmination of their camp efforts into a production dubbed "Then I Stood Up: A Civil Rights Cycle". The production stitches together the suites of music from previous Opera Camp productions, which focused on the Terezín concentration camps, Japanese internment camps, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

When campers aren't crafting their costumes or getting their staging just right, they're provided contextual history lessons about social injustices throughout history via field trips, special guest speaker talks and more.

Soon-to-be 11-year-old Egan says she's learned lot thus far in her three weeks of camp.

"It's super fun and it's hard work but I love it," Egan said. "I've learned how to read music better, learned a lot about the history of

SEE **CAMP** PAGE 6







ORIGAMI

Vanessa Alvarado

Crafty Kids-Origami was held at Pico Branch this week. This was a bilingual English/Spanish program. Participants made three origami animals together (Cat/Gato, Dog/Perro, and Fish/Pez). The children then had an opportunity to take a look at other origami books on display and make more origami's of their choice


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CITY OF SANTA MONICA

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Consideration of proposed resolution to adjust the Affordable Housing Unit Development Cost for new market-rate multifamily development pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.64.070(C)

WHEN: Tuesday, August 13, 2019
6:30 P.M.

WHERE: Santa Monica City Hall, Council Chambers, Room #213
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, California

HEARING DESCRIPTION
The City Council will conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed adoption of a resolution which would adjust the Affordable Housing Unit Development Cost that developers of multi-family projects may pay to the City pursuant to Section 9.64.070(C) of the City's Affordable Housing Production Program. The existing Affordable Housing Unit Development Cost of $374,555 would be increased by $8,240. Effective November 1, 2019, the adjusted Affordable Housing Unit Development Cost would be $382,795.

The adjustments to the Affordable Housing Unit Development Cost reflect changes in land and construction costs based on a methodology adopted by the City Council on June 13, 2006. An explanation of this methodology and the resulting adjustment to the fee are set forth in a memorandum prepared by the City. A copy of this memorandum is now available at the City Clerk's Office in Room 102 of City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California or the Housing Division Office at 1901 Main St., Suite B, Santa Monica, California. This information is also available on the City's web site (Housing section).

HOW TO COMMENT:
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment on this matter. You or your representative, or any other persons may comment at the City Council's public hearing or by writing a letter.

Letters should be addressed to:
Mayor and City Council
City Hall
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION
Further information may be obtained from the City Housing Division at the address above or by calling (310) 458-8702.

The meeting facility is accessible to persons with disabilities. If you have any special needs such as sign language interpreting, etc., please contact the City Clerk's Office at (310) 458-8211 or TDD: (310) 917-6626.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica, at or prior to the Public Hearing.

ESPAÑOL
Esta es una noticia de una audiencia pública para aumentar una tarifa sobre el desarrollo de viviendas "multi-familiar" en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Melinda Espinoza en la División de Viviendas al número (310) 458-8702.

What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Friday, August 2

Mad Science: What Do You Know About H2O?!
A high-energy exploration of water conservation, surface tension, and the three states of matter. For ages 4-11. (45 min.) Fairview Branch Library, 2:30 - 3:15 p.m.

Pool Open
The pool will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Passes go on sale at 9 a.m. Annenberg Community Beach House

Saturday, August 3

Paws to Read
Practice your reading skills by reading to a trained therapy dog from Paws 4 Healing. Sign-up in advance for a 15-minute period. Montana Avenue Branch Library, 2 - 3 p.m.

Millinery Archaeology with Leslie Robinson
What can we learn about vintage hats from the reverse engineering process? Take a part a vintage hat and repurpose to suit your own style. Leslie provides a vintage hat for you to deconstruct and assemble with new fabrics, feathers, beads, buttons and other options. Cost: $45 + $20 cash material fee payable to instructor. 1 - 4 p.m. Register online at https://apm.activecommunities.com/santamonicarecreation/Activity_Search/74076.

Ocean Park Book Group
A Monthly Meeting of the Ocean Park Book Group. Meets the 1st Saturday of the Month. Open to All. No Registration Required. Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann. Ocean Park Branch Library, 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 4

Pool Open
The pool will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Passes go on sale at 9 a.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH.

Monday, August 5

Architectural Review Board Meeting
The Santa Monica Architectural Review Board normally meets on the first and third Monday of every month in the City Council Chamber. City Hall, 7 p.m.

The Disabilities Commission Regular Meeting
The mission of the Disabilities Commission is to help improve the quality of life for people with disabilities in Santa Monica by prioritizing issues of concern and advising the City Council and staff on those issues. The Commission recommends ways to maximize participation of people with disabilities in all facets of City life and increase awareness of the abilities, rights and issues of people with disabilities throughout the community. Ken Edwards Center, 6:30 p.m.

Connected Families: Robot Playtime
Families play with robots and coding toys. Work together to complete challenges or just have fun! For families with children. Main Library. 2:30 - 4 p.m.

Tuesday, August 6

Gentle Yoga at Fairview
In a class that is safe for seniors and beginners, as well as relaxing and stress-releasing for pros, veteran instructor Raghavan guides you through a gentle session of yoga and meditation. Space is limited. Please bring a mat or towel to the program. Fairview Branch Library. 6:30 p.m.

Maker Space: Decorative Book Ends
Decorate a bookend or two any way you like and add it to your own home library! Materials provided. Ages 18+ Ocean Park Branch Library. 6 - 7 p.m.

Walk-In Tutoring
Friendly volunteer tutors provide help with basic reading, writing, and computer skills; using the Internet to search for information; opening and using an email account; filling out online forms or applications; learning how to write a resume or cover letter; and more. Main Library, 5 - 7 p.m.

Summer Activity Program: The Arty Loon Showtime Spectacular!
Arty brings his brand of magic, juggling, puppetry, storytelling and balloon twisting into a spectacular new show you do not want to miss! Ages 4-11. Free tickets will be available at 2 p.m. Pico Branch Library, 2:30 - 3:15 p.m.

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

E-cigarette giant Juul's campaign donations favor Democrats

RICHARD LARDNER AND MATTHEW PERRONE
Associated Press

E-cigarette giant Juul Labs gave nearly $100,000 to members of Congress during the first half of 2019 as the company faced the bulk of the blame for a surge of underage vaping and calls for tighter government regulation of the industry.

The donations from Juul's political action committee represent a sharp increase over last year's total, according to a Federal Election Commission report released Thursday that shows most of the money went to Democrats.

The boost in contributions is the latest sign of the company's expanding influence operation in Washington and around the country. An explosion of underage vaping has put Juul in the crosshairs of a number of Democrats, who have charged the company's early advertising and marketing led to the current wave of vaping by American teens.

Juul is ramping up its political giving as Congress considers legislation to raise the minimum age to purchase all tobacco and vaping products from 18 to 21.

Juul and cigarette maker Altria — which controls 35 percent of the vaping company — have backed a Senate bill that raises the age nationally. The bill does not include additional measures that anti-tobacco groups say are needed to curb underage use, such as banning flavored products and online sales.

The new FEC figures show that Democrats, who won control of the House during last year's elections, received $74,000 from Juul's PAC between January 1 and June 30 while Republicans received $22,500. Juul also gave $2,500 to a left-leaning group called VoteVets.

Ted Kwong, a spokesman for Juul, said in a statement that the company "strives to support candidates on both sides of the aisle" as part of its mission to "improve the lives" of smokers and "combat underage use."

Juul donated $2,500 to Rep. Sanford Bishop, D-Ga. Bishop has co-sponsored legislation to exempt most e-cigarettes on the market from health reviews by the Food and Drug Administration. Rep. Cedric Richmond, D-La., received $7,500, the largest donation to a single lawmaker. Richmond is co-chairman of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden's campaign and a former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The company gave $5,000 each to the Congressional Black Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' political action committees. The company also gave $2,500 the ASPIRE political action committee that raises money for Asian American candidates for Congress.

Juul gave $5,000 to New Hampshire Democrat Jeanne Shaheen, who has called e-cigarette companies the "culprits of this epidemic" of underage vaping. Legislation introduced by Shaheen would force manufacturers to fund anti-vaping education and prevention efforts for teenagers through federal user fees.

Sens. Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona and Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada, both Democrats, each received $5,000 from Juul.

Juul executives have said the company never intended its e-cigarettes to be adopted by underage teenagers. During a congressional hearing last week, Juul co-founder James Monsees testified that Juul developed its blockbuster vaping device and flavor pods for adult smokers who want to stop. "Combating underage use" is the company's highest priority, Monsees added.

Most health experts say that e-cigarettes are probably less harmful than traditional paper-and-tobacco cigarettes, which cause cancer, lung disease and stroke. But neither Juul nor any other e-cigarette has yet been approved by the FDA to help smokers quit.

Juul has assembled an extensive network of lobbyists amid mounting concern over e-cigarettes and warnings from the FDA that regulatory steps may be inevitable to combat what public health officials and anti-smoking groups have described as an epidemic of youth vaping.

The company also has become a generous political donor, giving tens of thousands of dollars over the last 18 months to candidates for state and national offices as well as political organizations, according to the Federal Election Commission data and state campaign finance records.

During the first half of 2019, Juul spent $1.9 million on lobbying Congress, the White House and FDA as the company expanded its pool of Washington insiders with ties to Republicans and Democrats in positions of authority.

Among those lobbying on Juul's behalf are Jim Esquea, who worked during the Obama administration as an assistant secretary at the Department of Health and Human Services, and Ted McCann, who was a top policy aide to former House Speaker Paul Ryan. Juul hired Fulcrum Public Affairs in January, adding to its lobbying ranks former aides to Obama-era Labor Secretary Hilda Solis and Rep. Maxine Waters, the California Democrat who chairs the House Financial Services Committee.

In California, where Juul is headquartered, the company has donated close to $99,000 since early last year to members of the state legislature, political action committees and committees set up to influence the outcome of ballot measures.

About a third of the money went to Assemblymember Adam Gray, a Democrat from Merced who chairs the powerful Governmental Organization Committee. Gray's re-election campaign received $8,800 from Juul and the company gave another $25,000 to Valley Solutions, Gray's ballot measure committee.

Legislation introduced by Gray and other assemblymembers earlier this month to curb youth use of vaping products was criticized by the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action Network as an industry-friendly measure that should be called the "Juul Market Share Protection Act."

Despite Juul's commitment to keeping its products out of teen hands, the company has

SEE **DONATIONS** PAGE 5

City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Consideration of proposed resolution to adjust the Affordable Housing Unit Base Fee for new market-rate multifamily development pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.64.070(B).

WHEN: Tuesday, August 13, 2019
6:30 P.M.

WHERE: Santa Monica City Hall, Council Chambers, Room #213
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, California

HEARING DESCRIPTION
The City Council will conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed adoption of a resolution which would adjust the Affordable Housing Unit Base Fee that developers of multi-family projects may pay to the City pursuant to Section 9.64.070(b) of the City's Affordable Housing Production Program. The existing Affordable Housing Unit Base fee for new market rate apartments of $35.71 per square foot would be increased by $0.79 per square foot of floor area and the existing Affordable Housing Unit Base fee for new market rate condominiums of $41.70 would be increased by $0.92 per square foot of floor area. Effective on November 1, 2019, the adjusted Affordable Housing Unit Base fee would be $36.49 per square foot of floor area for new market rate apartment buildings and would be $42.62 per square foot of floor area for new market rate condominium buildings.

The adjustments to the Affordable Housing Unit Base Fee reflect changes in land and construction costs based on a methodology adopted by the City Council on June 13, 2006. An explanation of this methodology and the resulting adjustment to the fee are set forth in a memorandum prepared by the City. A copy of this memorandum is now available at the City Clerk's Office in Room 102 of City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California or the Housing Division Office at 1901 Main Street, Suite B, Santa Monica, California. This information is also available on the City's web site (Housing section).

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Laughing Matters

Jack Neworth
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

"Moscow Mitch" CRIES McCarthyism

Featured in the two Presidential Debates on CNN this past week were perhaps too many qualified candidates. It worries me that, with all the Democrats in-fighting, the "Criminal Trump," aka "individual 1," could steal a 2nd term. (If he does, I'd slit my wrists, except I have an electric razor.)

Criminal Trump's despicable racism is no surprise. On the day after his "election" (aided by Russia, Wiki Leaks and 4 of his administration in prison or on their way) I knew Trump was going to be our generation's George Wallace.

What tipped me off was former KKK Grand Wizard David Duke. Less than 24 hour after the election, Duke stared into a news camera, and warned Trump, "Don't forget who got you elected." Clearly, Trump hasn't.

But, instead of the debates, I thought I'd write about Senate Leader, Mitch McConnell who has held that office since 2014 (although it seems way longer given all the harm he's created.) In 2008, as Senate Minority leader, it was Mitch who infamously said the day after Barack Obama's victory, "I will do everything in my power to make Obama a 1-term President," adding "I will not cooperate in the passage of a singe one of his programs." How's that for "bi-partisan spirit?"

Even to his supporters, McConnell is not considered outgoing or charming and doesn't exactly have the looks of fellow Senator, Mitt Romney. Many detractors note that Mitch has the appearance of a tortoise. (I guaranty Donald Trump has a far meaner nickname for Mitch that, like a vindictive child, he's saving for when it can hurt the most.)

Another interesting facet about Mitch is his remarkable wealth. For example, in 2005, his net worth was $2,962,015 but in 2015 it was $26,927,535. That's an increase of $23,965,520 (+809.1%. How's that for a "pay raise?") It does give rise to the question, how does a senator earning $193,400 a year increase his net worth by nearly $2.4 million a year, every year for a decade? Seems more than a little suspicious.

But apparently, in addition to being far wealthier than we ever imagined, Mitch is far more sensitive. I say that because he's taken great umbrage at the campaign slogan from his opponents looking to unseat him this fall, "Ditch Mitch." And even more upsetting to snowflake Mitch is the recent catch phrase, "Moscow Mitch"

As it happens there's a small town in Kentucky named Moscow, which was founded in 1829 and turned into an unincorporated area in 1831. It appears so small it hasn't had a post office since1955. (Which makes one wonder what they've done with all that backed up mail.)

So, how did the term, "Moscow Mitch," originate? For some inexplicable reason, Mitch has blocked and seemingly will block any bill from coming to the Senate floor that would provide funding to prevent foreign governments from attacking out 2020 election. Wouldn't a patriotic American want just the opposite, that is for our elections to be free of outside interference? You'd think.

The whole thing makes me wonder. Throw in Mitch's sudden wealth and I wonder more. I have no doubt without Russia "Criminal Trump" wouldn't have become # 45. (Unless #45 was part of his orange jumpsuit.) So maybe it's as simple as Moscow Mitch desperately needs Criminal Trump to win in 2020 so he can stay Leader of the Senate. Talk about "party over country."

By the time you read this criminal Trump will have staged another rally, this one in Cincinnati. Criminal's hate-filled rallies remind me more and more of the infamous Nuremberg Nazi rallies during the 20's and 30's. (Actually there are many comparisons between Hitler and Criminal Trump i.e. "the big lie theory," separating families and kids in cages, but I'll spare you for now.)

I'll just close with the last paragraph of the Baltimore Sun's July 27th editorial. It was in response to Criminal Trump's vile tweet attacking highly-respected African-American Congressman Elijah Cummings whose district includes Baltimore and who is Chairman of the Powerful House Oversight Committee and Government Reform. Trump fears "oversight," as much s he does sharks. His tweet included, "Rat infested Baltimore where no human being would want to live." (FYI,"Infestation" is a word Hitler often used to describe Jews.)

The editorial closes with, "Finally, we would tell the most dishonest man to ever occupy the Oval Office, the mocker of war heroes, the gleeful grabber of women's private parts, the serial bankrupter of businesses, the useful idiot of Vladimir Putin and the guy who insisted there are "good people" among murderous neo-Nazis that he's still not fooling most Americans into believing he's even slightly competent in his current post. Or that he possesses a scintilla of integrity. Better to have some vermin living in your neighborhood than to be one."

Amen.

Jack is at: facebook.com/jackneworth, twitter.com/jackneworth and jackdailypress@aol.com

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GOP pushes immigration bill, skirting rules as Dems protest

LISA MASCARO
AP Congressional Correspondent

Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee upended the rules Thursday for immigration legislation that would extend family detentions as chairman Lindsey Graham muscled the measure forward over the objections of Democrats.

It's one last battle, led by a top ally of President Donald Trump, before senators break for a long August recess and the start of 2020 campaigning with immigration at the forefront of the debate.

Graham gaveled open the hearing saying he wasn't going to wait any longer to address the crisis at the southern border. He acknowledged that his outreach to Democrats has failed to reach a compromise on detention policies for children and families.

In pushing the bill forward, the chairman skirted committee rules allowing for amendments and requiring minority participation in certain actions, including to end debate.

"What am I supposed to do?" asked the South Carolina Republican. "We have a right to vote."

Democrats have protested the bill and refused to attend a panel session last week, setting off the battle Thursday. They voted against the measure, decrying what Rhode Island Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse called an "illegitimate process."

Ripping up a copy of the committee's rules, Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, a former chairman of the panel, questioned why normal rules were being discarded.

"Apparently, it's for legislation to give the president what he wants in his political war on immigration," Leahy said.

"It's supposed to be the Senate Judiciary Committee, not the Donald Trump committee."

The bill would change existing law, which limits family detentions to 20 days for migrants traveling with children and requires them to be released pending asylum hearings. Instead, Graham's bill would allow longer detentions by doing away with the limits, which have been part of the so-called Flores legal settlement.

Among other changes, the legislation would restructure asylum law to have applicants apply in Mexico and other countries, rather than when they arrive at the U.S. border, and bring on 500 new immigration judges to help process the backlog of cases.

Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, said the bill is unworkable. "In a word, it's nuts and probably unconstitutional," she said.

The morning hearing set off a particularly heated dispute over not just immigration policy, which often divides the political parties, but the traditions of the Senate, where Republicans hold the majority and have chipped away at longstanding rules.

Ground zero for much of the uproar has been the work of the Judiciary Committee, which handled Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court last year.

Senate rules were changed to allow faster confirmation of Trump's judicial nominees, and confirming Kavanaugh and filling court vacancies with Trump's picks has been a top accomplishment of the Republican-led Senate.

Graham, who faces his own re-election alongside Trump in 2020, acknowledged his immigration bill may not be approved by the Senate — and faces even less chance in the House, where Democrats have the majority.

He indicated a willingness to continue negotiating with Democrats and the president on a compromise, but said he wasn't going to leave for the August break without acting.

Graham also acknowledged that negotiating a bipartisan solution can be a problem when Trump changes his mind, as he did last year on immigration policy.

In earlier immigration talks Trumps has suggested he liked one bipartisan approach only to drop it days later. "The Tuesday-Thursday Trump is a real dilemma," Graham said.

"Bipartisanship is going to be required," he said. "Maybe we can get there."

Lawmakers are eager to return home saying they have taken action to stem the crisis at the border.

DONATIONS

FROM PAGE 3

fought in California and other states against legislation that anti-tobacco groups have argued would help to move toward that goal.

Juul and the Vapor Technology Association, a trade group that lists Juul as a platinum member, opposed a California bill that would have banned flavored tobacco products, arguing such a prohibition would only hurt adults trying to quit smoking.

Juul and Altria lobbyists in Arizona supported legislation to raise the minimum buying age for tobacco products and e-cigarettes to 21 but which included language that would bar cities and counties from imposing regulations on tobacco and e-cigarettes. Local governments often impose stricter rules than the state does. In Montana, Juul opposed measures to require convenience stores that sell e-cigarettes to keep them behind the counter and to apply the state's tobacco tax to e-cigarettes.

Juul didn't testify against the tax measure in Montana, but several Montana vape shop owners did.

"Taxing a product that helps people? I don't see the point in that," said Ron Marshall of Freedom Vapes.

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City of Santa Monica

CITY OF SANTA MONICA

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

DATE/TIME: August 5, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Council Chambers, (wheelchair accessible)
Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street

PROPERTIES:

- 19ARB-0173: 1021 Pacific Street: Multi-Unit Residential
- 19ARB-0179: 1828 Ocean Avenue: Mixed-Use
- 19ARB-0178: 1921 Ocean Front Walk: Mixed-Use
- 19ARB-0238: 1115 14th Street: Multi-Unit Residential
- 19ARB-0193: 1707 Cloverfield: Mixed-Use
- 18ARB-0231: 1650 Lincoln Boulevard: Mixed-Use

PRELIMINARY REVIEW(S):

- None.

More information is available on-line at https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Architectural-Review-Board/ or at (310) 458-8341 (en espanol tambien). Plans may be reviewed at City Hall during business hours. Comments are invited at the hearing or in writing (FAX 310-458-3380, e-mail russell.bunim@smgov.net, or mail Santa Monica City Planning Division, 1685 Main St., Rm. 212, Santa Monica, CA 90401). The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. For disability-related accommodations, please contact 310-458-8701 or TTY 310-450-8696 a minimum of 72 hours in advance. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Santa Monica "Big Blue" Bus Lines #1, #2, #3, Rapid 3, #7, #8, #9, Rapid #10, and #18 service City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall, on Olympic Drive and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

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CAMP

FROM PAGE 1

the operas were doing and learned a lot about the civil rights movement, internment camps, concentration camps."

In their three weeks, campers had the opportunity to meet community organizers such as the Watts Labor Community Action Committee, son of James Forman Sr. Chaka Forman and Carlotta Walls LaNier, the youngest member of the Little Rock Nine.

Meeting people not long removed from racist acts profoundly affected the young Egan.

"They're so brave," she said. "It amazes me what they went through and I hate the fact that they had to go through that. Why did people do that to them?"

Shelton, a Santa Monica-based counselor for the camp who's in between semesters at the University of Miami, says she chose to work at the camp this summer instead of vacationing because she believes in the work the camp does, noting she went through the camp herself when she was younger.

"I think that learning through the arts and music is one of the most critical ways we can teach and have people learn things now," she said. "To learn about people who were and are suppressed and relate that to now...there's just so much relevance to what they're singing about now and they're learning that it in an interactive way."

For more information, visit LAopera.org

angel@smdp.com



Taso Papadakis

OPERA: In their three weeks, at Opera Camp, students had the opportunity to meet community organizers.

HOMELESS

FROM PAGE 1

county rose dramatically between 2014 and 2017. The trend showed signs of slowing or reversing in 2018, when the county reported a 3% decrease and Santa Monica's population grew by 4% after jumping 26% the previous year.

But the county's homeless population increased by 12% this year and the number of people experiencing homelessness on the Westside, excluding Santa Monica, rose about 31%.

Of the 15 neighborhoods and cities on the Westside, Venice led the pack with 1,128 people experiencing homelessness, an increase of 33% since 2018.

Santa Monica came close behind with 985 people, but the city's homeless population grew by only 3% this year.

The nature of homelessness in the adjacent communities differs in some noticeable ways.

In Venice, where 40% of homeless people live in their vehicles, vans and RVs are a fixture of both residential and commercial streets. Santa Monica has stricter rules on overnight parking and just 11% of its homeless population lives in vehicles.

Venice also has more homeless people per capita than Santa Monica. Venice's total population is roughly 40,000, less than half the size of Santa Monica's, and people experiencing homelessness make up 3% of its population. Only 1% of Santa Monica's 92,000 residents are homeless.

The third-largest homeless population on the Westside is in West Los Angeles. The number of people experiencing homelessness grew 69% this year to 480 people. 39% of the population live in vehicles.

Most communities near Santa Monica also saw sharp increases, except Brentwood, where the population plunged from 62 to 16, and Pacific Palisades, where the number of people experiencing homelessness dropped to 81 from 107. Increases in the population of people living in vehicles drove overall population growth in many areas.

Malibu's population more than quadrupled from 30 to 154. About 65% of the city's new homeless residents live in vehicles.

Mar Vista's population climbed a modest 9% to 147, while neighboring Palms almost doubled to 168 people. 60% of people experiencing homelessness in Mar Vista live in vehicles. In Palms, the proportion is 48%.

Further east, Culver City's population doubled to 236, with 38% living in vehicles. To the south, Marina Del Rey's population also doubled but only to 24 people, three of whom live in cars.

madeleine@smdp.com

Once a retail shrine, flagship stores lose their shine

ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Retail Writer

It used to be considered the retailer's crown jewel — a large format store on a swank corridor that showed off the best of what a brand had to offer.

But now the so-called flagship store is disappearing from high-profile shopping thoroughfares like Manhattan's Madison Avenue and Chicago's Magnificent Mile because of skyrocketing rents and the shift to online shopping.

Over the last year or so, Gap, Tommy Hilfiger, Lord & Taylor and Polo Ralph Lauren have closed their flagship stores on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue. Abercrombie announced in May that it was closing three more of its big locations — an Abercrombie store in Milan, an Abercrombie store in Fukuoka, Japan and a Hollister-branded store in Manhattan's SoHo area. The announcement came after the teen retailer shut down flagships in Hong Kong and Copenhagen.

Other retailers are reimagining the flagship concept instead of abandoning it altogether. Nike, for instance, opened a massive store on Fifth Avenue late last year that doesn't have any cash registers. It lets shoppers see details of items displayed on a mannequin by scanning the QR code and then having those items delivered to a fitting room or a designated pickup spot. Levi Strauss & Co.'s new flagship in Manhattan's Time Square features larger dressing rooms with call buttons and tailors who can add trims and patches to customers' jeans.

Those still clinging to the old concept, however, are having a harder time. The latest victim could be Barneys New York, which opened its 10-story Madison Avenue store in 1993 and became a cultural icon in luxury shopping but now risks closure. High rents and a dramatic shift toward online shopping are pressuring it to evaluate restructuring options, including possible bankruptcy, according to a source close to the matter who asked to remain anonymous because the discussions are confidential.

Joseph Aquino, who runs his namesake real estate services firm, says the days of the shop-til-you drop mentality on Madison Avenue popularized by the HBO popular series of the 1990s "Sex in the City" are over.

"She was 45 and now she is 65... She isn't shopping like she was 45," Aquino said. "We are in the phase where a lot of younger shoppers don't want to go the high street. They sit around and buy online and that's what we are fighting against."

The concept of a flagship store is more than a century old and used to be limited to retailers' biggest store — one in their first or most prominent location. But in the last 20 years, a flagship store frenzy took hold and retailers from Gap to H&M looked at them as a must-have shrine to their brands, opening multiple flagships in multiple locations. Not only that but they were willing to pay exorbitant sums of money to showcase their merchandise in luxury corridors.

Rents have swelled so much, however, that many retailers can no longer justify the high price, especially as more shoppers shift their spending online and physical stores lose foot traffic.

CoStar Group, a real estate research firm, examined retail leasing at luxury corridors in seven cities: Miami's Lincoln Road, Beverly Hills' Golden Triangle, Chicago's Magnificent Mile, Washington D.C.'s Georgetown district, Boston's Newbury Street, Manhattan's Fifth Avenue and San Francisco's Union Square. It found the vacancy rate shot up to 7% last year from 3% in 2017 — greater than the 4% those areas saw in the Great Recession.

Last year, the net number of retail square footage lost in these corridors topped 353,000, surpassing the 214,000 loss of square feet seen in 2009. The loss was exaggerated by Macy's selling of its I. Magnin portion of its flagship store at Union Square in San Francisco. But CoStar found that excluding even that move, every high-end shopping corridor it tracked saw a weakening trend.

As a result, rents on Madison Avenue and Fifth Avenue have taken a hit as demand for these locations have fallen. Average annual asking rents for ground floor locations for the Fifth Avenue strip between 49th and 60th Street was $2,779 per square feet in the first quarter of 2019, down 11% from its peak of the first quarter of 2017, says commercial real estate broker Cushman & Wakefield.

But many analysts believe they haven't fallen far enough. In fact, commercial rents in 45 out of the 60 cities including New York, Los Angeles and Miami, are higher than in 2009 when the economy was in a recession, according to data from CBRE, a commercial real estate service firm. In the case of Barneys New York's Madison Avenue store, the landlord there reportedly raised its rent to $30 million from $16 million earlier this year. A Barneys spokeswoman declined to comment.

Still, flagship stores aren't dead. Many retailers like Nike and Levi are embracing new versions that beckon shoppers with less merchandise and more high-tech experiences.

"I don't think you have a need for these massive stores," Stacey Widlitz, president of SW Retail Advisors, said. "Shoppers are shopping completely differently. You don't need a full assortment. They have to become an experience, letting customers get to know who you are versus selling stuff."

A growing number of retailers are also thinking smaller. Hollister, for instance, is embracing shrunken stores that offer online services and serve both local and tourist customers.

"Our customers continue to want smaller, more intimate stores where they can interact with associates and our smaller prototypes have proven higher productivity," said Abercrombie in an emailed statement.

Tommy Hilfiger, which also closed its other U.S. flagships on the swank Collins Avenue in Miami, will be testing smaller shops with online interaction in the U.S. that could be more like pop-ups.

Caroline Nash, 18 of Washington, D.C. says she finds massive stores too overwhelming, especially when she can get the merchandise online.

"I associate big stores with long fitting lines and big crowds," Nash said. "Unless it is something that offers a different experience, I'm not interested."

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6096E-0917 MB17-NM008Ec

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (August 2nd)

The bump in status that is your cosmic birthday gift is rather exciting, may make you smile and certainly will make you sweat, as keeping this elevation takes work. Just remember that status is not the only way to power, which is something you already possess. A special relationship will bring lightness to your realm. Aries and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 4, 31, 20, 45 and 18.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Though you can't actually try on another person's heart, following your curiosity will get you as close as possible to understanding a person's feelings, passions and drives.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Doubts set in. Does what you're doing matter? Is it adding up the way you wanted it to? This is a rabbit hole of thought that you don't want to fall into. Avoid. Strike up the band, and march right past it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). As much as you tried to stay out of it, taking on certain responsibilities has become a compulsion for you. You can't not volunteer. You may as well own it. This job was meant for you.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It feels nice to be understood, but being (SET ITAL) misunderstood (END ITAL) is better for you. It makes you work harder. It leads you to create and problem-solve. It brings you to the deepest parts of your soul.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Cultivating your aura and then turning that vision outward may work for the guru meditating alone on the top of the mountain, but it's not going to work in your busy life. Calmly breathe through life's inconveniences. That's spiritual evolution.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Don't assume that what others are doing is all that's needed. You have something different to give, and though they might not realize it right away, your contribution is as vital as anyone's, if not more so.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). With your incredibly opulent powers of imagination surging today, you can apply yourself in any number of directions, including the past, the future and any state of mind or being you can conjure.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There will be many different people and personalities to contend with, each with their own agenda. Settle on an itinerary you can all agree to, and then enjoy the wave of relaxed energy that rests upon your scene.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). It will be fun to spend time with the socially smooth, the lighthearted friends who know how to keep the party sailing along in any sort of weather. These are good times.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Following through on an impulse takes courage. Not following through takes self-control. Knowing which choice to make in this regard takes wisdom, which is the rarest quality of the three, but you possess plenty.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You don't expect to be paid for every effort you make. However, expecting some manner of reward from things is just smart. And knowing the nature of that reward, however nuanced and ethereal it may be, is even smarter.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Maybe the thing you want to do will be seen as eccentric, but it makes perfect sense to you. For the most part, people will be drawn in by your complexity, and your mysterious ways will attract fans.

Cosmic Cat Vs. Bull

Some people have a personality, and some people (SET ITAL) are (END ITAL) a personality, possessing a character so unmistakably their own that they've managed to eliminate any confusion as to their role. Venus in Leo squares off to Uranus in Taurus. If this day were a person, it would be such a person, unmistakably unique and highly entertaining.

WEEKEND LOVE FORECAST

ARIES: Chances are that the smooth operator got that way by having plenty of practice. TAURUS: The rebel actually does need a cause. With nothing to rebel against, it's just called "moody." GEMINI: Text doesn't usually convey tone as well as other mediums, but you're one exceptional texter. You come through loud and clear. CANCER: To study a person is to love that person. LEO: You don't have to talk about anything too deep to keep the positive vibes bouncing between you. VIRGO: Technology could be a hindrance to love. When possible, go old-school. LIBRA: Make sure a person really knows you and is not making up a story of you to fall in love with. SCORPIO: You'll come across someone so enthralling it makes you forget about whatever bothersome thing was happening in the workaday world. SAGITTARIUS: The hand of destiny will be felt as a third party in a relationship, a seasoned matchmaker pulling you together with someone. CAPRICORN: When you choose the right atmosphere, the date takes care of itself. AQUARIUS: If there's a good enough reason to like someone, it may overcompensate for a lack of common ground. Unlike chemistry, shared interests can be created. PISCES: The most attractive people are also the most aware.

CELEBRITY PROFILES

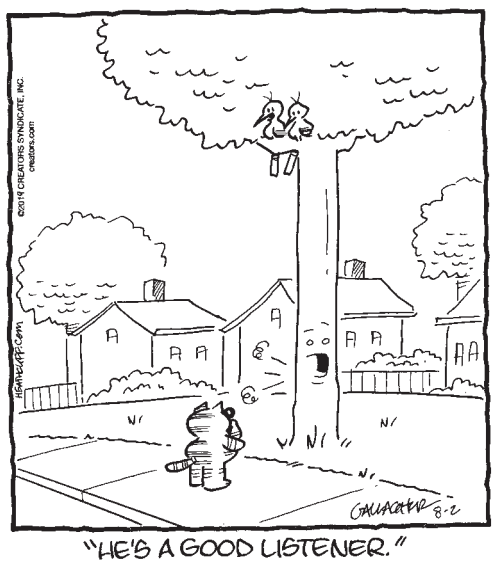
The lively discussions of a Virgo and Leo could be mistaken for arguments. Assertiveness gets confused with contention because the affinity between them is far deeper than outsiders understand. It's because they feel so connected that they have the freedom to disagree. They sharpen each other and are, without a doubt, a better version of themselves for their coupledom. **Write Holiday Mathis at HolidayMathis.com.**

WORD UP!

August
adjective [aw-guhst]. Inspiring reverence or admiration; of supreme dignity or grandeur; majestic: an august performance of a religious drama.

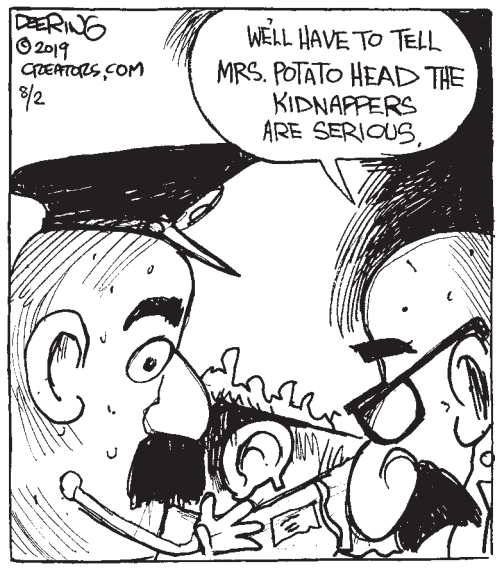
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



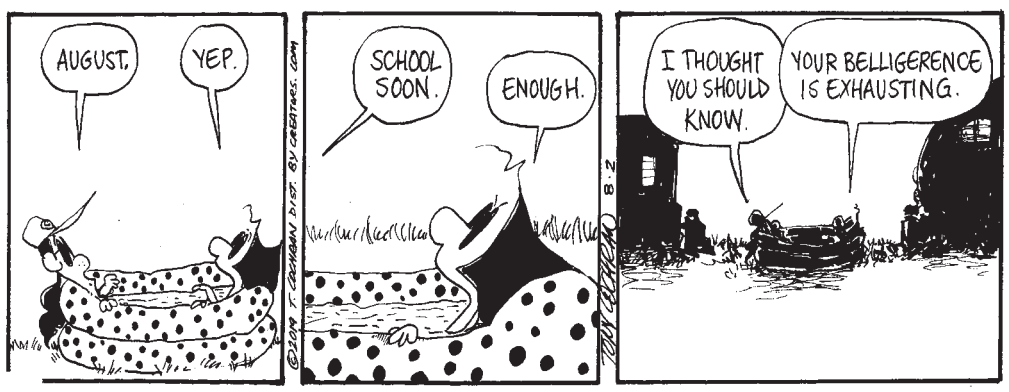
Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



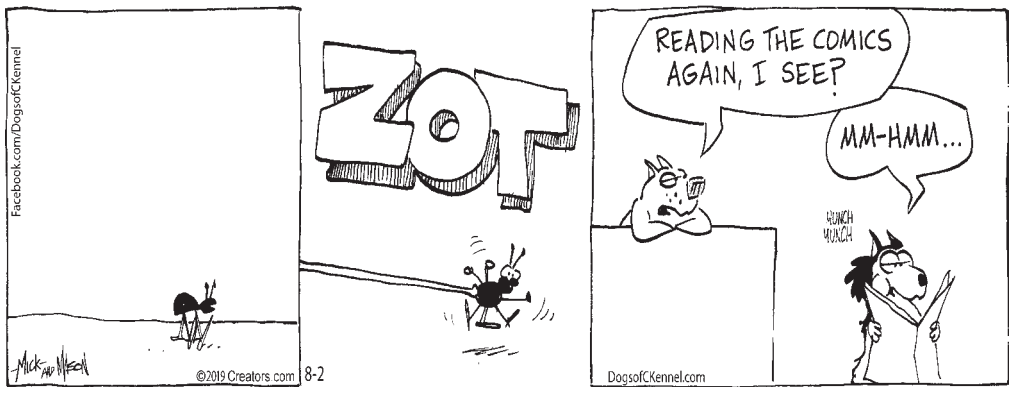
Agnes

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
Draw Date:07/31
14 37 47 55 67
Power#: 6
Jackpot: 102 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 07/30
10 24 28 33 38
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 50 M

SUPER LOTTO PLUS
Draw Date: 07/31
1 8 28 37 41
Mega#: 8
Jackpot: 67 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 07/31
8 13 18 20 30

DAILY 3
Draw Date: 07/31
Midday: 1 9 2
Draw Date: 08/01
Evening: 6 5 5

DAILY DERBY
Draw Date: 07/30
1st: 8 - GORGEOUS GEORGE
2nd: 4 - BIG BEN
3rd: 2 - LUCKY STAR
RACE TIME: 1:47.77

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 FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 72.3°

FRIDAY- **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft knee to waist high
New long period S swell fills in further. NW windswell shows.

SATURDAY- **FAIR** - SURF: 3-4ft waist to chest high
Long period S swell peaks. Small NW windswell.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

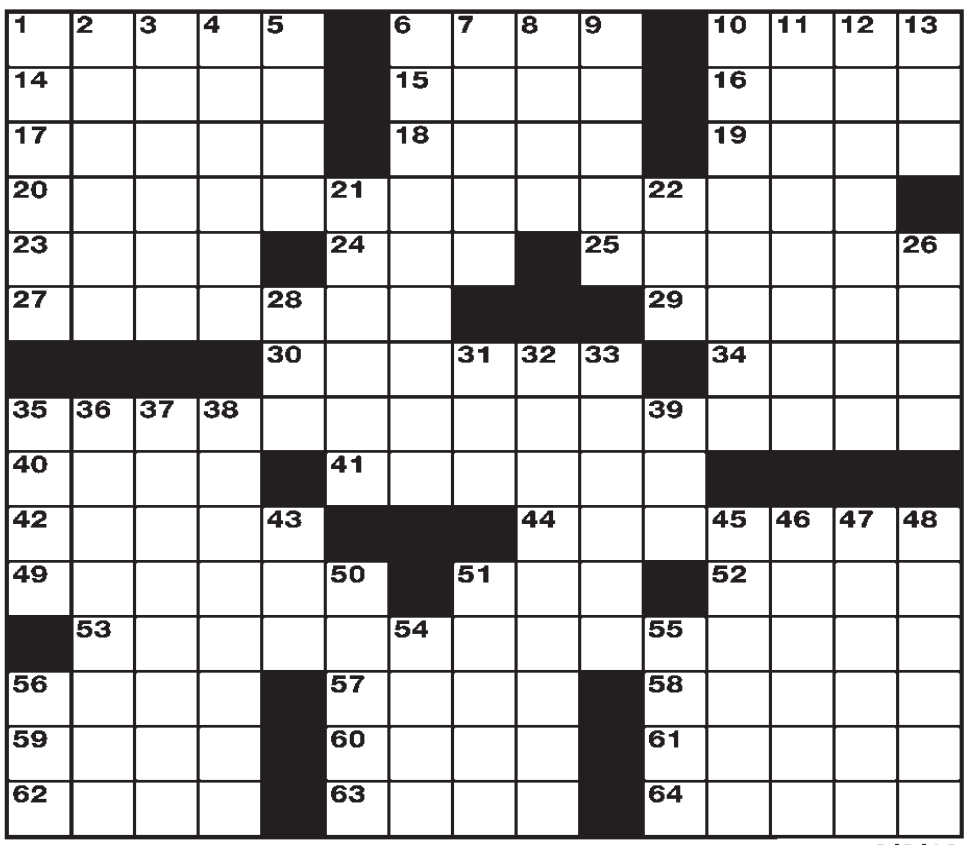
				7	1			
4			2			5		
	6	3		4				8
		9	3	6		1		5
	4						8	
3		1		5	2	6		
6				8		2	3	
		7			9			4
			5	2				

Newsday Crossword

SUMMERTIME BLUES by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Hot-water hazard
6 Cape Town cash
10 Circuit measures
14 Prohibited, or prohibit
15 Saber relative
16 Percolate
17 Get straight
18 "Poor" guy
19 Family nickname
20 Blue __
23 Slurpee rival
24 Ending for walk, run or sit
25 Land : isthmus :: water : __
27 Crisis-free
29 Knightly quality
30 Government lender, familiarly
34 Less then minimal
35 Blue __
40 Much-favored palm fruit
41 Check writer's security device
42 Eked out a living
44 Close relatives of a sort
49 Deprive of power
51 "Then what?"
52 Purview
53 Blue __
56 Workplace fairness agcy.
57 Saber relative
58 Former senator Heitkamp
59 Novelist O'Brien
60 Something related
61 Hypnotized
62 Stem-to-stern structure
63 Herring in rivers
64 Fixed look

DOWN
1 Headline, as a play
2 Multicolored cat
3 Stood for
4 Worker with wood
5 "It's a deal!"
6 Vibrant sound quality
7 Mark of excellence
8 Element #10
9 What chargers run up
10 Hopeful
11 Be much appreciated
12 Former Tab rival
13 What Brits call a "hydro"
21 Acting silently
22 Rugged bike
26 Cork, for one
28 Earlier
31 Big Easy's Amtrak code
32 Chose for a trial
33 Copyedits
35 Classico competitor
36 "Uncle!"
37 Private cell, in corporate lingo
38 What many early Bartlett's quotes are
39 Storm __ teacup
43 "You got it!"
45 Beef about
46 Heinz subsidiary
47 Language class classification
48 Biting literature
50 Focus of a wrap session
51 City northwest of Toledo
54 Genesis 7 guy
55 "As we have shown . . ."
56 Apt rhyme for "shriek"

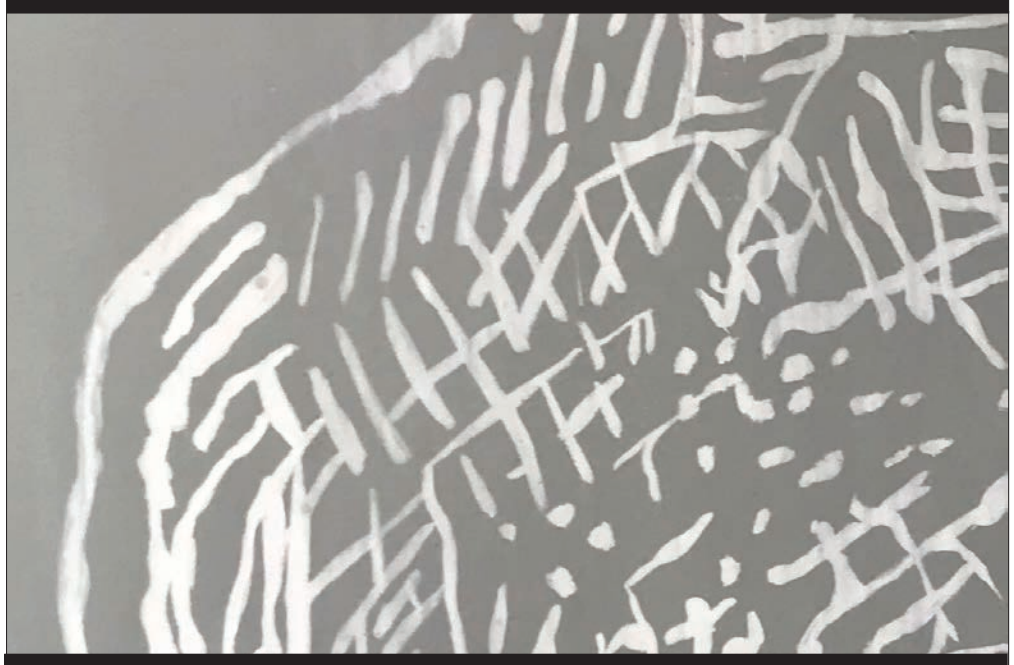


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MYSTERY PHOTO

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DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 36 CALLS ON JULY 31

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) 600 blk Palisades Beach Rd 12:43 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 15th St 12:59 a.m.
EMS 00blk Bay St 2:28 a.m.
EMS 2400blk Hill St 2:52 a.m.
EMS 1300blk 9th St 2:56 a.m.
EMS 1400blk 2nd St 5:43 a.m.
EMS 2600blk Ocean Front Walk 7:48 a.m.
EMS 1600blk Ocean Ave 8:22 a.m.
EMS 4th St / Colorado Ave 9:05 a.m.
Vehicle Fire 800blk Wilshire Blvd 9:27 a.m.
EMS 3000blk Exposition Blvd 9:55 a.m.
EMS 2400blk Main St 10:58 a.m.
EMS 2200blk 29th St 11:35 a.m.
Traffic Collision with Injury 1400blk Centinela Ave 1:10 p.m.
EMS 1400blk 17th St 1:49 p.m.
EMS 3000blk Olympic Blvd 2:08 p.m.
EMS 2700blk 2nd St 2:16 p.m.
EMS 100blk Montana Ave 2:23 p.m.
EMS 2000blk Wilshire Blvd 3:02 p.m.
EMS 600blk Santa Monica Blvd 3:13 p.m.
EMS 2800blk Neilson Way 4:37 p.m.
EMS 800blk 18th St 5:24 p.m.
EMS Barnard Way / Ocean Park Blvd 5:57 p.m.
EMS 25th St / Idaho Ave 7:05 p.m.
EMS 2500blk 4th St 7:10 p.m.
EMS 600blk Colorado Ave 7:24 p.m.
EMS 1600blk Ocean Front Walk 7:31 p.m.
EMS 1400blk 14th St 9:35 p.m.
EMS 4th St / Marguerita Ave 9:46 p.m.
EMS 1400blk Ocean Ave 11:39 p.m.

DAILY POLICE LOG

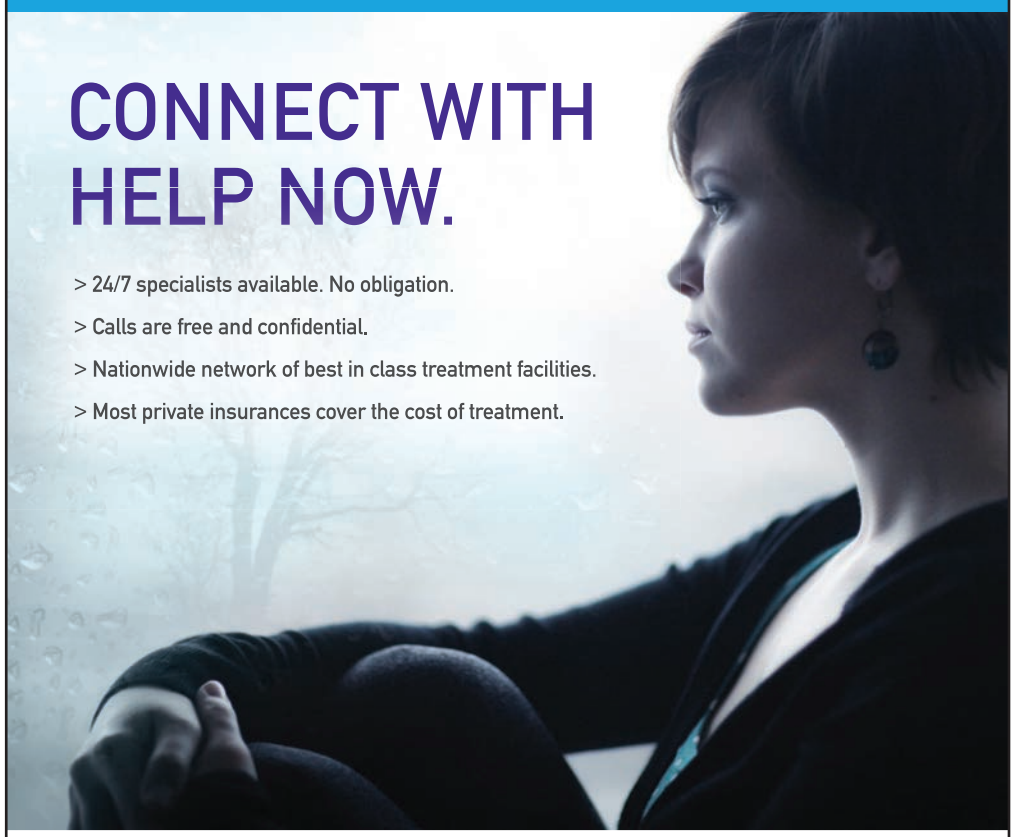
SMDP CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 414 CALLS ON JULY 31

Encampment Olympic Blvd / Centinela Ave 10:17 a.m.
Fraud Report 400blk 18th St 10:32 a.m.
Traffic Hazard 23rd St / Pico Blvd 10:34 a.m.
Loud Music 2700blk Barnard Way 10:39 a.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 1700blk Dewey St 10:39 a.m.
Health & Safety Code Violation 2000blk Ocean Ave 10:52 a.m.
Burglary Report 1300blk Ocean Ave 10:54 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2600blk 25th St 10:58 a.m.
Malicious Mischief Report 1700blk Dewey St 11:12 a.m.
Battery Just Occurred 1900blk 3rd St 11:16 a.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 600blk Ocean Park Blvd 11:23 a.m.
Elder Abuse 2800blk Neilson Way 11:45 a.m.
Missing Person 300blk Olympic Dr 12:06 p.m.
Bike Theft Report 2600blk 5th St 12:12 p.m.
Public Intoxication 200blk Broadway 12:19 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 1500blk Ocean Front Walk 12:23 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 500blk Santa Monica Pier 12:37 p.m.
Smoking Violation 800blk Broadway 12:47 p.m.
Auto Burglary Report 1100blk Idaho Ave 12:47 p.m.
Traffic Collision with Injuries 1400blk Centinela Ave 1:10 p.m.
Violation of Preferential Parking Zone 100blk Hart Ave 1:32 p.m.
Arson 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 1:36 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 14th St / Olympic Blvd 1:49 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2200blk La Mesa Dr 2:16 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 300blk Santa Monica Pier 2:19 p.m.
Forensics Request - Fingerprint 300blk Olympic Dr 2:23 p.m.
Silent Robbery Alarm 1400blk Wilshire Blvd 2:39 p.m.
Traffic Collision with Injuries City Prop Involved 1000blk 25th St 2:52 p.m.
Audible Burglar Alarm 2500blk 7th St 3:41 p.m.
Lewd Activity 300blk Santa Monica Pl 3:42 p.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 600blk Santa Monica Blvd 3:44 p.m.
Violation of Preferential Parking Zone 1200blk Princeton St 3:48 p.m.
Loitering 1100blk 20th St 3:50 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto Report 2500blk 28th St 4:02 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 300blk Santa Monica Pier 4:33 p.m.
Violation of Posted Sign 1300blk Centinela Ave 4:43 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 1300blk 2nd St 4:52 p.m.
Municipal Code Violation 1600blk Centinela Ave 5:30 p.m.
Violation of Posted Sign 1200bll Berkeley St 5:34 p.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 900blk 3rd St 5:45 p.m.
Traffic/Vehicle Stop 26th St / Wilshire Blvd 5:45 p.m.
Auto Burglary 1100blk Pacific Coast Hwy 5:48 p.m.
Hit and Run 26th St / San Vicente Blvd 5:53 p.m.

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Leaders of religious right balk at labeling Trump a racist

DAVID CRARY
AP National Writer

Many religious leaders have strongly condemned President Donald Trump's disparaging remarks about minority members of Congress. Prominent figures on the religious right have not joined in, instead maintaining public silence or insisting that Trump's tactics reflect hard-nosed politics rather than racism.

"He does not judge people by the color of their skin," said the Rev. Robert Jeffress, pastor of the Southern Baptist megachurch First Baptist Dallas and a frequent guest at the White House.

"He judges people on whether they support him," Jeffress said. "If you embrace him, he'll embrace you. If you attack him, he'll attack you. That's the definition of colorblind."

Debate over Trump's inflammatory tweets and comments has flared over the past few weeks. He told four outspoken congresswomen of color — three of them born in the U.S.—to "go back" where they came from. He also derided two black leaders — the Rev. Al Sharpton and Democratic Rep. Elijah Cummings, of Maryland — and called the majority-black city of Baltimore a "rodent-infested mess."

In response, 11 leaders of Protestant and Catholic groups in Maryland issued a public letter Tuesday imploring Trump to "stop putting people down."

"Enough of the harmful rhetoric that angers and discourages the people and communities you are called to serve," the leaders wrote.

A similar message came the same day from leaders of the Washington National Cathedral, designated by Congress as a non-denominational National House of Prayer.

"As leaders of faith who believe in the sacredness of every single human being, the time for silence is over," said a statement from three cathedral leaders. "We must boldly stand witness against the bigotry, hatred, intolerance, and xenophobia that is hurled at us, especially when it comes from the highest offices of this nation."

The Rev. Jim Wallis, founder of the Christian social justice group Sojourners, assailed Trump's remarks as "a public sin that must be called out" and challenged five of the president's evangelical supporters, including Jeffress and the Rev. Franklin Graham, to publicly denounce his rhetoric.

"If we hear silence from white people of faith, we are in deep spiritual trouble," Wallis wrote on Sojourners' web site. "Christian moral objection to the president's racist language must grow every day and from many quarters."

Graham, the son of renowned evangelist Billy Graham and president of the charity Samaritan's Purse, said the president's critics had devalued the word "racism."

"The left has weaponized it and uses it against their opponents," he said in a telephone interview Thursday. "The president is not afraid to go after anyone — their color has nothing to do with it. It's the person's ideology and politics."

Graham contended that Trump was justified in his criticism of Cummings' district encompassing much of Baltimore.

"The president is right — it should be investigated," Graham said. "Billions of federal dollars have been given to this area. It certainly hasn't helped the people of Baltimore."

Among Trump's most outspoken evangelical supporters is Alveda King, a niece of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and a longtime anti-abortion activist. She was among a group of black pastors who met with Trump at the White House on Monday.

Citing her family's credo, King said, "When we dealt with racism, it was in prayer, not condemnation."

"I don't have to pray for President Trump for being a racist, because he's not," she said. "He's not colorblind —he can see and appreciate ethnic differences. But he's going to treat everybody with the same regard."

Some prominent evangelical leaders, thus far, have chosen not to wade into the public debate over Trump and racism.

Three high-level leaders in the Southern Baptist Convention update their websites frequently with topical commentary, but there have been no postings about the Trump/racism debate by the SBC's president, the Rev. J.D. Greear; the head of its flagship seminary, the Rev. Albert Mohler; or the head of its public policy arm, the Rev. Russell Moore.

Jeffress, the Dallas pastor who's been a friend of Trump's since 2015, said there are numerous SBC leaders who have been "Never Trumpers" since the launch of his candidacy.

"They're out of step with mainstream Southern Baptists, who've been loyal to Donald Trump since the beginning," Jeffress said. "It's caused many of them to go silent."

Another conservative denomination, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this week declined to comment on the racial discussion triggered by Trump's recent tweets. Spokesman Eric Hawkins instead cited a July 21 speech by church President Russell M. Nelson at the NACCP convention in Detroit, where he urged people to love one another no matter their differences.

"We are all connected, and we have a God-given responsibility to help make life better for those around us," Nelson said. "We don't have to be alike or look alike to have love for each other. We don't even have to agree with each other to love each other."

Associated Press writer Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City contributed to this report.

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