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- 2 **Storm Prep Underway**
County readies as forecasters warn of historic El Niño.
- 3 **Fighting for Oil**
Trump administration pushes California to boost flow.



- 4 **Americana Returns**
Sixth year at Gandara Park on Sept. 13.
- 5 **Caution Urged**
Hazardous surf, flooding loom over Labor Day weekend.

Volume 25 Issue 206

THE WEEKENDER 9/4-9/7

smdp.com

Former Santa Monica tech CEO added to FBI's Most Wanted Fraudsters list



Courtesy image

CRIME: Former Santa Monica tech CEO Bernhard Fritsch added to FBI's Most Wanted Fraudsters list after fleeing pre-sentencing; \$150K reward offered.

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

A former Santa Monica tech executive convicted of defrauding investors out of millions of dollars has been added to the FBI's Most Wanted Fraudsters list after fleeing the country ahead of his sentencing, federal officials announced.

Bernhard Eugen Fritsch, 65, founder and CEO of Santa Monica-based StarClub Inc., is one of three fugitives added to the newly formed list, according to Patrick Grandy, assistant director in charge of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office.

The other two fugitives are wanted by FBI field offices in Seattle and Tampa.

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$150,000 for information leading to Fritsch's arrest and conviction.

"Southern California is a target-rich environment for fraudsters — among them Bernhard Fritsch — who was convicted of ripping off investors of millions and fleeing the United States prior to his sentencing," Grandy said in a statement. "Regardless of how long it takes for Mr. Fritsch to serve his

SEE **FBI** PAGE 6

LA County moves to shield fire survivors from contractor scams

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors have voted unanimously to crack down on contractor fraud and rebuilding scams targeting survivors of the January 2025 Eaton and Palisades fires, ordering a coordinated county response and a new public awareness campaign as construction across the burn zones accelerates.

The motion, authored by Supervisors Kathryn Barger and Lindsey P. Horvath, directs the county's Department of Consumer

SEE **LA COUNTY** PAGE 8



Photo Credit: Brian Feinzimer/Los Angeles County

ALTADENA: An aerial view of homes being rebuilt in Altadena following the Eaton Fire.

Malibu loses bid to claim ownership of public trails but city weighs appeal

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

A judge has rejected the city of Malibu's attempt to take ownership of public trails within its borders, ruling this week that the state law the city relied on does not support its claim and that the claim was filed too late.

The Los Angeles County Superior Court decision is a setback for the city's effort to wrest control of trails and easements — including along Murphy Way and Winding Way — from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the Mountains Recreation

and Conservation Authority, the agencies that manage them.

In a statement Thursday, the city said it was "disappointed with the ruling" and was weighing its options, including an appeal, though no decision will come until the City Council has time to review the matter in the coming weeks.

"No decision will be made until the City Council has an opportunity to consider the question and provide direction to the City's counsel," the city said.

Malibu filed the lawsuit April 14, seeking quiet title and declaratory relief. Its case hinged on Section 989 of the California

Streets and Highways Code, which the city argued had automatically transferred all county-held trail rights within Malibu's limits to the city when it incorporated in 1991. Under that theory, a 1998 quitclaim deed transferring the same interests to the conservancy was legally without effect. The court disagreed, finding the statute did not support the city's claim and that the claim was untimely.

The 257-page complaint described what the city called a long-documented pattern of unsafe and inadequate trail management.

SEE **MALIBU** PAGE 11

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County outlines El Nino storm preparations as forecasters warn of historic season

MATTHEW HALL

Daily Press Editor

Los Angeles County emergency officials have detailed how the county is gearing up for the 2026-27 storm season and urged residents to prepare now, following an Aug. 11 motion by Supervisor Lindsey Horvath that called for a coordinated response to a forecast El Niño winter.

“After fires, floods, and landslides, we know exactly what is at stake when heavy rain hits Los Angeles,” Horvath said. “LA County crews have been doing the work year-round; now we’re making sure every part of County government is ready to move together when conditions change.”

“

After fires,
floods, and
landslides, we
know exactly
what is at stake
when heavy
rain hits Los
Angeles

- Lindsey P. Horvath, Supervisor

”

County crews are inspecting and maintaining dams, debris basins, channels, storm drains and pump stations, and monitoring burn areas and hillsides at risk of flooding and debris flows, officials said. The county is also preparing for evacuations and emergency shelter, and putting plans in place to assist people experiencing homelessness, older adults and others who may need extra help during severe weather.

Several county departments are involved. The Chief Executive Office’s Office of Emergency Management is coordinating disaster planning and public communication with local, state and federal agencies. The Department of Public Works and the county’s Flood Control District operate the dams, basins, storm drains and channels meant to protect communities from floodwater, and are also handling risk modeling, sandbag distribution and land-use reviews. The Department of Beaches and Harbors is working to protect coastal infrastructure through the county’s Coastal Resilience Initiative. The Sheriff’s Department is coordinating evacuations,

while its Sheriff-HOST teams and the Department of Homeless Services and Housing are working with service providers to protect homeless residents during storms. The Fire Department will respond to life-safety operations, and the Internal Services Department is tasked with keeping county facilities running during disruptions.

Horvath’s motion also directed county agencies to conduct a tabletop emergency-coordination exercise with local, state and federal partners before the storm season begins, and to report back to the Board of Supervisors before Oct. 15 on the results. Departments must also report to the board in writing every 30 days through the end of the storm season on preparation efforts.

Officials outlined several steps residents can take now. They urged residents to sign up for emergency alerts at alert.lacounty.gov, learn their flood and mudflow risk if they live near a hillside, canyon or recent burn area, and make an evacuation plan. The county recommended keeping food, water, medication and other supplies on hand for up to 10 days, clearing gutters and storm drains, fixing roof leaks and obtaining sandbags before storms arrive. Officials also noted that standard homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage and that flood insurance can take at least 30 days to take effect. Residents with concerns about mud or debris flow risk can call LA County Public Works at 1-800-933-0930, and people seeking help for someone experiencing homelessness can visit homeless.lacounty.gov/get-help/.

During storms, officials said residents should never drive or walk through flooded roads, stay away from downed power lines, watch for rising water, mud and debris, move to higher ground if they see signs of a debris flow, follow evacuation orders and check on neighbors, older adults and others who may need assistance.

Horvath will host a virtual town hall for county residents at 6 p.m. Sept. 28, where residents can ask county experts about El Niño risks and preparations. More information is available at lindseyhorvath.lacounty.gov, and general preparedness resources are posted at ready.lacounty.gov.

The preparations come as federal forecasters project one of the strongest El Niño events on record. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Climate Prediction Center said in its Aug. 13 diagnostic discussion that there is a greater than 90% chance of a “very strong” El Niño this fall and winter, and a 69% chance the October-December season will exceed every El Niño on record dating to 1950. The center’s Aug. 20 winter outlook favors above-normal precipitation for coastal California from December through April, with the wettest conditions expected January through March.

Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, the National Center for Atmospheric Research and The Nature Conservancy, said at an Aug. 27 briefing that a wetter-than-average winter

SEE WEATHER PAGE 8

Trump administration ratchets up its fight to get more oil flowing from California

The Trump administration is ratcheting up its fight to get more crude flowing through California and reverse the state's efforts to move away from fossil fuels.

Its latest salvo is a federal review of California's coastal management program, which is run largely by a state commission that has had a powerful role for decades in shaping development along the coast. Environmental advocates fear federal officials could use the review to strip the California Coastal Commission of its ability to have a say in projects involving federal agencies that affect the state's rugged coastal bluffs, pristine beaches and world-class surfing spots.

The administration, citing a need for energy security and job creation, has already announced plans for new offshore oil leases in California as well as Florida, where the federal government has not allowed drilling since 1995 because of concerns about oil spills in the Gulf of Mexico.

Trump officials also helped a Texas firm jump-start an old pipeline system that had been idled since its 2015 rupture caused one of California's worst oil spills, blackening beaches for 150 miles from Santa Barbara to Los Angeles and polluting habitat for endangered whales and sea turtles. Federal officials also recently took a step toward authorizing fracking on an old oil platform 9 miles off Ventura County — a move opposed by the state's coastal commission.

"It's just part of that overall belief that they have, that they're going to get rid of renewables and go back to good old-fashioned fossil fuels, and what better place to start than California?" said Deborah A. Sivas, a professor of environmental law at Stanford Law School. "We're the feds — we're going to tell the state what to do."

California has some working offshore rigs, but there has been no new oil leasing in federal waters since the mid-1980s and no new state leasing for even longer. The state barred new offshore oil leases after a catastrophic spill in 1969 spewed between 3.5 million and 4.2 million gallons of crude into the Santa Barbara Channel. The disaster killed thousands of seabirds and helped give rise to the modern environmental movement.

California now uses so much solar and wind energy that nearly half the state's electricity came from renewable resources in 2024, according to the state's energy commission. That's also the source of a fight with the Trump administration. Last week, state officials sued the federal government over its buyback of an offshore wind lease aimed at discouraging the expansion of wind energy in favor of fossil fuels.

California has also tried to wean residents off gas-powered cars — another push opposed by the Trump administration.

CALIFORNIA'S COASTAL COMMISSION IS THE LATEST TARGET

California's coastal commission, an independent agency with appointed members, was formed in 1972. It has often been in the spotlight for taking up high-profile projects on the state's tourism-

dependent coast. The panel voted against but later approved a U2 guitarist's plan for mansions on seaside bluffs, though the building proposal was eventually nixed by a court. It also rejected a proposed desalination plant to create drinking water in Huntington Beach.

The commission also has a say in federal projects along California's coast, in line with a 1972 federal coastal management law. More than 30 states have similar programs to protect their coastal resources and all are subject to periodic federal evaluation.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick announced the unexpected review of California's program in May while denouncing the commission's opposition to an expanded launch schedule for SpaceX's Falcon 9 rockets from Vandenberg Space Force Base. Commissioners cited concerns that more launches could harm sensitive species and limit public access to the coast.

"Obstructionist policies that delay critical national infrastructure in the name of environmental extremism are unacceptable," Lutnick said. He said the review will examine how California has addressed federal priorities on spaceport infrastructure, offshore oil production, pipeline maintenance and desalination projects.

Targeting California raises a fight that could reverberate nationwide, experts say. Until now, no state with a coastal program has been stripped of its authority to review federal projects. Many Californians who spoke at an hourslong public hearing in Santa Monica in August said they don't want their state to be the first.

"This isn't about performance. This is about power," said Maureen Ellenberger, a Santa Barbara resident who is upset about the decision to let Houston-based Sable Offshore Corp. resume pumping through the old pipeline. "It's about whether the Trump administration can strip California's authority because they don't like the answers the coastal commission gave to oil companies."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is carrying out the review. It isn't known when it will be completed.

THE COMMISSION ISN'T NEW TO CONTROVERSY

In the past, California's coastal commission has clashed with elected officials from both political parties. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom rushed to the commission's defense this year, but in 2025 suspended its permitting requirements for home rebuilding following the devastating Los Angeles area wildfires.

Trump's battles with the commission began before his first term when he put up a 70-foot flagpole on his golf club in Rancho Palos Verdes. The commission ultimately allowed for it after a lengthy battle.

Last month, the commission unanimously voted to oppose the plan for fracking on a 45-year-old platform in federal waters off Ventura County after a lengthy public hearing. The federal Bureau of Ocean Energy



Surf report WATER TEMP: 69.8

FRIDAY
FAIR | **SURF:** 4-5ft
Chest to head
Karina swell finally loses some steam, but long period SPAC swell is on the rise. Clean AM. Mid period tropical SSW swell from Karina likely eases through the day but new, long period SSW swell from the S Hemisphere is on the rise. May even see NW windswell nudge up slightly. The blend means more chest high surf at average breaks, focal points head high at times. Wind looks best in the AM before PM onshore flow. May have the next SSE/S tropical swell on the rise. Euro timing is ahead of the GFS. I'd favor it and expect the LOTUS output to change/bump up timing.

SATURDAY
FAIR TO GOOD | **SURF:** 4-6ft
Chest to overhead
Long period SSW swell peaks. Karina leftovers, looking like the next tropical swell builds. SSW swell from the SPAC tops out, widespread waist-chest high surf on its own with standout spots head+. Could be some leftover Karina swell helping the consistency and shape at times, but not really adding size. We likely get tropical cyclone Marie southwest of Cabo in the next day or two, and most models would already have swell on the rise (Euro/GFS/DeepMind). Some GFS runs clinging to a possible track into the bight - very low odds, but the reason behind some of the crazy number spikes.

Weather

Friday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 72.
Friday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 65.
Saturday: A 30 percent chance of showers after 11am. Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, partly sunny, with a high near 74.
Saturday Night: A slight chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 68.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted	(ft)High/Low
2026/09/04	Fri	3:25 PM	5.47	H
2026/09/04	Fri	11:49 PM	0.34	L
2026/09/05	Sat	07:26 AM	3.44	H
2026/09/05	Sat	10:14 AM	3.27	L
2026/09/05	Sat	4:55 PM	5.66	H
2026/09/06	Sun	12:51 AM	-0.14	L
2026/09/06	Sun	07:53 AM	3.83	H
2026/09/06	Sun	11:58 AM	2.95	L

Daily Lottery

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

 Draw Date: 9/2 3 10 29 58 64 Power#: 14 Jackpot: 173 M	 Draw Date: 9/2 3 6 23 29 35
 Draw Date: 9/1 1 22 51 61 63 Mega#: 17 Jackpot: 177 M	 Draw Date: 9/2 EVENING: 1 7 2 Draw Date: 9/2 MIDDAY: 0 4 9
 Draw Date: 9/2 12 17 18 35 40 Mega#: 9 Jackpot: 52 M	 Draw Date: 9/2 1st: 07 - Eureka 2nd: 03 - Hot Shot 3rd: 08 - Gorgeous George Race Time: 1:42.30

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26SMCP00362. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main St #102, Santa Monica CA 90401. Petition of Quinn de Souza for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Quinn de Souza filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Quinn Sierra de Souza to Quinn Marlo Keve. 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: 09/18/26, 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: 08/07/26. LAWRENCE H. CHO, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 08/21/26, 08/28/26, 09/04/26, 09/11/26

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26SMCP00362. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main St #102, Santa Monica CA 90401. Petition of Quinn de Souza for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Quinn de Souza filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Quinn Sierra de Souza to Quinn Marlo Keve. 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: 09/18/26, 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: 08/07/26. LAWRENCE H. CHO, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 08/21/26, 08/28/26, 09/04/26, 09/11/26

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26SMCP00380. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Scarlett Hale Berman for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Scarlett Hale Berman filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Scarlett Hale Berman to Scarlett Hale Kellner. 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: [10/2/26 Time: [8:30am], Dept: [K]. The address of the court is the 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: [8/11/26] Lawrence Cho, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 08/28/2026, 09/04/2026, 09/11/2026, 09/18/2026

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 26SMCP00426. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 1725 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Petition of Jennifer Sachiyo McIlraith and Steven Douglas Poleschuk for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Jennifer Sachiyo McIlraith and Steven Douglas Poleschuk filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Sunny Pearl Poleschuk to Sunny Sachiko Poleschuk. 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: 10-16-20, 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: AUG 28 2026. LAWRENCE H. CHO Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 09/04/2026, 09/11/2026, 09/18/2026, 09/25/2026

Petition to Admin Estate

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF Konrad Luther Rucker aka Konrad Rucker Case No. 26STPB02292. To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of Konrad Luther Rucker aka Konrad Rucker. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by Kenneth Andre Shelton in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that Kenneth Andre Shelton be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. A HEARING on the petition will be held on October 14, 2026 at 8:32 in Dept. 29 located at 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles 90012, Stanley Mosk Courthouse - Central District. IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, or 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. Attorney for Petitioner: Kenneth Andre Shelton, 12818 N. Seaglass Cir., Playa Vista CA 90094, 310-308-3081. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 08/21/26, 08/28/26, 09/04/26

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Pico

Americana in the Park returns to Gandara Park for sixth year on Sept. 13

The sixth annual Americana in the Park will bring roots, blues, jazz and folk music to Gandara Park, 1819 Stewart St., on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. The free, all-ages event features kid-friendly activities and onsite food trucks.

Presented by McCabe’s Guitar Shop in partnership with the city of Santa Monica’s Cultural Affairs Division and KCRW, the concert showcases local talent playing traditional Americana and its modern forms. Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket, lawn chair and picnic.

The 2026 lineup includes Albert Lee, a Grammy-winning British guitarist known for his fingerstyle and hybrid picking and multiple “Best Country Guitarist” honors from Guitar Player Magazine; Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca, blending Afro-Cuban rhythms with pan-African styles such as soukous, semba and kizomba; Abby Posner & the Big Fall, a genre-defying multi-instrumentalist recently featured on NPR’s Mountain Stage; Jason Luckett, a singer-songwriter mixing jazz, soul and samba with social justice themes; and the Bob Baker Marionette Theater, the nonprofit puppet theater and Los Angeles Cultural-Historical Monument serving the community since 1963.

Public transportation is encouraged. Big Blue Bus Route 43 serves Gandara Park with buses every 45 minutes, and Metro Rail’s E Line stops nearby at 26th St./Bergamot Station, with trains every 10 minutes between East Los Angeles and Downtown Santa Monica. Plan trips at bigbluebus.com.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

Santa Monica

Santa Monica library marks Card Sign-Up Month with special-edition cards, local discounts

The Santa Monica Public Library is celebrating Library Card Sign-Up Month this September with a special-edition library card designed by local artist Al Mercado and the return of its Read Local, Shop Local: Community Discount Program.

Throughout September, patrons who sign up for a card at any of the library’s five locations will receive the special-edition card, while supplies last. Families are also invited to the Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., on Sept. 12 to decorate a card sleeve and lanyard to personalize and protect their cards.

The card features artwork from the city’s Art Everywhere: Local Canvas initiative, which showcases the work of local artists throughout the city’s streetscape.

“Libraries are places where creativity, learning and community come together, and this special-edition card is a wonderful expression of that spirit,” said Recreation and Arts Department Director Jenny Rogers, who oversees the city’s Cultural Affairs division.

A library card provides free access to books, music, movies, video games, databases, study rooms and other resources. Cardholders also receive access to exclusive offers from local businesses through the discount program.

“Your library card opens the door to far more than books. It connects you to resources, experiences and the people and places that make Santa Monica special,” said Director of Library Services Erica Cuyugan.

Launched in September 2025, the program was created to encourage residents to get a card while strengthening ties between the library and the business community. By presenting their card at participating businesses, cardholders can receive discounts at local restaurants, retailers, cultural attractions and service providers.

The program returns for its second year. Returning partners include Bike Attack Electric, Crow Comedy, Good Body Pilates, Offhand Wine Bar, Santa Monica History Museum, Solidarity, Sweet Lady Jane and The Curious Palate. New partners this year include AJA Vineyards, Alinea Orthodontics, Backyard Bowls, Chick-fil-A Santa Monica, Crossroads Trading, Harvelle’s, Love Tap, Road Runner Sports and The Spot.

To view participating businesses and discounts, visit santamonica.gov/programs/library-community-discount-program.

Library Card Sign-Up Month originated in 1987 in response to then-U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett’s call for every child to have a library card. It was established by the American Library Association and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

Getting a card is free. California residents 18 and older can apply in person during open hours, while qualified Los Angeles County residents can apply online. Teens ages 13-17 can register in person with a school ID. For children under 12, a parent or guardian must be present. For more information, visit santamonica.gov.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

California

California lawmakers introduce bill to protect film and television jobs

State Sen. Ben Allen, D-Santa Monica, and Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur, D-Hollywood, have introduced AB/SB 186, a budget trailer bill aimed at protecting middle-class jobs tied to film and television production in the state.

The measure is designed to mitigate the impact of SB 122, a tax bill enacted in June to ensure corporations pay their fair share of state taxes. Lawmakers say SB 122 unintentionally imposed an additional cap on the already capped and allocated Film & TV Tax Credit Program, undermining commitments made to projects already underway.

“Last year, we took action to get families back to work and jumpstart the state’s film and television industry,” Allen said. He warned that momentum and jobs could be lost without action by month’s end, and credited Gov. Gavin Newsom, Zbur and legislative leadership with helping find a path forward to keep California the global hub of entertainment.

Zbur said the effort protects progress made last year and reflects a priority shared by many colleagues. He noted the modernized program drew 170 projects to California and supported nearly 35,000 cast and crew jobs in its first year. He said AB/SB 186 would provide greater stability for productions and workers and mitigate the effects of the tax credit limitation, while acknowledging more work remains in the coming months.

Last year, Newsom signed the California Film & Television Jobs Act, authored by Zbur and Allen, to modernize the Film and TV Tax Credit Program and curb “runaway production.” The act, which won bipartisan support, raised the annual cap to \$750 million, increased the credit amount and expanded eligibility.

The program’s first year, from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, awarded credits to 170 new projects, bringing an estimated \$6.6 billion in economic activity and creating almost 35,000 jobs statewide.

AB/SB 186 would exempt independent productions from the SB 122 caps; lower the discount on refunds in the 4.0 program from 10% to 5% and provide payout over two years instead of five; and protect unused credits earned in the earlier 2.0 and 3.0 programs from premature expiration if the company has a project awarded under the 4.0 program.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

Santa Monica

Hazardous Surf, Possible Flooding Loom Over Labor Day Weekend as SMPD Urges Caution

Beachgoers across Los Angeles County should brace for hazardous surf, strong rip currents and possible coastal flooding this Labor Day weekend as swells from a tropical system move through the region, forecasters said Thursday.

The National Weather Service has issued a High Surf Advisory and a Coastal Flood Advisory for the coast, both in effect from 6 a.m. Saturday to 11 p.m. Tuesday. A Beach Hazards Statement is also in effect from Saturday morning through Tuesday evening.

South to southeast swells from Hurricane Marie are expected to bring larger surf and strong rip currents, especially to south-facing beaches, forecasters said. Marie is projected to track northwest, well away from the California coast, but its swell could still generate elevated surf, with the peak expected Sunday through Monday.

Evening high tides of about 7 feet are expected during the event, raising the risk of moderate coastal flooding in low-lying areas and significant beach erosion, according to the weather service. Avalon, the Alamitos Peninsula in Long Beach, Malibu and Point Mugu are among the areas considered most vulnerable.

The weather service is urging anyone visiting a beach to go where lifeguards are on duty, stay back from the water’s edge, never turn their back to the ocean and stay off rocks and jetties.

Ahead of the surf, the region will see a quiet pattern through Friday, with below-normal temperatures, patchy marine layer clouds and breezy onshore winds. A Wind Advisory is in effect from 6 p.m. Thursday to 6 a.m. Friday for gusty Sundowner winds in southwestern Santa Barbara County.

Temperatures and humidity are expected to rise heading into the weekend, with a small chance of showers Saturday night and better odds of widespread rain from Sunday through Tuesday, mainly south of Point Conception. Forecasters also put the chance of thunderstorms Sunday at 5% to 10%.

With crowds expected at the beach, Pier, Downtown, parks and neighborhoods, the Santa Monica Police Department is asking residents and visitors to make safety part of their holiday plans. Officers recommend designating a sober driver or arranging a rideshare or taxi, slowing down and watching for increased vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, locking vehicles and keeping valuables out of sight, and staying alert to belongings in crowded public areas.

SMPD also asked beachgoers to follow posted signs, restricted areas and instructions from public safety personnel, and to report suspicious or concerning activity.

Officers will be stationed throughout Santa Monica during the holiday to provide a visible safety presence and traffic control, the department said.

For emergencies or crimes in progress, call 911. For non-emergency police assistance, call 310-458-8491.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF

OIL

FROM PAGE 3

Management released an environmental analysis for the proposal, which energy company DCOR said would more than triple daily oil output in 16 wells from 1,100 barrels to 4,000 barrels.

“This is just simply one of those cases where the juice isn’t worth the squeeze,” Coastal Commissioner Ray Jackson said

during a hearing on DCOR LLC’s plan. “It creates far too many opportunities for something to go wrong. When something does go wrong it is our ocean, beaches, wildlife and coastal economy that pay the price.”

The company said it’s evaluating whether to appeal to the commerce secretary.

By AMY TAXIN Associated Press



City of
Santa Monica

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE THE SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: 26ENT-0164 (Final Map)
2134 Stewart Street
APPLICANT: Colin Logan, LTM Development
PROPERTY OWNER: Seth Hamilton, CALDEV LLC

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to consider the following request:

Final Parcel Map to create four residential parcels pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65852.28 and 66499.41 (Senate Bills 684 and 1123) within a Multiple-Unit Residential (R2) zoning district.

At the time of the public hearing, the City Council will also be considering compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

DATE/TIME: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2026 AT 5:30 PM

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, Second Floor, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT:

The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Members of the public unable to attend a meeting but wishing to comment on an item(s) listed on the agenda may submit written comments prior to the public hearing via email to councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov or via mail to City Clerk, 1685 Main Street, Room 102, Santa Monica, California 90401. Written public comment submitted before 12:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting will be available for online viewing. All written comments shall be made part of the public record. Please note the agenda item number in the subject line of your written comments.

You may also comment in person at the City Council hearing. Please check the agenda for more detailed instructions on how to comment in person.

Address your comments to:

City Clerk	
Re:	26ENT-0164 (2134 Stewart St) Final Map
VIA EMAIL:	councilmtgitems@santamonica.gov
VIA MAIL:	1685 Main Street, Room 102 Santa Monica, CA 90401

MORE INFORMATION: If you want more information about this project, please contact Jesse Brown at jesse.brown@santamonica.gov. For disability-related accommodations, please contact the City Clerk’s Office at (310) 458-8211 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Every attempt will be made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate languages provided the request is received 72 hours prior to the meeting. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines serve City Hall and the Civic Center area. The Expo Line terminus is located at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, and is 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).

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: Esto es una noticia pública para revisar aplicaciones proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si desea más información, favor de llamar a Ana Fernandez en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-2201 ext. 2431 o envíe un correo electrónico a ana.fernandez@santamonica.gov

GET IT
DAILY...



FBI

FROM PAGE 1

sentence, the FBI will unrelentingly seek his whereabouts and is offering a significant reward of up to \$150,000 in exchange for information leading to his apprehension and conviction.”

Fritsch was charged federally in Los Angeles in August 2017, accused of defrauding investors out of more than \$20 million between 2014 and 2017 by lying about his company's financial performance. He pitched StarClub's app, StarSite, as technology that could help celebrities and social media influencers monetize their brand endorsements by delivering advertising content and sharing ad revenue with the celebrity who posted it.

Prosecutors said Fritsch made a series of false claims to investors, including that StarClub was close to striking commercial deals with, or landing investments and buyout offers from, major media companies such as Disney. He also falsely claimed the company earned \$15 million in revenue in 2015 and that its investors included major media companies and a global investment banking firm.

Rather than developing StarClub's technology, Fritsch used much of the investment money to fund a lavish lifestyle, prosecutors said, including the purchase of a McLaren and a Rolls-Royce, upgrades to his yacht, and renovations to his Malibu mansion near Carbon Beach. The FBI has since seized the yacht and both vehicles.

One victim invested more than \$20 million in StarClub over two years based on Fritsch's false statements and introduced him to other victims who invested millions more, according to the FBI. Prosecutors estimate Fritsch caused approximately \$26.8 million in victim losses.

A federal jury in Los Angeles found Fritsch guilty in April 2025. While awaiting sentencing, he fled to Los Mochis, Sinaloa, Mexico, in June 2025, ahead of a bond revocation hearing, prompting a federal arrest warrant after he failed to appear in court.

In September 2025, Mexican law enforcement detained Fritsch after he was found with false identification, in violation of the country's immigration laws. He was released from immigration custody and ordered to check in with Mexican immigration court every two weeks but instead fled to Munich, Germany, on Oct. 6, 2025.

On Oct. 20, 2025, Fritsch was sentenced in absentia to 15 years in federal prison, fined \$35,000 and later ordered to pay \$26,806,901 in restitution.

“Placing Fritsch on the Most Wanted Fraudsters list reflects our commitment to pursue those who attempt to outrun the law. Fleeing the United States will not shield him from justice,” said Bill Essayli, first assistant U.S. attorney for the Central District of California. “We will find him and he will answer for his conduct in a court of law.”

The Most Wanted Fraudsters list was created in June 2026 to draw public attention to fraud fugitives. Fifteen fugitives have been added to the list since its creation, four of whom have since been captured, leaving 12 currently on the list. It is separate from the FBI's traditional Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list and focuses exclusively on major fraud cases.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the FBI's toll-free tipline at 1-800-CALL-FBI or submit a tip online at tips.fbi.gov. The case was investigated by the FBI and is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of California.

Fritsch's girlfriend, Lucinda Jane Weist Manera, 63, of Malibu, pleaded guilty in June 2026 to a felony count of being an accessory after the fact for helping Fritsch evade authorities.

According to her plea agreement, Manera was in the courtroom when the guilty verdict against Fritsch was read in April 2025. Fritsch was free on bond at the time, with a hearing on his potential remand into federal custody scheduled for June 2, 2025, ahead of a later sentencing date.

On June 2, 2025, Fritsch fled the United States by car, crossing into Mexico to avoid being taken into custody at that hearing and to avoid serving a prison sentence.

Placing Fritsch on the Most Wanted Fraudsters list reflects our commitment to pursue those who attempt to outrun the law. Fleeing the United States will not shield him from justice

- Bill Essayli, first assistant U.S. attorney for the Central District of California

From June to September 2025, prosecutors said Manera assisted Fritsch with the purpose of hindering his apprehension and punishment, including lying to FBI agents about having spoken to him within a day of his scheduled June 2 hearing. She also made at least 10 payments totaling roughly \$7,475 to a third party while knowing Fritsch was hiding at that person's home, and she authorized a \$534 charge to her bank account to cover a hotel stay for Fritsch in Mexico.

In September 2025, Manera searched the internet on Fritsch's behalf for information on how he could leave Mexico and travel to Germany, his native country, which generally does not extradite its citizens.

In April 2026, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed Fritsch's appeal of his conviction because of his fugitive status; a fugitive defendant is generally not entitled to a ruling on the merits of his claims. If Fritsch surrenders to authorities by Aug. 21, 2026, he may seek to reinstate the appeal.

U.S. District Judge Dale S. Fischer has scheduled an Oct. 5 sentencing hearing for Manera, who faces a statutory maximum of five years in federal prison.

The case against Manera is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Monica E. Tait of the Major Frauds Section.

editor@smdp.com



OPINION

UNMUTED

Devan Sipher

Send comments to
editor@smdp.com

Separate and unequal

Distraught residents lined up to speak at City Hall last Tuesday about a threat to their homes, not from a natural disaster but from California Senate Bill 79 (SB 79). However, the Council meeting had been canceled. Instead, it was members of the city's community development team listening to anguished pleas and offering the kind of thorough explanations and gracious empathy frequently missing from the Council chambers.

The city staff on the dais had distinct advantages over council members. If the Council let everyone speak without time limits and responded to each comment, it could double the 9-hour endurance tests that meetings already often become.

Yet it was still heartwarming to see the unflappable professionalism exhibited by Ross Fehrman, Jing Yeo, and Rachel Kwok. There was no speechifying or pandering, because they're not elected leaders seeking votes or contributions. They just offered clarity, and the compassion was an extra bonus.

Clarity is in short supply when it comes to SB 79, which is intended to increase housing development by upzoning all properties within a half mile of major transit stops, but just what constitutes a “major” stop was still being deliberated practically until the law took effect on July 1.

The LA Metro stations were always included, and erecting eight-story buildings (the maximum height allowed) along Colorado Avenue could be an effective way to increase housing in Santa Monica without negatively impacting the community. But SB 79 casts a far wider net, encompassing most of the Mid-City, Pico and Downtown neighborhoods without providing any infrastructure to facilitate the transit use it purports to encourage, such as streetlights and level sidewalks.

Instead, it doles out density bonuses like bonbons, allowing as many as developers can gobble up, resulting already in a proposed tower on 15th Street that's not eight stories but 12. On a block of mostly one- and two-story buildings, is that densifying a neighborhood or destroying it?

This is where the politics of housing development get complicated, because affordable housing is a major concern for many residents, and an obvious way to increase it is by replacing smaller residences with larger ones containing more units. However, it's also convenient for elected leaders to support such upzoning when it earns them abundant financial rewards from real estate developers.

The first Santa Monica project announced under SB 79 is coincidentally owned by a donor of one of the legislation's most vocal supporters on the Council and at a location that the Council

more or less chose, which brings us back to the meeting at City Hall. Pico residents wanted to know why the Council chose to target their single-family homes for upzoning, against the advice of city staff and the Planning Commission.

Of course, it's not quite that simple. There's a complex mathematical formula embedded in SB 79 that allows cities to suspend the law's impact from eligible areas until 2030, but that math left part of Pico unprotected, with the Council having the undesirable task of choosing which part. Councilmember Ellis Raskin expressed apprehension about the potential for “unprecedented displacement and gentrification.”

The Planning Commission recommended upzoning an area with multi-family housing to minimize that displacement, since developers are less likely to risk the higher costs of evicting and relocating numerous tenants and the lower profit margins, compared to redeveloping a lot with a single home.

It's unclear if the Council didn't accept this or if they just have a kneejerk bias against neighborhoods of single family homes, which some of them have stated are a vestige of 20th century racism. There's some historic basis for that progressive perspective. The conundrum is that the people expressing it are often white, and many of the people living in single-family homes in Pico are not.

One of them is Christine Parra, a former council member, who criticized the Council majority for not doing a racial equity analysis prior to their decision. “They're going to allow the displacement of a neighborhood, when they had a better option,” she said, bemoaning their decision to override the Planning Commission's advice and pointing out that roughly 20% of her neighbors are renters.

“It's a really, really hard policy choice,” said Yeo, the director of community development, at last Tuesday's meeting, defending the Council's action despite the staff report's contrary recommendation. “The city has been forced into this.”

But that's not entirely accurate. While it's true that in July the Council voiced unanimous opposition to the risks SB 79 posed to Santa Monica, that was a year after the Council voted (6-1) to endorse the bill and send the legislature a letter documenting their enthusiastic support.

SB 79 isn't something that was forced on the city so much as something the city eagerly pursued. Now that we're facing the unintended consequences, the Council is vowing to safeguard working class residents from displacement. But what about the rest of the residents? Why is it okay for their neighborhoods to be displaced?

**"THE FUNNIEST SERIES
OF RECENT MEMORY"**
— THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

**"KEVIN KLINE AND
LAURA LINNEY DELIVER
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— LOS ANGELES TIMES

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SPECTACULARLY GOOD"**
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AMERICAN — CLASSIC —



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FROM AUGUST 31 TO SEPTEMBER 30

Santa Monica Daily Press

Classifieds

Summons

DBA

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)CASE NO. 24AVCV01402NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): William B. Settle Jr.YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): TRASHAUN BABERS, an individualNOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.The name and address of the court is: Los Angeles County Superior Court, Michael Antonovich Antelope Valley Courthouse, 42011 4th St W, Lancaster, CA 93534.The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: Thomas H. Schelly, Lipeles Law Group, APC, 1060 Aviation Blvd Suite 100, Hermosa Beach CA 90254 , 310-322-2211.DATE: October 30, 2024. David W. Slayton, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court, by D. Simon, Deputy.SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS 09/04/2026, 09/11/2026, 09/17/2026, 09/24/2026 - GOV CODE SECTION 6064

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026151732. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: ICONOLAB, 5311 WHITEFOX DRIVE, RANCHO PALOS VERDES, CA 90275, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): ICON BOTANICA, INC., 5311 WHITEFOX DRIVE, RANCHO PALOS VERDES, CA 90275. This business is conducted by: a Corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 03/2018. 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/ TANJA PAAJANEN, CEO. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 07/13/2026. 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: 08/14/2026, 08/21/2026, 08/28/2026, 09/04/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2026178913. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: DR. MELISSA'S, 721 N ROXBURY DR, BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90210, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): INTEGRIMD LLC, 1118 E 223RD ST, CARSON, CA 90745. 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 08/2026. 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/ MELISSA DANESH, PRESIDENT. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 08/19/2026. 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: 08/30/2026, 09/06/2026, 09/13/2026, 09/20/2026

Storage Auction Sale Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION - ABANDONED PERSONAL PROPERTYNotice is hereby given that, pursuant to California Civil Code section 1988, Government Code section 6066, and other applicable California law, the personal property listed below is believed to be abandoned by Nighat Zaidi, Nadim Zaidi, All Unknown Occupants, and all other owners, occupants, partners, tenants, and/or subtenants, located at 8303 Topeka Drive, Northridge, CA 91324.The property will be sold at public auction by U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as Trustee for Tiki Series VI Trust, offered in one or more lots through a competitive online public auction facilitated by MEGA Auctions, to be conducted on Friday, September 25, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.Auction access: WWW.MEGAAUCTIONS.NETItems to be sold include, but are not limited to:LG smart washer and gas dryer; LG side-by-side refrigerator; Samsung 55-inch curved 4K television; Nexgrill six-burner gas grill; wood and glass display cabinet; patio heater; upright and wet/dry vacuums; multifunction printer; fiberglass ladder; shelving units; tables and chairs; outdoor grills and equipment; gardening tools and supplies; cleaning and painting supplies; household furniture and décor; bathroom and garage items; unopened items; and miscellaneous personal property.

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

WEATHER

FROM PAGE 2

is the clearest signal, with peak impacts likely from December through March. He said coastal flooding tied to elevated sea levels coinciding with king tides and storm waves is “almost guaranteed,” and noted that erosion has already forced closures along Pacific Coast Highway near Malibu and the Amtrak line between Los Angeles and San Diego.

Forecasters are especially concerned about burn scars left by the January 2025 Palisades and Eaton fires and the December 2024 Franklin fire, which left behind hydrophobic soils prone to shedding rainfall rather than absorbing it. U.S. Geological Survey modeling found a 60% to 80% chance of debris flows in Palisades-area canyons, including Temescal and Tuna canyons, under a design storm scenario. California State Geologist Jeremy Lancaster has said as little as a fifth of an inch of rain

LA COUNTY

FROM PAGE 1

and Business Affairs to develop a plan within 30 days to curb fraud and to launch an expanded consumer education effort within 45 days. It comes 18 months after the fires destroyed thousands of homes in Altadena and the Pacific Palisades area, and as more residents begin the long process of rebuilding.

“As more Eaton Fire survivors move forward with rebuilding, my office is hearing increasing concerns about contractor fraud and bad actors targeting homeowners in Altadena,” Barger said. “My constituents have already lost far too much — they shouldn’t have to worry about being victimized again by an unscrupulous contractor or scammer.”

Barger, whose 5th District includes Altadena, said the county needs “our consumer protection and enforcement partners working together, while making sure survivors have clear, trusted information before they sign a contract or spend their recovery dollars.”

The Eaton Fire tore through Altadena in January 2025, killing 19 people and destroying more than 9,000 structures in what became the second-most destructive wildfire in California history. The Palisades Fire, burning at the same time, killed 12 people and destroyed nearly 6,900 structures across Pacific Palisades, Malibu and surrounding areas. Together the fires displaced tens of thousands of residents.

The concern driving Tuesday’s action is not hypothetical. The California Contractors State License Board’s investigative fraud team conducted 52 sweeps in the Palisades and Eaton fire areas in 2025 to deter unlicensed work, and the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office has charged 11 unlicensed contractors — five in the Eaton zone in December and six in the Palisades zone this year, tied to bids totaling as much as \$1.27 million. Some survivors have reported losing tens of thousands of dollars to builders who left work unfinished.

In their motion, the supervisors wrote that while survivors “have shown extraordinary resilience, the complexity of recovery has also created opportunities for bad actors to exploit vulnerable homeowners through contractor fraud, home repair scams, deceptive business practices, and other predatory conduct.”

in 15 minutes could trigger a debris flow in the Eaton burn scar. The National Weather Service says burn areas remain at heightened risk of flash flooding and debris flows for at least two years after a fire, putting the 2025 burn scars squarely within their highest-risk window this winter.

The outlook follows a rapid swing in ocean conditions: a weak La Niña early this year gave way to a strengthening El Niño by summer, with July sea-surface temperatures well above average in the equatorial Pacific. NOAA’s next ENSO update is scheduled for Sept. 10.

Separately, NOAA’s final 2026 Atlantic hurricane outlook calls for a below-normal season, as El Niño increases disruptive wind shear, while its Eastern Pacific outlook calls for an above-average season that could raise storm and moisture risks for Mexico, Hawaii and far Southern California.

editor@smdp.com

Officials also warned that not all harm comes from criminals. Some contractors, they said, take on more work than they can finish, leaving homeowners with stalled projects and additional financial and emotional strain.

Horvath, whose 3rd District includes Calabasas and the Palisades area, said the county’s response must combine enforcement with support for those already harmed.

“Los Angeles County is standing with wildfire survivors and holding accountable those who seek to exploit them,” Horvath said. “Survivors deserve our full support as they rebuild — not scams, fraud, or predatory contractors looking to take advantage of vulnerable residents who have already endured too much. If you believe you’ve been victimized, our Department of Consumer and Business Affairs is here to help.”

The motion directs consumer affairs officials to work with the District Attorney’s Office, County Counsel, the Department of Public Works and the state licensing board to align enforcement tools so emerging complaints can be identified and addressed more quickly.

A central goal is preventing fraud before it happens. The planned awareness campaign will teach survivors how to verify a contractor’s license, understand the terms of a home improvement contract, recognize warning signs and report suspected scams. Information will be centralized on the county’s Recovery LA website, recovery.lacounty.gov, and built into the Altadena and Calabasas One-Stop Permitting Centers, where homeowners obtain rebuilding permits.

The measure also calls for targeted outreach to residents considered especially vulnerable or hard to reach, including older adults, people with limited English proficiency and displaced households. Those efforts will rely on partnerships with community and legal service organizations.

The board granted the consumer affairs director authority to enter agreements with consultants, nonprofits and community groups to carry out the work. The motion does not attach a specific dollar figure, instead directing existing county resources toward the effort.

maaz@smdp.com

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

© australianwordgames.com.au 7053

Gold Coast holiday

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

Aquaduck	Dodgems	Keno	Relax
Arundel	Drinks	Loop	Sanctuary
Bike	Entertainment	Lunch	Shade
Buses	Exhausted	Nerang	Shops
Camp	Fast food	Ocean	Surf
Catch	Funny	Open	Swim
Cool	Harbour	Pass	Trips
Cruise	Town	Picnic	Tube
Dawn	Hats	Popular	Unit
Disco	Iluka	Raft	Wind
Diving	Island	Recreation	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.

Beautiful meaning

TODAY’S BIRTHDAY (Sept. 4)

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You’re leadership instinct is on point today and you have an immediate sense for what action needs to be taken and by whom. If there isn’t such a person close at hand, you cast a wide net and find someone to fill the role.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). The same story can be gossip or kindness depending on why it’s being told. Listen with one ear on the words and the other on the motive. Kind motives will leave everyone richer in dignity and goodwill.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The reason you get such consistent results is that you have standards in place. But for new endeavors, it’s best to start without them. Stay in learning mode a while. By getting a sense of what to reasonably expect, you’ll avoid frustration.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Ideas behave differently from most things. Spending one rarely leaves you with fewer. In fact, they seem to invite each other. You’ll toss a few around today, and they will start to take root over the weekend.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Every situation has its own temperature. Some need another log on the fire. Others need a window opened. You’re unusually good at telling the difference. That’s one reason people trust you when it’s your turn to lead today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Success is no longer doing the job you already know you can do. Now it’s doing the job that only you can do. Success is reaching for the impossible and expecting to fail gloriously and often.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). After weeks of familiar faces enacting the same patterns, someone new will step through your scene. All they need is the slightest interest from you, and it’s on. This relationship has real potential for mutuality and magic.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Good partnerships aren’t built from matching talents. They’re built from complementary ones. Today you have a gift for recognizing strengths that have very little in common with your own and will therefore be useful in a team effort.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Someone is paying closer attention than you realize. Your casual reaction will become their memory. So make sure you’re intent on encouragement, laughter, curiosity and the like. It will echo far beyond the moment.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You want to write a brand-new story for your future. This requires that you look back. Unless you understand the patterns that brought you here, you’re likely to repeat them. Some are great, but still not a “new story.”

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). It’s a day to give people lots of chances to succeed. If you decide too quickly that they are not going to deliver what you want, you’ll have to eat your words later. Stay hopeful and patient.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). A gift loses its sparkle if it’s expected. You are such a gift. If people grow too accustomed to your generosity, they may stop seeing it as generosity at all. It’s OK to hold back a little. Your restraint will keep them from taking you for granted.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S CROSSWORD

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

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY’S SUDOKU

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

Newsday Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Carry colleague
- 5 Frozen digs
- 10 Drain
- 13 Tennis great on a 2005 stamp
- 14 High-maintenance
- 15 Medicinal shipment
- 16 Elk sausage seller
- 17 ___ *Hot*
- 19 Be boisterous
- 20 ___TV (docusoap channel)
- 21 Avarice exemplar
- 22 Hot ___
- 26 Short trip
- 27 Baby badger
- 28 Hoof healer’s designation
- 31 Maned mammal
- 34 Stone mostly silicon
- 36 Still to be caught
- 37 “Hot ___?”
- 40 What you might break into
- 41 Fabricated
- 42 Go formal
- 43 Open-and-shut-case org.
- 44 Cold-weather beverage
- 45 Fooled
- 46 “___ hot..”
- 53 Fascinates, so to speak
- 55 Romantic, to musicians
- 56 Keep hidden
- 57 Hot-___
- 60 Falsetto monster of TV
- 61 Plenty

- 62 Edible ring
- 63 No longer crisp
- 64 -speak cousin
- 65 Holds up
- 66 Explanation intro

DOWN

- 1 Largest North African city
- 2 “All I ___ You” (*Phantom...* tune)
- 3 Paper bundle
- 4 Fireside decor
- 5 Part of a foot
- 6 Physicist Ohm
- 7 Arboreal primate
- 8 Elevated lines
- 9 Toon with a brother Castor
- 10 Delivery to 50-Down
- 11 Vocal showcase
- 12 Tangible encouragement
- 15 Black & Decker rival
- 18 Website with trailer videos
- 23 Novelist Tami
- 24 “It matters to me”
- 25 As it should be
- 29 Flight formations
- 30 Team on the same island as JFK
- 31 Hearty enjoyment
- 32 First Biblical grandson
- 33 19th century autocrat
- 34 Grown up
- 35 Botanical vessel

HOT STUFF by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- 36 Sub rosa
- 38 Drs.’ associations
- 39 Telltale sign
- 44 Cosmic radiation studier
- 45 Research assistance
- 47 Rolls out
- 48 Drudges
- 49 “Indoors ___?”
- 50 Sub stations
- 51 Impolite demand
- 52 Emulate the Shelleys and Brownings
- 53 Snow blower, more than likely
- 54 *Mapa* lines
- 58 Bloodwork letters
- 59 Name on macadamia jars

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
53	54					55					56		
57					58	59					60		
61					62						63		
64					65						66		

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

MALIBU

FROM PAGE 1

Chief among its concerns was a chronic lack of parking that the city said forces hikers onto Pacific Coast Highway, which it described as one of the most dangerous roadways in California. The complaint also faulted the recreation authority for failing to consistently enforce required sunset trail closures, at times leaving visitors in the dark and prompting calls for emergency assistance.

The city said it had warned the authority in writing as early as July 2024 that directing visitors to park along the highway and cross on foot was extremely dangerous, citing heavy traffic and a documented pattern of illegal parking and U-turns. On Feb. 8, 2026, Joshua Farmer was struck and killed on Pacific Coast Highway near Winding Way, in the vicinity of the trails at the center of the lawsuit.

“The City can no longer accept the status quo,” the city said when it filed the suit.

The suit also tied the trails’ management to wildfire risk. It pointed to two fires in 2024 that residents blamed on overgrown vegetation on land managed by the authority. The Broad Fire began in November 2024 on the authority-managed Malibu Bluffs Open Space, burning about 50 acres and damaging homes and other structures during Santa Ana winds. Weeks later, the Franklin Fire erupted north of Pepperdine University along Malibu Canyon Road, burning more than 4,000 acres, destroying 20 homes and forcing evacuations for tens of thousands of residents.

State records showed fewer than 200 acres of fuel reduction had been performed in the year before the fires across the authority’s roughly 75,000 acres of holdings.

Mayor Bruce Silverstein said the city had not sued lightly. “For more than a year, we worked collaboratively with MRCA to try to resolve our concerns,” he said when the suit was filed. “When those efforts proved unsuccessful, the City Council concluded that legal action was the only option to effect change.”

In its statement this week, the city stressed that the ruling does not resolve the underlying problems. Trail users are still parking along the highway for lack of adequate parking, closures still go unenforced, trash still accumulates along environmentally sensitive coastal areas, and vegetation that residents believe has contributed to recent wildfires still goes unmanaged, the city said.

“Those are the conditions that led the City Council to act, and the Court’s ruling does not change them,” the statement said.

The city said it remained willing to work with the authority on trail safety, parking, closure enforcement and vegetation management, noting it had spent more than a year trying to resolve the issues collaboratively before turning to the courts.

The lawsuit was one of two Malibu has pressed against the conservancy agencies. In a separate February lawsuit seeking damages from the Palisades Fire, the city alleged the authority failed to perform adequate brush clearance on its parkland, including vacant lots along Pacific Coast Highway and Big Rock Drive. The city acknowledged the authority had begun new brush and vegetation management contracts for 2026 but called the steps “too little, too late.”

“The City thanks the Malibu community for its continued engagement on these issues,” the statement said, adding that it would provide updates as the matter develops.

maaz@smdp.com

UNMUTED

FROM PAGE 6

The Council should be commended for protecting those with the least resources. But why should middle-class residents or any others feel like second-class citizens? We have a President who believes in rewarding people who voted for him and punishing those who didn’t. Fortunately, our council members don’t espouse that approach, but there seems to be an

element of it present.

For all the lip service to diversity, equity and inclusion, some people in Santa Monica are treated as less equal than others. Too often, council members stratify citizens according to a progressive pecking order to determine who is worthy of empathy and who isn’t. To the credit of the development team last week, they offered it equally to all.

Devan Sipher can be reached at Devan@smdp.com.



FRIDAY | SEPTEMBER 4

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/19242128/2026-09-04T09>

MOBILE COMMUNITY MEDITATION CENTER - GUIDED MEDITATION

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Santa Monica Beach lot 5 South 2600 Bernard Way Santa Monica. Please join Mobile Community Meditation Center aka Buddhist Boondockers Wednesdays and Fridays at 10 am for a 50 minute fully guided mindfulness meditation - on the grass, under the shade of the trees, with a view of the sparkling ocean. (Tuesday and Thursday offered via zoom). Whether you’re new to meditation or a seasoned practitioner, everyone is welcomed. Bring your own chair or cushion and try to arrive 5 minutes early. Be prepared to enjoy a truly peaceful moment as we relax, be present and make new friends; giving ourselves the love and attention we deserve by quieting our minds, finding peace and creating community. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/mobile-community-meditation-center-guided-meditation/19479748/2026-09-04T10>

GLOBAL MOTION WORLD DANCE COMPANY DANCERS AUDITION

2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. CPC 310 Core Performance Center, SMC Main Campus, 1900 Pico Blvd Santa Monica. All dancers auditioning must be warmed up and wear appropriate dancewear. Participants accepted by audition must enroll in Global Motion - Dance 57A. This course offers performance experience and is organized as a world dance company. Dancers and choreographers audition, rehearse, and perform on stage traditional and contemporary forms of world dance. Styles include dances of Africa, Asia, Latin America, México, Europe (ballet), and USA (jazz, tap, hip hop). Visit smc.edu/dance. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/global-motion-world-dance-company-dancers-audition/19305363/2026-09-04T14>

NIKKA WHISKY & SPIRITS BAR TAKEOVER AT THE LOBSTER

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. The Lobster 1602 Ocean Avenue Santa Monica. Molecular mixologist Tony Bennett from The Alchemists’ Garden in Paso Robles is coming to The Lobster for a complete bar takeover on Friday, September 4 from 5–8 PM, mixing up a special menu of cocktails featuring Nikka Whisky & Spirits — whisky, gin and vodka. Chef Govind Armstrong will be making small bites to pair with the cocktails. Tony has been behind the bar since 2011, getting his start in high-volume sports bars and nightclubs before finding his way into the world of craft cocktails. In 2020, he co-founded The Alchemists’ Garden in downtown Paso Robles, where his drinks draw inspiration from old cocktail lore, vintage recipes, and the incredible farms, wineries, and distilleries of California’s Central

Coast. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/nikka-whisky-spirits-bar-takeover-at-the-lobster/19669971/2026-09-04T17>

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. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/bundy-triangle-night-market/18490079/2026-09-04T17>

SATURDAY | SEPTEMBER 5

WELLNESS & WAVES RETURNS TO SANTA MONICA PIER, FREE SAT. MORNING FITNESS

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Santa Monica Pier 200 Santa Monica Pier, Ste A Santa Monica. The Santa Monica Pier Corporation invites the community to move, stretch, and recharge by the ocean as Wellness & Waves returns for its 2026 season. Taking place every Saturday from April 4 through October 17, 2026, from 8 to 10 a.m., this free, all-ages wellness series transforms the iconic Santa Monica Pier into an open-air fitness destination at the most iconic outdoor setting in Southern California. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/wellness-waves-returns-to-santa-monica-pier-free-sat-morning-fitness/18475500/2026-09-05T08>

TASTE OUR FRESH HARVESTED SANTA MONICA SHADE GROWN COFFEE

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. 1933 20th Street Santa Monica. Come sip our fresh, shade-grown coffee straight from the far. \$0.00 to \$17.85. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/taste-our-fresh-harvested-santa-monica-shade-grown-coffee/19783550/2026-09-05T09>

MARION DAVIES GUEST HOUSE TOUR AT ACBH

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. 415 Pacific Coast Highway Santa Monica, CA 90402. 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. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/marion-davies-guest-house-tour-at-acbh/19340399/2026-09-05T12>

MAGIC BY THE SEA: JAMES MAKO & GREG VAN HOLSBECK

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Illusion Magic Lounge 1418 4th St Santa Monica. Our signature “Magic by the Sea” series brings the World’s Best Magicians to Santa Monica! Our signature “Magic by the Sea” series brings the World’s Best Magicians to Santa Monica! \$22.01 to \$63.96. Visit: <https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/magic-by-the-sea-james-mako-greg-van-holsbeck/19742884/2026-09-05T19>

SAVE THE KITTENS



#SAVETHEKITTENS

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