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Cancer and COVID
Screenings should be rescheduled.
Page 4

What's The Point
Businesses are in a tough spot.
Page 7

COVID cases on the decline but officials expect a surge soon

BRENNON DIXSON
SMDP Staff Writer

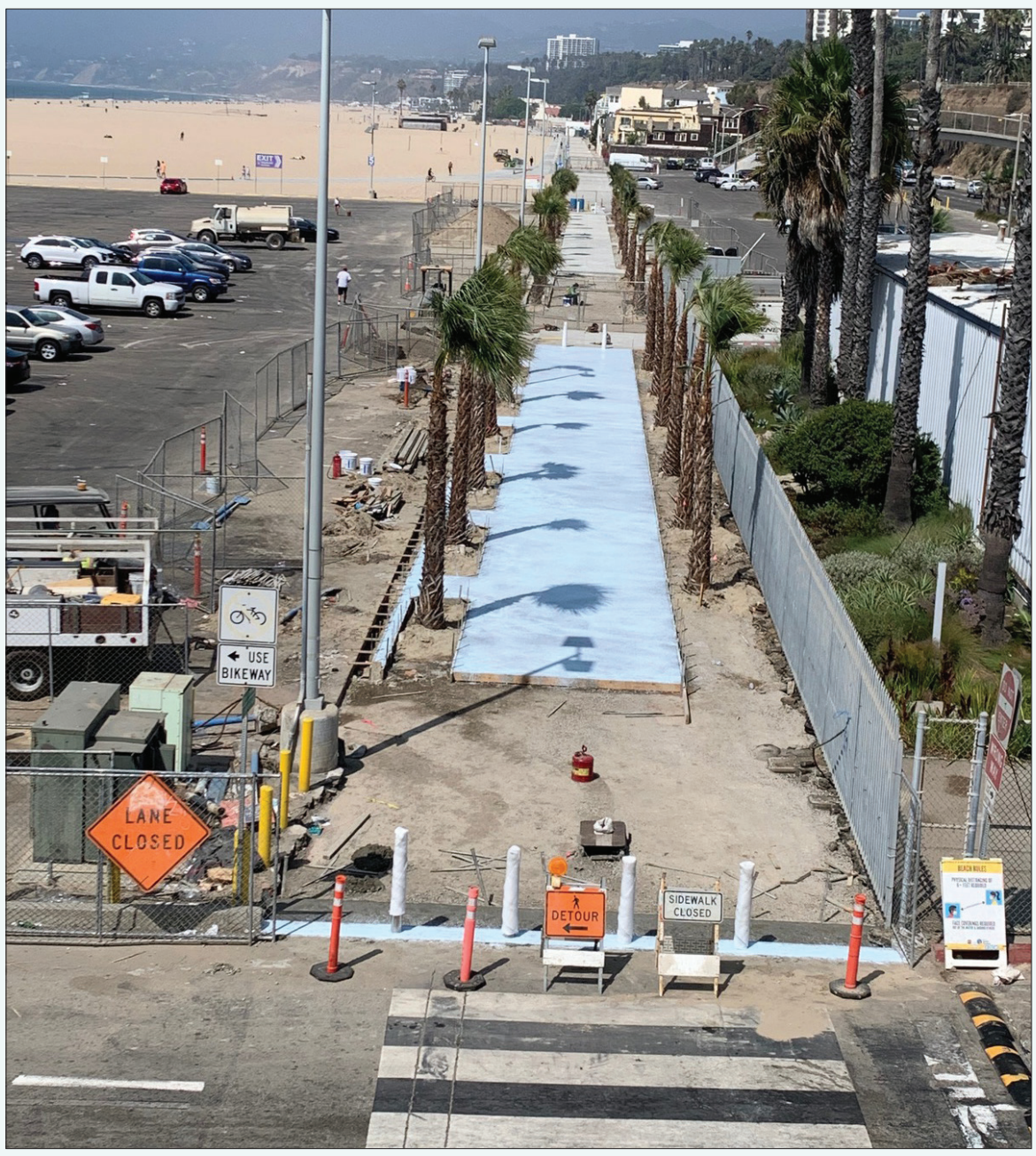
The COVID-19 daily positivity rate continues to decline but Los Angeles County health experts said Monday they are still unsure when the region will move into the next phase of reopenings.

Director Barbara Ferrer and her peers at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health have reported a steady decrease in the number of new coronavirus cases in recent weeks, but officials reiterated Monday there is a need for more data from Labor Day Weekend before they can accurately say the worst of the pandemic has passed.

Last week's case counts were on the rise again, according to Ferrer, who noted Monday how freely people interacted with each other during the most recent holiday weekend. As a result, the health department is looking every day to see if there is any indication that L.A. County will again see a surge in the numbers of COVID-19 cases.

"We've had a troubling trend the last few days of last week, and we

SEE **COVID** PAGE 11



Ross Furukawa

BEACH PATH: **Work continues on expansion of the beach path in Santa Monica with a new pedestrian walk way coming to the area just north of the Pier.**

One month into distance learning, District plans assessment

CLARA HARTER
SMDP Staff Writer

The Santa Monica Malibu-Unified School District has completed its first four weeks of distance learning and will soon be releasing a survey to assess family satisfaction and plan adjustments. While many parents are pleased with the improvements to spring's distance learning model, some voiced concerns about screen time and scheduling at last week's School Board meeting, and the District seeks to incorporate this feedback into its response.

"We have one cohort of our community that are happy with what they have right now and would like to continue with what they have right now. We also have a cohort of people that do not like the distance learning model, that either want something in person or something that works better for them," said Jon Kean, School Board President. "The survey will be addressing both of these issues. That way, the response is not going to be anecdotal based on who comes to the Board meeting or who sends more emails, but will be based on data from all of our schools."

SEE **DISTANCE LEARNING** PAGE 11

Enormous wildfire threatens desert homes near Los Angeles

CHRISTOPHER WEBER
Associated Press

An enormous wildfire that churned through mountains northeast of Los Angeles and into the Mojave Desert was still threatening homes on Monday and was one of more than two dozen major fires burning across California.

Five of the largest wildfires in state history are currently burning and more than 5,600 square miles have been charred, an area larger than the state of Connecticut, Gov. Gavin Newsom said.

At 165 square miles, the Bobcat Fire is one of the largest ever in Los Angeles County after burning for more than two weeks. It's just 15% contained.

Evacuation orders and warnings are in place for thousands of residents in foothill and desert areas, where semi-rural homes and a popular nature sanctuary have burned. Statewide, at least 23,000 people remain evacuated, Newsom said.

No injuries have been reported for the fire about 50 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles.

Erratic winds that drove flames into the community of Juniper Hills over the weekend had died down, said U.S. Forest Service spokesman Larry Smith.

"It's slightly cooler too, so hopefully that will be a help to firefighters," Smith said.

Numerous studies in recent years have linked bigger U.S. wildfires to global warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas, especially because climate change has made California much drier. A drier California means plants are more flammable.

Officials said it could be days before teams determine the scope of the destruction in the area burned by the Bobcat Fire

Early estimates are that 6,400 buildings have been destroyed across the state, but Newsom said "by no

SEE **WILDFIRE** PAGE 6

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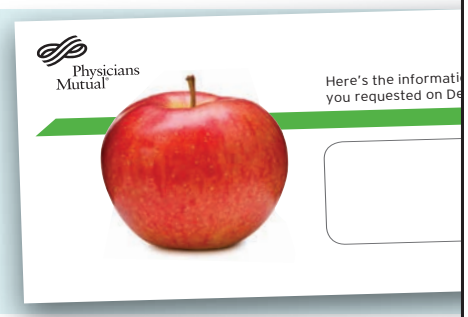
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DAILY POLICE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 262 CALLS ON SEPTEMBER 20

Fight Appian Way / Pacific Ter 12:02 a.m.
Party Complaint 12th St / Pico Blvd 12:18 a.m.
72 Hour Psychiatric Hold 4th St / Pico Blvd 12:35 a.m.
Party Complaint 800blk 3rd St 12:38 a.m.
Battery 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 12:49 a.m.
Speeding Ocean Ave / California Ave 1:22 a.m.
Party Complaint 1400blk Broadway 1:34 a.m.
Party Complaint 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 1:37 a.m.
Party Complaint 1100blk 11th St 1:52 a.m.
Party Complaint 700blk 18th St 2:04 a.m.
Trash Dumping 1600blk The Beach 3:10 a.m.
Petty Theft 300blk Pico Blvd 3:12 a.m.
Petty Theft 1200blk Franklin St 4:48 a.m.
Traffic Collision With Injuries Lincoln Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 6:41 a.m.
Violation Of Temporary No Parking Signs 1200blk 9th St 7:15 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 1100blk 7th St 9:32 a.m.
Lewd Activity 300blk Washington Ave 9:52 a.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 3300blk Barnard Way 10:06 a.m.
Check Temporary No Parking Signs 600blk 9th St 10:25 a.m.
Violation Of Posted Sign 2900blk Ocean Park Blvd 10:29 a.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 1700blk Appian Way 10:52 a.m.
Burglary 1300blk 2nd St 10:53 a.m.
Burglary 900blk Colorado Ave 11:29 a.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries Main St / Ocean Park Blvd 11:32 a.m.
Hit And Run 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 11:32 a.m.
Auto Burglary 800blk Centinela Ave 11:33 a.m.
Fraud 3100blk Highland Ave 11:36 a.m.
Construction Noise 700blk Navy St 11:59 a.m.
Failure To Pay Parking Fee 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 12:07 p.m.
Burglary 3100blk Colorado Ave 12:26 p.m.
Burglary 2500blk Main St 12:33 p.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 400blk Georgina Ave 12:40 p.m.
Vehicle Blocking Driveway 2600blk 23rd St 12:45 p.m.
Hit And Run 500blk Raymond Ave 1:33 p.m.
Grand Theft Auto 1400blk Ocean Ave 1:40 p.m.
Speeding Pacific Coast Hwy / California Incline 2:00 p.m.
Harassing Phone Calls 1300blk Berkeley St 2:47 p.m.
Found Property 2600blk Ocean Park Blvd 3:14 p.m.
Hit And Run 1300blk 4th St 3:22 p.m.
Person Down 1600blk Ocean Front Walk 3:28 p.m.
Drinking In Public 800blk Navy St 3:29 p.m.
Vehicle Parked On Sidewalk 4th St / Pier Ave 3:36 p.m.
Petty Theft 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 3:37 p.m.
Lost Property 2100blk Ocean Ave 3:38 p.m.
Petty Theft 200blk Broadway 3:50 p.m.
Injured Person 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 3:52 p.m.
Speeding 1900blk Ocean Ave 4:07 p.m.
Abandoned Vehicle 1100blk Ozone Ave 4:07 p.m.
Theft Of Recyclables 2700blk Main St 4:09 p.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon 1600blk The Beach 4:19 p.m.
Speeding Highland Ave / Pier Ave 4:37 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 1100blk Pacific Coast Hwy 4:44 p.m.
Bike Theft 2000blk Ocean Ave 4:48 p.m.
Violation Of Restraining Order 1400blk Lincoln Blvd 4:52 p.m.
Harassing Phone Calls 600blk Marine St 4:59 p.m.
Auto Burglary 500blk 10th St 5:11 p.m.
Vehicle Parked In Alley 1300blk Centinela Ave 5:16 p.m.
Petty Theft Now 3200blk Wilshire Blvd 5:24 p.m.
Violation Of Restraining Order 1600blk Berkeley St 5:34 p.m.
Found Person 300blk Santa Monica Pier 5:41 p.m.
Traffic Collision - Unknown Injuries Main St / Ocean Park Blvd 5:44 p.m.
Illegal party 16th St / Pearl St 5:58 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 1700blk Lincoln Blvd 6:00 p.m.
Encampment 2300blk Ocean Front Walk 6:57 p.m.
Auto Burglary 1400blk 11th St 7:01 p.m.
Violation Of Preferential Parking Zone 1700blk Appian Way 7:03 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 100blk Interstate 10 7:03 p.m.
Shots Fired 1200blk Franklin St 7:18 p.m.
Petty Theft 1200blk Lincoln Blvd 7:54 p.m.
Battery 1700blk Ocean Front Walk 7:59 p.m.
Person With A Gun 2800blk Ocean Front Walk 8:00 p.m.
Public Intoxication 300blk Broadway 8:29 p.m.
Defrauding Innkeeper 1400blk 4th St 8:54 p.m.
Burglary 1500blk 6th St 9:07 p.m.
Keep The Peace 2000blk Ocean Ave 9:17 p.m.
Illegal party 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 9:29 p.m.
Hit And Run 4th St / Marine St 9:30 p.m.
Bike Theft 00blk Pico Blvd 9:37 p.m.
Defrauding Innkeeper In Progress 2400blk Michigan Ave 9:38 p.m.
Petty Theft 1600blk 11th St 10:00 p.m.
Drunk Driving Investigation 19th St / Santa Monica Blvd 10:19 p.m.
Public Intoxication 200blk Santa Monica Pier 10:44 p.m.
Prowler Just Left 900blk 4th St 10:46 p.m.
Hit And Run Felony Investigation Moomat Ahiko Way / Ocean Ave 10:50 p.m.
Speeding 300blk California Ave 10:55 p.m.
Assault W/Deadly Weapon 2100blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:14 p.m.
Traffic Collision - No Injuries 4th St / Colorado Ave 11:18 p.m.
Petty Theft Now 1500blk 16th St 11:34 p.m.

CORRECTION

According to the City of Santa Monica, as of Sept. 5, 42.4% of Santa Monica COVID-19 cases have occurred among staff and patients at skilled nursing facilities.

DAILY FIRE LOG

SMDP STAFF CHOSE THE FOLLOWING FROM 45 CALLS ON SEPTEMBER 20

EMS 500blk Marguerita Ave 12:30 a.m.
Odor Of Natural Gas 1500blk Franklin St 1:37 a.m.
EMS Main St / Ashland Ave 2:15 a.m.
Elevator Rescue 500blk Broadway 2:41 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 1200blk 2nd St 4:25 a.m.
EMS Lincoln Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 6:40 a.m.
EMS Cloverfield Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 7:19 a.m.
EMS 2000blk Arizona Ave 8:51 a.m.
Automatic Alarm 700blk Marine St 9:39 a.m.
EMS Lincoln Blvd / Santa Monica Blvd 9:41 a.m.
Odor Of Natural Gas 1300blk 4th St 10:21 a.m.
EMS 700blk Raymond Ave 10:28 a.m.
EMS 1100blk 19th St 11:36 a.m.
EMS 1000blk Pico Blvd 11:40 a.m.
EMS 800blk 20th St 11:43 a.m.
EMS 700blk Montana Ave 11:58 a.m.
EMS 2500blk 4th St 12:19 p.m.
EMS 600blk Bay St 12:56 p.m.
EMS 1400blk 23rd St 2:06 p.m.
EMS 2600blk 26th St 2:21 p.m.
EMS 3400blk Pearl St 2:25 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 20th St 3:07 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 2nd St 3:09 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 16th St 3:10 p.m.
EMS 1200blk 3rd Street Prom 3:49 p.m.
EMS 700blk Broadway 5:10 p.m.
EMS 300blk Olympic Dr 5:15 p.m.
EMS Main St / Ocean Park Blvd 5:44 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 200blk California Ave 6:17 p.m.
EMS 1500blk 7th St 6:48 p.m.
Broken Water Main 11th St / Colorado Ave 6:48 p.m.
EMS 1800blk Montana Ave 7:14 p.m.
EMS 3200blk Pico Blvd 7:39 p.m.
EMS 200blk Bay St 8:13 p.m.
EMS 2100blk 20th St 8:14 p.m.
EMS 900blk 2nd St 8:16 p.m.
EMS 3rd Street Prom / Santa Monica Blvd 8:30 p.m.
EMS 2100blk 20th St 8:39 p.m.
EMS 300blk Broadway 8:55 p.m.
EMS 1300blk Ocean Ave 8:57 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 200blk San Vicente Blvd 9:10 p.m.
Automatic Alarm 600blk Pico Blvd 10:35 p.m.
EMS 2400blk Centinela Ave 10:48 p.m.
Wires Down 800blk Pine St 11:14 p.m.
EMS 800blk 19th St 11:21 p.m.

CDC changes, then retracts, its take on coronavirus spread

MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

The top U.S. public health agency stirred confusion by posting — and then taking down — an apparent change in its position on how easily the coronavirus can spread from person to person on small droplets in the air.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has said that the virus spreads primarily through small airborne droplets, like those that fly through the air when someone coughs or sneezes. Most CDC guidance about social distancing is built around that idea, saying that 6 feet is a safe buffer between people who are not wearing masks.

In interviews, CDC officials have also acknowledged growing evidence that the virus can sometimes spread on even smaller, aerosolized particles or droplets that spread over a wider area. That's one reason public health experts urge people to wear masks, which can stop or reduce contact with both larger droplets and aerosolized particles.

For months, the agency's website said little about aerosolized particles. So when the CDC quietly posted an update Friday that discussed the particles in more detail, the agency's position appeared to have changed. The post said the virus can remain suspended in the air and drift more than 6 feet, and officials emphasized the importance of indoor ventilation. The post also added singing and breathing to the ways the virus can go airborne.

On Monday, federal health officials said the post was a mistake and that it had been released before full editing and clearance was completed. They said the CDC plans to clarify the agency's thinking, but the agency did not immediately release a statement or revision.

In a statement released Monday, the agency said the revisions to the "How COVID-19 Spreads" page happened "without appropriate in-house technical review."

"We are reviewing our process and tightening criteria for review of all guidance and updates before they are posted to the CDC website," the statement said.

The CDC has come under attack for past revisions of guidance during the pandemic, some of which were driven by political considerations by the Trump administration.

At least one expert said the episode could further chip away at public confidence in the CDC.

"The consistent inconsistency in this administration's guidance on COVID-19 has severely compromised the nation's trust in our public health agencies," said Dr. Howard Koh, a Harvard University public health professor who was a high-ranked official in the Department of Health and Human Services during the Obama administration.

"To rectify the latest challenge, the CDC must acknowledge that growing scientific evidence indicates the importance of airborne transmission through aerosols, making mask wearing even more critical as we head into the difficult fall and winter season," Koh said in a statement.

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Your column here

By Brad Bott

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Patients urged to re-schedule missed cancer screenings

As Covid-19 cases decline again in Southern California, doctors are relieved to see patients resuming routine cancer screenings but continue to urge people to schedule those critical diagnostic tests.

At my organization's hospitals in Southern California as well as those across the country, numbers of screenings are returning to 2019 rates, but these rates do not reflect the steep decline in the early months of the pandemic due to canceled or rescheduled appointments. Now that Covid-19 cases are waning and safety measures have been proven remarkably effective, cancer specialists urge their patients to get back on track.

That includes regularly scheduled mammograms to detect breast abnormalities such as cancerous tumors and colonoscopies to detect colon cancer. Both cancers potentially are deadly if care is delayed.

During the early days of the pandemic, some elective yet essential screenings were delayed to conserve protective equipment and to put in place safety measures that guard against spread of the virus. We have accomplished both and are confident it is safe to continue receiving routine health care. We also believe some people will die of cancer if they wait too long.

Our cancer care teams too often have seen the devastation on the faces of patients who either ignored symptoms or delayed recommended diagnostic screenings and found themselves in the fights of their lives. Their families are terrified. Their lives are upended. Their finances often drained.

Early detection, early intervention, early treatment. The last thing we want is a late stage cancer.

A study by Epic Health Research Network of 39 health systems with a total of 100 hospitals across 23 states found that in the very early days, routine screenings for breast, colon and cervical cancers dropped as much as 94 percent compared to relative January averages. But within months, methods were devised to safely manage patients' care, separate from those under treatment for Covid-19. The numbers improved but not nearly enough.

Patients should ask questions, starting with asking providers what safety practices are in place and what the risks are of both undergoing screenings as scheduled or delaying care. If your risk is low, your provider might agree to postpone a short time – but promptly following up is essential.

Any oncologist would rather prevent than treat a cancer.

Brad Bott is executive director of the Providence Southern California Cancer and Research Clinical Institutes.

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Sustainable Quality Awards WINNER

Outbreak threatens San Diego's economic recovery

ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press

The start of the semester at San Diego State University was, as always, a time for students to make and renew friendships on and off its urban campus and enjoy the beach and the city's unmatched August weather.

The coronavirus meant far fewer people returned to campus this year but the parties, cookouts and other festivities that mark the start of the fall semester went on as usual for a week or two, then abruptly stopped as infections quickly mounted.

James Floyd, a freshman from Davis, California, noticed a mood change when classmates began getting tested. "Once a friend got it, they got scared," he said.

There have been larger outbreaks at U.S. colleges but none may be more impactful than the one at San Diego State.

California has seen remarkable recent success with the virus — the infection rate of 2.8% for the last week is the lowest since the pandemic began, and hospitalizations dropped to a level not seen since the first week of April. But the campus outbreak is large enough to put San Diego County over a state threshold for cases that mandates many businesses close or restrict indoor operations.

For some, it will mark the third closure since California instituted the nation's first statewide shutdown order in March.

It is a dizzying and discouraging turn of events for the county of 3.3 million residents that less than a month ago was the only one in Southern California with virus case numbers low enough to advance to a second level in the state's four-tiered system for reopening.

The county argued that San Diego State cases — which have topped 800 among students — should be excluded from state tallies, like prisons are. Gov. Gavin Newsom rejected the proposal before it was even formally delivered.

"You can't isolate as if it's on an island, a campus community that is part of a larger community, so the answer is no," Newsom said last week.

The county Board of Supervisors dismissed a proposal to disregard state rules but met in a closed-door, emergency session last week to consider litigation.

Jon and Angie Weber said they won't comply with orders to stop serving patrons inside their restaurant.

They closed their Cowboy Star Restaurant and Butcher Shop in downtown San Diego on March 17 for three months, laying off all but one of 55 employees. A June reopening lasted 19 days until cases began spiking again in California and Newsom ordered another round of closures.

When San Diego businesses got permission last month to open more indoor operations with restrictions — 25% indoor capacity for restaurants — the Webers waited two weeks to train staff on sanitation measures and revamp its seasonal menu. When they opened Sept. 15, they learned the same day they would likely have to pull back again in a week unless there was a dramatic turnaround in San Diego.

California uses two metrics for its 58 counties: percentage of positive tests and per capita new cases. Each of the four tiers for reopening include ranges for those categories and a county must meet both for two consecutive weeks before advancing to a higher tier. If they fail on one or both counts for two weeks, they are bumped to a more restrictive tier.

San Diego's infection rate is low enough to advance to another tier but its per capita cases of 7.9 for every 100,000 people in weekly figures announced Sept. 15 is above the rate of 7 needed to stay put. Without San Diego State, the rate would have dropped to 6, according to county officials.

If San Diego's case rate registers above 7 again when weekly figures are announced Tuesday, restaurants could still seat outdoors and do takeout in a lower tier.

Cowboy Star doesn't have room for sidewalk service. "It's demoralizing to open and close, open and close, hire and fire, hire and fire," Jon Weber said.

The Webers say they have exhausted savings and can't survive another closure. Without the restaurant they opened in 2008, they are unable to pay home loans.

"This is our life," Jon Weber said. "To walk away from it would be nearly impossible. It would be like walking away from your child."

The Webers, whose restaurant is 10 miles from the San Diego State campus, are upset with the governor, not the university.

It's difficult to overstate the school's stature in San Diego with its 300-acre campus atop Montezuma Mesa and alumni that permeate every fabric of the city, including two recent mayors, baseball Hall of Famer Tony Gwynn and countless political and business figures.

San Diego State began classes Aug 24 with about 8,000 of more than 35,000 students living on campus or taking at least one in-person class. About 2,400 students also lived on campus, roughly one-third the usual level.

When new cases topped 80 for four straight days, the school suspended in-person classes for four weeks starting Sept. 3. Dorms were locked down.

"The idea here was to really ratchet back the amount of housing available to students," said Adela de la Torre, San Diego State president. "We also wanted to be very, very clear that our classes would be virtual at a moment's notice if we saw a spike at all. That's exactly what we did."

San Diego is one of only two schools in the 23-campus California State system that had to pull back on in-person classes after they began. De la Torre says that's because its students tend to live on or near campus, in contrast to the system's many commuter schools.

About 75% of San Diego State cases originated in off-campus housing, where rents are high and it's not unusual for three

SEE **RECOVERY** PAGE 5

OPINIONS EXPRESSED are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters to the Editor can be submitted to letters@smdp.com. Receipt of a letter does not guarantee publication and all content is published at the discretion of the paper. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content. All submissions must include the author's name, address and phone number for the purposes of verification.

Report: Order to shorten count wasn't made by Census Bureau

MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

The decision to shorten by a month the 2020 head count of every U.S. resident was not made by the U.S. Census Bureau, and some agency officials suspect it was made by the White House or the Department of Commerce, according to a report from the bureau's watchdog agency.

The report by the Office of Inspector General did not identify who made the decision to shorten the 2020 census from the end of October to the end of September, but it said bureau officials confirm it was not made by them.

The accelerated schedule "increases the risks to the accuracy of the 2020 Census," the Inspector General report said. "This was the consensus view of the senior Bureau officials we interviewed."

Because of the pandemic, the Census Bureau got support last spring from the Department of Commerce, which oversees the agency, to push back its deadline from winding down the head count from the end of July to the end of October. The extra time was contingent on Congress extending the deadline for the Census Bureau turning in figures used to determine how many congressional seats each state gets from Dec. 31 to the end of next April, according to the report.

"This shift would allow the Bureau to follow the planned operations it had spent a decade developing," the Inspector General's report said.

At some point in July, though, support for the extensions from the Trump administration and Congress were called into doubt. There was pressure from the Commerce Department to speed up operations, legislation in Congress to extend the deadlines stalled and President Donald Trump issued a directive trying to exclude people in the country illegally from the numbers used in redrawing congressional districts, according to the Inspector General.

At least two Census Bureau officials interviewed by the Office of Inspector General believe the president's order changed the administration's support for extending the deadlines, the report said.

A three-judge panel in New York blocked Trump's directive earlier this month, saying it was unlawful. The Trump administration is planning an appeal to the Supreme Court.

On July 29, a senior Department of Commerce official told bureau officials to put together options for meeting the Dec. 31 deadline, and officials at the statistical agency concluded that it would have to end the head count at the end of September in order to have enough time to process the apportionment data.

Federal judges on opposite coasts this week are hearing arguments in two lawsuits seeking to extend the 2020 census into October. The lawsuits filed by civil rights groups, cities, counties and citizens say minority communities, including Latinos, Asian Americans, and non-U.S. citizens, stand to be undercounted if the census ends a month early.

A hearing in Maryland was held Monday, and a hearing in San Jose, California, will take place Tuesday.

During a 2 1/2-hour virtual hearing, a three-judge panel in Maryland focused their questions to attorneys on what would be considered an inaccurate count. They didn't say when they would rule on a request from the plaintiffs for either a temporary restraining order or an injunction that would stop the count from finishing at the end of the month.

The judge in the San Jose case earlier this month issued a temporary restraining order prohibiting the Census Bureau from winding down 2020 census operations for the time being. Plaintiffs in the San Jose case allege the decision to shorten the schedule was made to accommodate Trump's directive.

Government attorneys have argued that the census must finish by the end of September to meet the Dec. 31 deadline for turning over apportionment numbers.

So far, more than 95% of households had been counted. The Census Bureau has a goal of reaching 99% of households.

The bureau doesn't have a plan if it doesn't reach that 99% goal, the Inspector General report said, and the sped-up data processing plan after field operations end "poses a myriad of risks to accuracy and completeness."

RECOVERY

FROM PAGE 4

or four people to share a bathroom, she said.

De la Torre said state authorities might consider hospitalization rates as a measurement for reopening, noting only one San Diego State student was hospitalized.

The Daily Aztec student newspaper credited administrators for a "measured" approach that included free testing and mandated masks on campus. Fraternity leaders banned in-person events before the semester began. The newspaper said a "smart reopening" once appeared possible.

"The start of the semester has made it abundantly clear that besides bringing 2,600 socially-starved 18 to 20-year-olds back to campus, the administration's biggest failure was assuming students could handle that much responsibility," the newspaper editorialized Sept. 1. "In real-time, we see the consequences of this miscalculation playing out: large groups of students partying, not wearing masks and cases on the rise."

Miles Crawford, a junior, stayed in his campus apartment when classes resumed last month and is growing frustrated by the lockdown. The music major plans a year off if in-person learning doesn't fully resume.

"Patience is growing thin," said Crawford, 22. "We're just trying to have the regular college experience."

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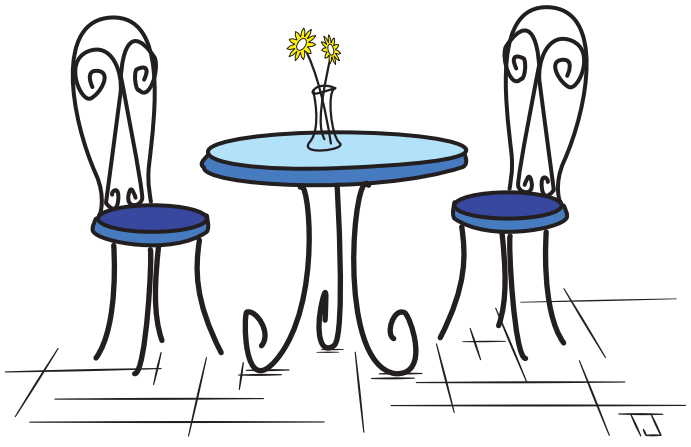
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WILDFIRE

FROM PAGE 1

stretch of the imagination do we think this tells the entire story." Damage assessments are ongoing, he said.

The Bobcat Fire started Sept. 6 and has doubled in size over the last week as it ripped through forested areas that hadn't burned in decades. The cause is under investigation.

Firefighters battled back against another flareup near Mount Wilson, which overlooks greater Los Angeles in the San Gabriel Mountains and has a historic observatory founded more than a century ago and numerous broadcast antennas serving Southern California.

Flames destroyed the nature center at Devil's Punchbowl Natural Area, a geological attraction that sees some 130,000 visitors per year. A wildlife sanctuary on the property was undamaged, and staff and animals had been evacuated days earlier.

Nearly 19,000 firefighters in California are currently battling 27 major blazes, Newsom said. At least 7,900 wildfires have erupted in the state this year, many during a mid-August barrage of dry lightning ignited parched vegetation.

Twenty-six people have been killed. Officials were investigating the death of a firefighter at another Southern California wildfire that erupted earlier this month from a smoke-generating pyrotechnic device used by a couple to reveal their baby's gender.

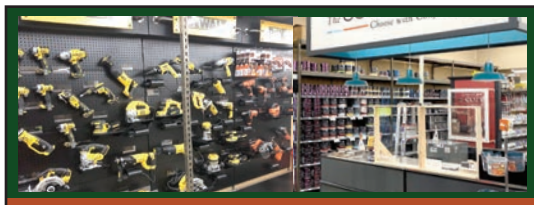
The death occurred Sept. 17 in San Bernardino National Forest as crews battled the El Dorado Fire about 75 miles east of Los Angeles, the U.S. Forest Service said in a statement. That blaze is 59% contained.

In Wyoming, officials warned that gusty winds on Monday could cause more growth of a wildfire burning toward cabins and an important water supply reservoir that's a major source of water for the state's capital city, Cheyenne. The fire in the Medicine Bow National Forest is burning in heavily forested, rugged terrain which would usually would be busy now with hunters at the start of elk hunting season.

And in Colorado, more evacuations were ordered on Sunday as winds caused the state's largest wildfire to grow. Firefighters had to temporarily retreat from the massive Cameron Peak Fire near Red Feather Lakes. Flames later spread into flatter ground which gave crews a better chance to battle the blaze, fire managers said.

More than 9,000 firefighters continue to battle 27 large wildfires across Oregon and Washington, where thousands of residences have been destroyed, the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service said.

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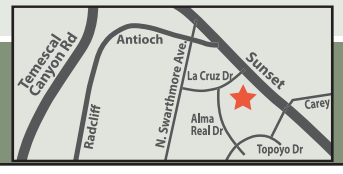
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What's the Point?

David Pisarra
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Back in the carefree days of early March, before the great shutdown, we had a vibrant city with many small businesses supporting families. Life was blissfully chugging along and few of us thought about the cataclysmic virus that was roaring down the road of life towards us.

I was just back from a trip to South Africa where I had been traveling with my brother and seeing my friends from around the world. There was talk of this new virus, people were aware of it, slightly concerned but mostly just moving on with life. The long flight from Johannesburg to Atlanta was populated with individuals who wore masks and gloves, but they were the minority of passengers. The flight attendants took no notice really, and there was no set of precautions that we all had to take.

That third week of March seems so long ago, and yet feels almost like yesterday. Governor Newsom announced the Shelter in Place order, and I was walking along with my friend and her dogs when I said this was going to be bad, really bad for many small business owners. She didn't believe me. Like many people she thought it was a week or two of compulsory vacation. Not me.

I saw the ripple effect this was all going to have. Having worked with many entrepreneurs, I know exactly how thin the line is their businesses walk each day between survival and death. A product recall, and a company is out of business. Too many bills and not enough marketing and bam, shut it all down.

When you're an entrepreneur scraping together the funds to get your first business off the ground you do a lot of "robbing Peter to pay Paul" – which is officially called cash-flow management. Entrepreneurs have to prioritize bills, payroll, rent, vendor payments and marketing & advertising expenses in order to keep the lights on and the machine operating. It's a lot of work and it is all very dependent on one thing – the constant flow of money. It'll ebb and flow, there'll be highs and lows, big weeks and slow weeks, but so long as there is a flow, the juggling act can continue.

It's when the flow stops that the business goes stagnant and turns fallow. Because some expenses continue no matter what, like rent and utilities, a small interruption in cash-flow can cause big problems - even if it's for a week or two, let alone months.

It's painful for me to see the destruction of businesses that COVID is causing in our little city. I know how hard the entrepreneurs work to build their dreams and when they get dashed on the rocks of life, it's a sad day. Earlier this month, YogurtLand closed down. The shop was opened about 2 years ago and had a good run of it. Being in a good strip mall at the corner of Pico and Lincoln didn't assure success, but it tipped the scales in their favor. Having the high school so close, along with a good selection of other food companies, made this location a 'more likely to succeed than not' space.

But a good location cannot overcome a global pandemic that demanded we rewrite the rules of business and social interaction. A business that was dependent on people eating out, and being able to create their dessert concoction was not going to survive the 'order in' new world order. Especially when the new health codes mean that self-serve is not allowed in most instances.

I knew that YogurtLand closed and reached out to Rudy who used to be my favorite store manager there to see what he was up to. He told me that he had moved on to managing a 99 Cents Only store and was doing okay. I was happy for him. He's a good young man, who is caught up in the troubles of the economy. But yesterday as the sign guy came to take down the YogurtLand sign from the building, I felt pangs of hurt for Chris who invested heart and soul, and more than a few dollars into the location. I hope he's okay and can recover fairly quickly from what I'm sure is an economic rock being tossed into the pond of his life.

His is just one story of the great shuttering. As you make your way about town, pay attention to the closed businesses, say a prayer if you're so inclined for their owners, and remember to support our local businesses a bit more as we continue to feel the fallout from the pandemic.

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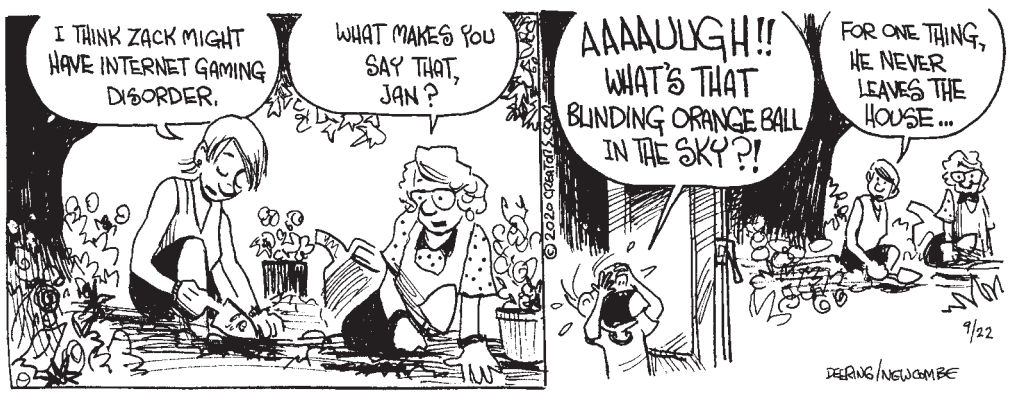
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"THE CAT ATE MY HOMEWORK, SORT OF."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING





SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 66.5°

TUESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft Thigh to waist high
SW/SSW swell up a little further through the day -- most size west of Pt Dume. Small NW swell mix blends in. Light AM winds expected.

WEDNESDAY - **FAIR** - SURF: 2-3ft+ Waist to stomach high.
SW/SSW swell tops out -- most size west of Pt Dume. Small NW swell mix blends in. Light AM winds expected.

WEATHER

Tuesday: Patchy fog before 11am. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 70.
Tuesday Night: Patchy fog after 11pm. Otherwise, mostly cloudy, with a low around 61.
Wednesday: Patchy fog. Otherwise, mostly sunny, with a high near 74.
Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 62.
Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 74.
Thursday Night: Clear, with a low around 63.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2020/09/22	Tue	02:00 AM	3.78	H
2020/09/22	Tue	06:54 AM	2.25	L
2020/09/22	Tue	1:32 PM	5.60	H
2020/09/22	Tue	9:05 PM	0.51	L
2020/09/23	Wed	03:54 AM	3.45	H
2020/09/23	Wed	07:52 AM	2.84	L
2020/09/23	Wed	2:43 PM	5.31	H
2020/09/23	Wed	10:41 PM	0.43	L
2020/09/24	Thu	05:55 AM	3.63	H
2020/09/24	Thu	09:53 AM	3.18	L
2020/09/24	Thu	4:13 PM	5.16	H
2020/09/24	Thu	11:59 PM	0.21	L
2020/09/25	Fri	07:07 AM	4.00	H
2020/09/25	Fri	11:44 AM	3.00	L
2020/09/25	Fri	5:35 PM	5.22	H
2020/09/26	Sat	12:57 AM	0.00	L
2020/09/26	Sat	07:48 AM	4.33	H
2020/09/26	Sat	12:51 PM	2.60	L
2020/09/26	Sat	6:40 PM	5.38	H

DAILY LOTTERY

POWERBALL
Draw Date:09/19
11 14 23 47 57
Power#: 14
Jackpot:22 M

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 09/18
26 29 41 52 64
Mega#: 11
Jackpot: 22 M

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 09/19
4 5 13 22 23
Mega#: 24
Jackpot:11 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 09/20
5 6 7 20 23

Daily 3
Draw Date: 09/20
Midday: 4 2 9
Draw Date: 09/20
Evening: 6 9 7

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 09/20
1st: 5-CALIFORNIA CLASSIC
2nd: 10-SOLID GOLD
3rd: 11-MONEY BAGS
RACE TIME: 1:41.66

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (SEPTEMBER 22)

It's time to broaden your scope and stay aware of a wider array of options. You will be offered something unique and will be in just the position to run with it. At the turn of the year, ideas come together to paint a pleasing picture. Desire sets in, which is a creative force pulling you toward new levels of vitality. Aries and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 8, 3, 29, 38 and 14.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Convenience is as good a reason to do a thing as any. You might even say that convenience is the finger of destiny pointing you in the luckiest direction imaginable today.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Humor has its own rules. Large margins of error are given to those who produce large smiles. You love the people who can make you laugh. They can get away with so much more than others in your life.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You know that if you don't like what you're getting, then you need to adjust what you're giving. And yet, sometimes, it's hard to see the correlation. Trusted outside parties who will share honest insights are invaluable.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It will come up, this question of when to stop. "Quit while you're ahead" is the maxim, but how ahead? If you pull back just because you're winning, you won't ever know the extent of what's possible. Let it ride out a little longer.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You live and work in a group. You'd rather make them your friends than have conflict in your day to day. Your feelers are constantly out, searching for ways to connect, uplift and support.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll give your trust, and people will, in turn, behave in a trustworthy manner. There's something about you that makes people want to live up to your expectations of them.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Today, you'll get into the flow and be mightily productive. Modesty prevents you from telling everyone how well you're doing. Also, you want to be sure you have the stamina to continue like this before they start expecting it from you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll do what's easy for you. It also happens to be kind and thoughtful and necessary, so don't be surprised by the wave of appreciation. Splash that right back on the others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Stars warn against rigidness and shallowness. Be instead like the mighty oak, built to stand strong, roots that are deep anchors and thirsty straws, branches that bend and sway.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). To live in the moment is to concentrate on what is in front of you. If you don't like the looks of it, don't worry. There are a million different ways to see it. Tilt your head.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Small children seem tormented by minor slights. This human instinct never really goes away, though we mature to hide and transmute those feelings. You'll notice this is what's going on today.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Rituals of preparation have a way of settling you into a mindset and a purpose. Without them, you would do just fine. But with them, you are focused... maybe even mighty.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

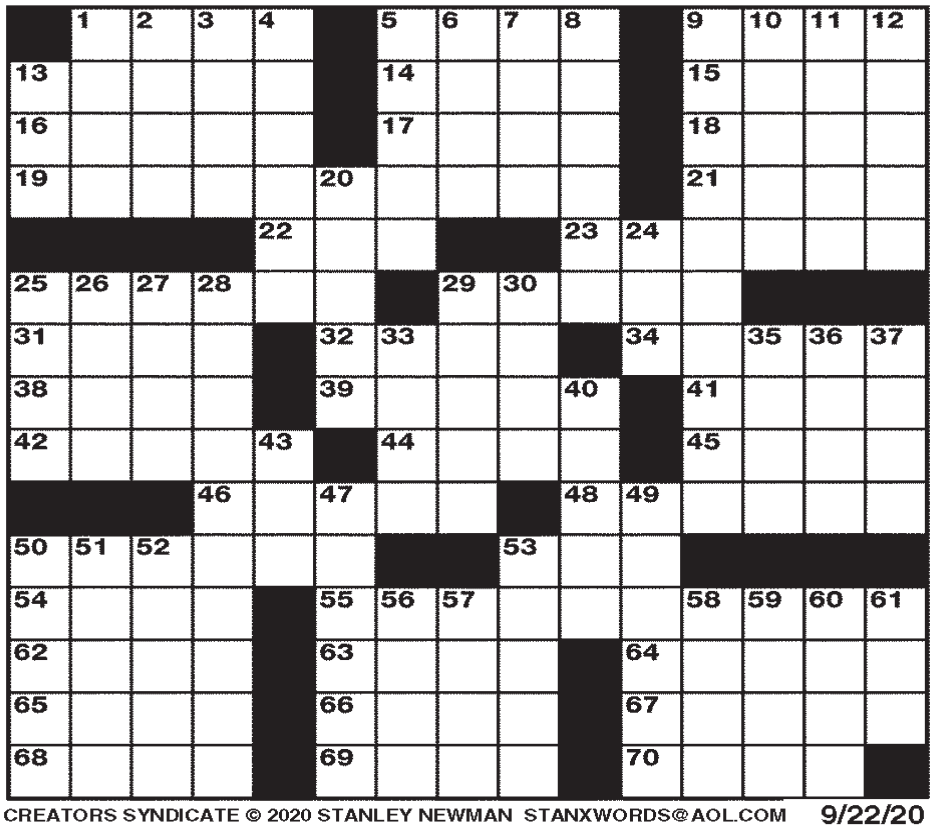
	4		1			9		
7		5			6		8	
6		3			8		1	
	5			7	3			
2				5				4
			4	8			3	
	2		8			3		9
	6		3			8		7
		9			4		5	

Newsday Crossword

HOLD IT by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Close (a door) with a bang
5 Pack away, as cargo
9 Side of a doorway
13 Social composure
14 Butterfly-to-be, while in a cocoon
15 And others: Abbr.
16 Small and mischievous
17 Brother of Cain
18 "Product" suffix for silver or soft
19 Holder for spuds
21 Yale students, informally
22 Sleeve filler
23 Women admired at a ball
25 Be a snitch
29 Ad placed on a windshield
31 Fraction of a day
32 Woodwind instrument
34 Stretchy sportswear fabric
38 __ uncertain terms
39 Be at an incline
41 Wild pig
42 Oozes
44 Something __ entirely
45 Leave out
46 Abides by
48 Dots in a digital image
50 Started to unravel
53 Japanese money
54 Campus military program: Abbr.
55 Holder for a traveler's coat or suit
62 Flash of inspiration
63 Norse explorer __ the Red
64 Got out of bed
65 Hawaiian floral necklaces
66 Country singer McEntire
67 Prime-time TV hr.
68 The __ Ranger (Tonto's pal)
69 Smart-alecky talk
70 Former couples

DOWN
1 Song for one singer
2 Elevate
3 Largest continent
4 Of the mind
5 Muscle twinge
6 Large brass instrument
7 Oil cartel
8 Stroll past
9 Holder for rings and bracelets
10 In any way
11 __ Antoinette (French queen)
12 Wish well to, as after a sneeze
13 Lively energy
20 Three-tier cookies
24 "Electric" fish
25 The one right here
26 First-rate
27 Carry a __ (sing accurately)
28 Holder for sports awards
29 Baby horses
30 A glass in glasses
33 Ran in the wash
35 Attend a party
36 Banister
37 __ and crafts
40 Indian dwelling in westerns
43 Catch sight of
47 Lawn-trimming tools
49 Present from birth, as a talent
50 Unnecessary extra
51 Event with calf roping
52 Had supper at home
53 Rec centers for guys: Abbr.
56 Vicinity
57 Barbecue "rack"
58 Fearsome dinosaur, familiarly
59 Dog biscuit shape
60 Egyptian snakes
61 Any precious stone



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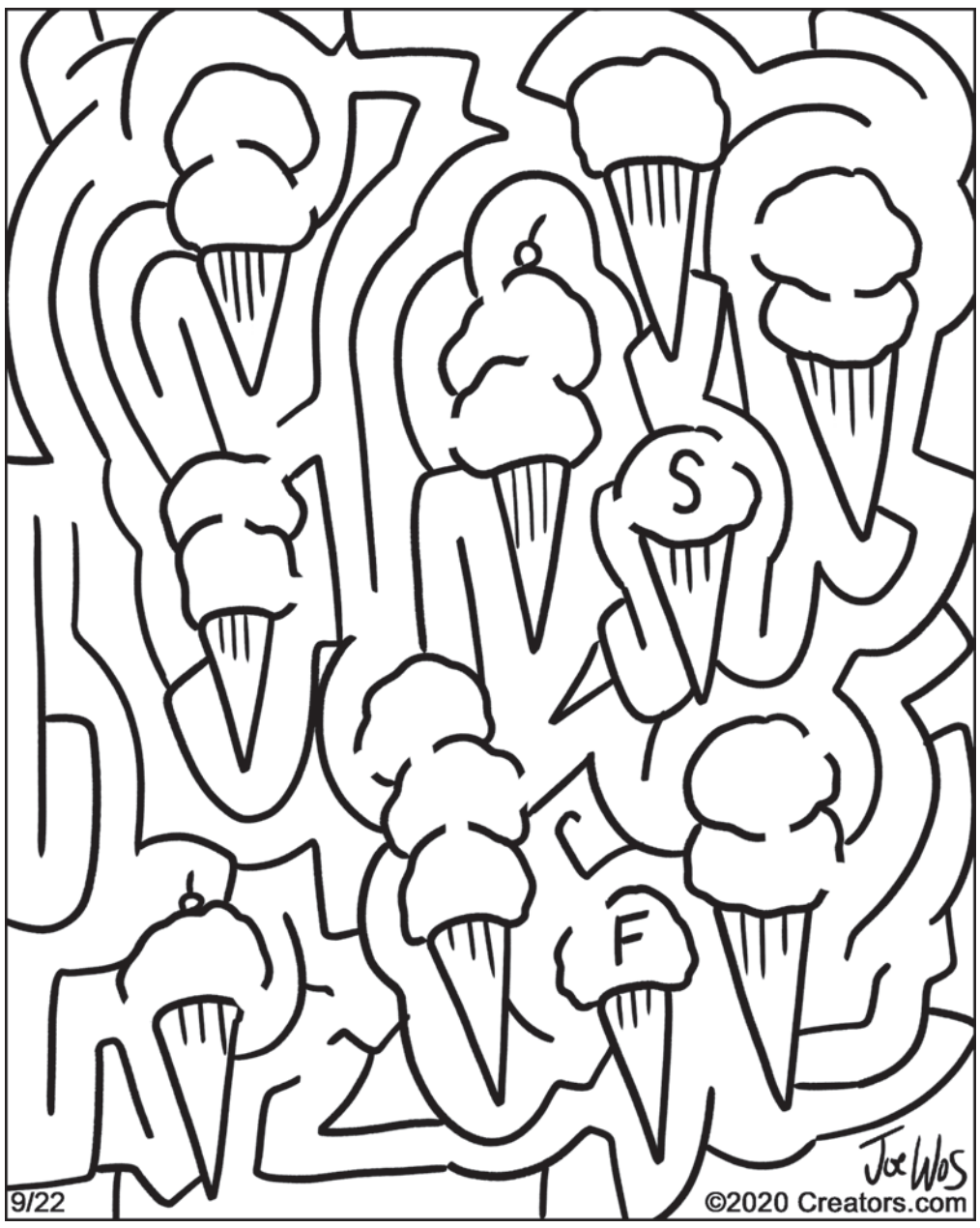
Binary Puzzle

Each cell should contain a zero or a one. No more than two similar numbers below or next to each other are allowed. Each row and each column is unique and contains as many zeros as ones.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S PUZZLE

I	I	O	I	O	I	I	O	O	I	O	O
I	O	I	O	I	O	O	I	I	O	O	I
O	I	I	O	O	I	O	O	I	O	I	I
I	O	O	I	O	O	I	I	O	I	I	O
I	O	O	I	I	O	I	O	I	I	O	O
O	I	I	O	O	I	O	I	O	O	I	I
O	I	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O
I	O	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I
O	I	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	I	O	O
O	I	O	I	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O
I	O	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	O	I	I
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	O				I						
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	O				O		O		I		
		I			O			I	I		I



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

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Getting married

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

Acceptance	Civil	History	Poem
Aisle	Crystal	Inspiring	Rapture
Altar	Engagement	Kind	Romantic
Amity	Eyes	Knee	Shower
Amour	Focus	Like	Sign
Attraction	Fond	Love	Spouse
Beau	Golden	Make-up	Tables
Blue	Grandchildren	Nerves	Unexpected
Budget	Groom	Park	Veil
Church	Happy	Pearl	Wife

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
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DISTANCE LEARNING

FROM PAGE 1

This fall's model of distance learning was based on parent, student, and staff feedback from distance learning in the spring and the educational requirements outlined in Senate Bill 98. It includes a mix of live instruction and asynchronous work time, enforced attendance requirements, and daily social emotional learning.

There are weekly professional development sessions for teachers to share problems and best practices and receive additional training in engaging students through the online model.

Despite the strong efforts put forward by the District, there are still some parents and teachers experiencing stress and difficulties with the current model. Several of these parents spoke up at last Thursday's School Board meeting asking for decreased screen time and increased scheduling flexibility.

"I've got four kids. Life is crazy right now. I'm working full time. What I'm seeing every day is heartbreaking as I have to convince my kids to log in to Zoom multiple times a day and they're resisting it. I've never heard them tell me before that they hate school, that they don't like math, and they don't want to read online," said parent Jaye Fenderson. "What I'm asking for is to reduce the screen time, to give us some flexible options, and to align the lunch schedules across grade levels."

Parents and Board members both noted that the challenges of distance learning are particularly acute for younger students who struggle to focus on a computer for long periods of time.

"Screen time increases disengagement, complacency, and can increase the risk of lower long-term academic performance and even whether learners advance in their academic career years later," said parent Julie Rousseau. "My five-year-old kindergarten child has been imposed to watch a screen for 180 minutes per day. I'm asking you to consider giving families the flexibility to opt out of live Zoom sessions, and or administer curriculum independently, and or grant a sabbatical so that families will not lose their spots."

SB98 requires 180 instructional minutes in kindergarten, 230 in grades 1 to 3, and 240 in grades 4 to 12. The District has made efforts to include small group work, project work, and out-of-the-seat activities during these instructional minutes.

"I think we have to listen to some of the families that are having a hard time and listen to the teachers that are very stressed out and overwhelmed. I'm hoping that if we allow everybody involved to give their input, the leadership team would be able to come up with a better approach," said Maria Leon-Vazquez, School Board member. "We are at one month and we're already getting to a breaking point, so I think we have to stop and reassess where we're going."

The upcoming survey is one method the District will use to assess distance learning in addition to considering comments shared at Board meetings and working with guardians of English learners, foster youth, and low-income students.

"We are hearing from parents directly that they are overwhelmingly happy with distance learning this fall," said a District spokeswoman. "We all long for the days of our students in class as was the experience prior to the pandemic. This is not the reality now. District teachers and staff are committed to making this situation as good as possible. We have resources and partners who are assisting parents to best support their students during this challenging time."

Clara@smdp.com

COVID

FROM PAGE 1

think, in fact, that could allow us to not be able to make movement into tier two in the upcoming couple of weeks," Ferrer added after detailing how the daily case rate in the county must drop significantly if residents hope to see the region enter the red tier of the state's reopening plan.

"We saw some lower numbers back in the earlier part of September," but the county has reported more than 1,000 new cases per day, Ferrer said, "which makes it hard for us to get into tier two at this point in time."

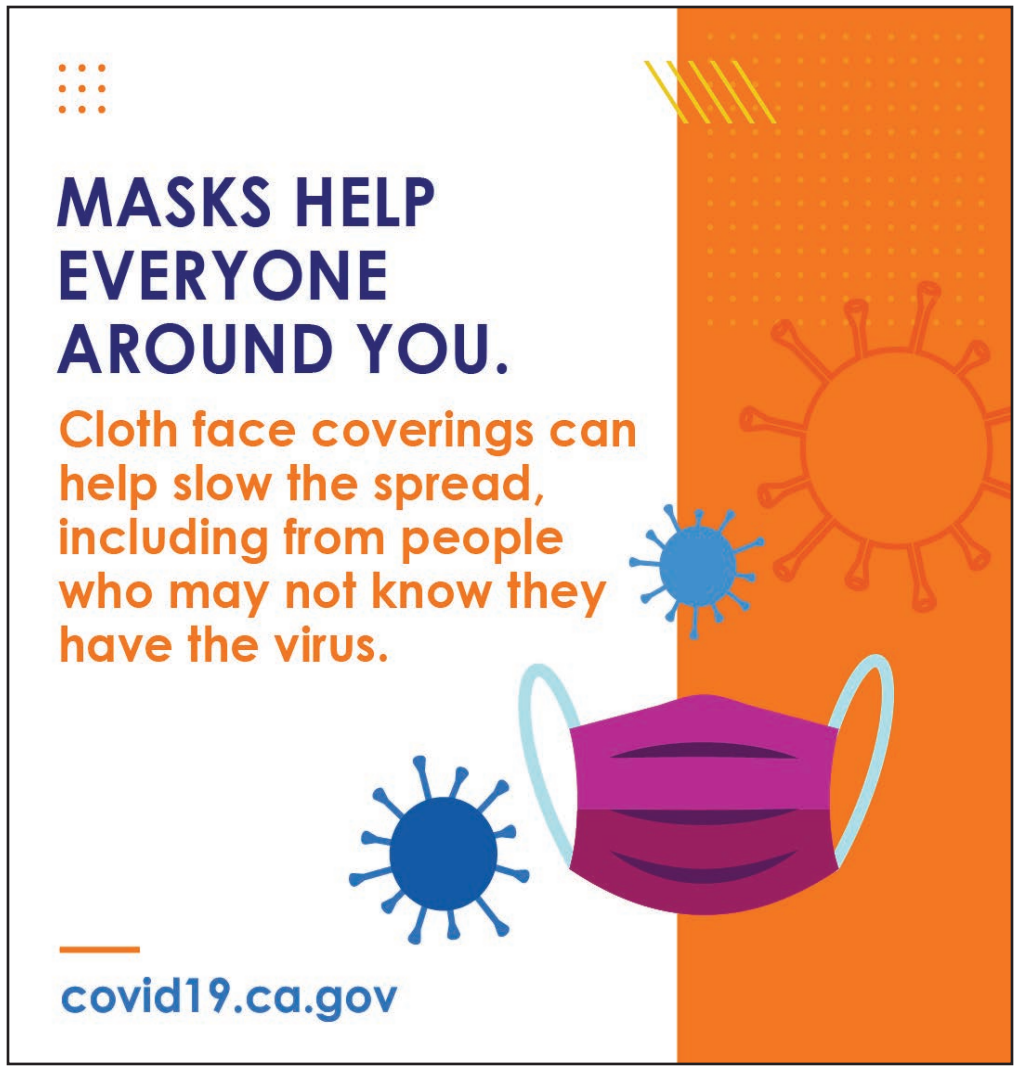
After reporting 652 new cases and 16 deaths resulting from COVID, Ferrer said the numbers reflect the weekend's data so the statistics may be a bit inflated compared to a normal weekday.

"We'll need to look at Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday's case data here to see whether that increase continues or are we actually stabilized," she added. "The county saw big surges in positive COVID tests about two to three weeks after Memorial Day. And we saw that again… two to three weeks after July."

This is why officials have been cautious, according to Ferrer. Because when you see an increase in cases, "that's when you know — another week or two later — you'll start seeing an increase in hospitalizations, and then that often is followed by, unfortunately, an increase in deaths. So, I want to be cautiously optimistic but we did have four days of data last week that showed increases in cases, so we're going to have to pay a lot of attention to the data this week."

Ferrer concluded the briefing stating she expects the department to have a much better sense of current transmission rates by the end of this week but officials are adamant everybody, whether they're at-risk or not, should continue being diligent in the coming days.

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2020



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