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2 **Beach construction**
Controversy in Malibu.

3 **New Mission**
Beyond cutting carbon pollution.

smdp
Santa Monica Daily Press

4 **Cutting Counselors**
California's schools can't afford.

5 **Drugs Still Plague**
MacArthur Park.

Volume 25 Issue 20 THE WEEKENDER 12/12-12/14 smdp.com

Fraud concerns prompt City to take multi-million dollar abuse case to trial

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

With no end in sight to the ongoing and ever expanding Eric Uller sexual abuse case, the City of Santa Monica has adopted a newly aggressive strategy that it says is prompted by concerns over the authenticity of past and current claims.

Council has approved pursuing so-called "bellwether" cases for the current round of settlements and 14 cases have been assigned trial dates in the spring of 2027. Bellwether cases are a means of testing individual cases from a large group of claims and the public trials can be used to establish a framework for possible future settlements.

City officials said they are shifting away from automatic early settlements for several reasons, not the least of which is potential fraud.

"Because of the confluence of a number of factors – large-scale new filings; concerns about potential fraud; a breakdown in mediation, and the need for more formal evidentiary testing of claims – the City has indicated publicly that it will need to more aggressively defend the litigation moving forward," said City Manager Oliver Chi.

According to Chi and court

SEE **ULLER** PAGE 5

Zbur outlines legislative wins in visit to Santa Monica

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

State Assembly Member Rick Zbur outlined his legislative accomplishments during a Santa Monica City Council meeting Tuesday, detailing efforts to expand California's film tax credit, combat retail theft and support local businesses. Zbur also participated in the mayoral transfer by praising outgoing Mayor Lana Negrete's leadership during recent wildfires and swearing in new Mayor Caroline Torosis.

Zbur reported significant progress on economic development initiatives, including expanding the state's film and television tax credit from $330 million to $750 million. The enhanced program, signed by the governor in July, has already approved 71 new productions through October, projected to generate more than $1.4 billion for

SEE **COUNCIL** PAGE 9

Local leaders signal a reset at Downtown revitalization forum

Santa Monica leaders, developers, and business owners gathered Monday for a rare alignment of voices at the Leadership Forum on the Future of Downtown Santa Monica and the Third Street Promenade, an event hosted by CALS and the Zacuto Group with support from the City of Santa Monica and Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. at the Museum of Illusions. The gathering came at a moment many described as an inflection point charting a coordinated path toward recovery with City Manager Oliver Chi's "Realignment Plan."

Councilwoman Lana Negrete set the tone, speaking with candid urgency about Santa Monica's challenges and the momentum building through the city's new Realignment Plan. "We've hit rock bottom," she said. "And we can only go up from here." Negrete pointed to tangible changes already underway: newly planted trees downtown, long-delayed pothole repairs across Pico, and a renewed focus on basic maintenance that residents had been calling for. She emphasized a new business concierge program to guide operators from start to finish, along with efforts to cut red tape so developers can reimagine and reinvest in aging buildings. Her message was clear - Santa Monica is stepping into a rebuilding moment, and the city intends to meet it with action.

Public safety dominated much of the conversation. Negrete highlighted the city's plan to double police presence downtown beginning January 7, supported by an expanded Downtown Service Unit and a new police substation slated to open in 2026. She noted increased coordination with Metro to address safety concerns at the end-of-line station and the launch of the SAMO Bridge program, which provides two trailers at Main and Pico where officers can bring individuals to sober up and connect with permanent services. "Every city is trying to rebuild," she said. "Our job is to make Santa Monica

SEE **DEVELOPMENT** PAGE 12



Michelle Edgar

BUSINESS: Developers are bullish on the future of the city.

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Malibu Council scales back proposal to downsize beachfront development after public outcry

MAAZ ALIN
SMDP Staff Writer

The Malibu City Council significantly narrowed a controversial proposal to regulate beachfront development Monday night, backing away from square footage restrictions after fire victims warned the measure could devastate property values and freeze construction financing.

The council voted unanimously to limit the scope of amendments to the Local Coastal Program and Municipal Code to only clarify the definition of beachfront properties, stripping out provisions that would have imposed limits on total development square footage for beachfront lots.

The decision came after more than an hour of heated public testimony from residents rebuilding from the Woolsey, Franklin and Palisades fires, who characterized the proposal as "insensitive" and accused the council of "moving the goalposts" while they struggle to reconstruct their homes.

"I'm going to vote against doing anything with respect to the beachfront properties other than look at what it means to be a beachfront property," Councilmember Bruce Silverstein said, summarizing the council's pivot.

The original proposal, outlined in staff reports, had two primary objectives: establishing a clear legal definition for beachfront lots and considering limits on total development square footage to prevent "mega mansions" resulting from merged lots.

Currently, Malibu has no limit on beachfront lot size, raising staff concerns about scenarios where developers could purchase multiple adjacent properties and combine them to build exceptionally large homes.

Councilmember Steve Uhring defended the original intent, citing concerns about foreign investment and consolidated development.

"When I looked at the New Zealand guys buying the land, and I looked at Chinese money coming into the city, I said, Look, I have no idea what these people are going to do," Uhring said. "And I think we owe the residents, and we owe the city some protection that says if they want to build, you know, multi-mansions, that there should be a limit to those."

However, Uhring acknowledged that given current circumstances, "this is the wrong time" to pursue such restrictions.

During public comment, residents and real estate professionals warned that merely discussing square footage caps introduces market uncertainty that could kill construction loans for ordinary homeowners.

Multiple speakers noted that underwriters "do not lend into maybe" and that the proposal could leave only wealthy buyers able to afford beachfront rebuilds, forcing long-term residents to sell to developers.

The Palisades Fire, which struck Jan. 7, 2025, impacted more than 700 structures in Malibu, including over 300 beachfront properties prompting state and national declarations of emergency.

Despite staff assurances that fire rebuilds utilizing "like-for-like" exemptions would not be affected by square footage limits, residents remained skeptical.

Councilmember Haylynn Conrad voiced concerns about timing and economic impact.

"I'm very worried about what just having even this discussion does for beachfront residents value," Conrad said. "And having it at this time seems kind of insensitive."

Mayor Marianne Riggins clarified that the definition component addresses property owners of large rural residential or bluff-top lots who argue they should be considered beachfront to avoid stricter setback and height restrictions.

"We need to give the staff some backup so that they understand that it is the policy of the city that they were zoned rural residential and they're subject to the rural residential design standards," Riggins said.

Tyler Eaton, assistant community development director, confirmed that staff has consistently applied beachfront development standards for decades but wants to codify the practice to prevent future legal challenges.

"Our goal is to really codify the application that has been historically used," Eaton said.

The modified resolution will initiate amendments only to clarify beachfront lot definitions matching existing staff practices. The council directed staff that the definition cleanup is "not a high priority" and should be completed only when staff has bandwidth, to avoid interfering with fire rebuild processing.

Silverstein emphasized that the California Coastal Commission cannot force unwanted changes on the city.

"Coastal can't force us to change our rules in a way that they want," Silverstein said. "We need their permission, but they can't change them."

The matter will proceed to the Planning Commission for a public hearing and recommendation before returning to the council for final approval. Any Local Coastal Program amendments require final certification from the California Coastal Commission.

Councilmember Doug Stewart praised the collaborative outcome.

"We're here just to get the best things done for the city of Malibu," Stewart said. "Getting you guys back in your houses is pro Malibu."

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GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Cap and trade gets a new name and a new mission beyond cutting carbon pollution



Photo by Larry Valenzuela, CalMatters/CatchLight Local

CONSTRUCTION: A high speed rail ramp under construction in Fresno on Sept. 12, 2025. The state's cap-and-invest money is expected to help keep the rail plan alive.

Nineteen years ago, during actor Arnold Schwarzenegger's governorship, he and the Legislature created a program that would, in theory, reduce California's emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases deemed to affect the planet's climate.

The plan, dubbed cap and trade, authorizes the California Air Resources Board to conduct quarterly auctions of emissions allowances which refineries, electric power generators and other industrial facilities purchase to offset their emissions. It's an alternative to actually reducing emissions or financing other projects to cut them.

Once purchased, the allowances can be sold and traded back and forth. As the auction prices increase over time, emitting facilities would, in theory, be motivated to make reductions.

Proceeds from the auctions have steadily increased and today run about $5 billion a year, which the state is spending on climate-related projects, officials boast.

"The program's proceeds have funded nearly $33 billion in investments across the state and cut carbon pollution equivalent to taking 1.3 million gas-powered cars off the road," Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2025-26 budget declared.

> "The program's proceeds have funded nearly $33 billion in investments across the state and cut carbon pollution equivalent to taking 1.3 million gas-powered cars off the road
>
> - Gavin Newsom

The program is due to expire in 2030, and Newsom wanted the Legislature to extend it to 2045, the date when California is supposed to achieve carbon emission neutrality. Legislators balked at a simple extension and, instead, insisted on making some changes that tightened the

SEE **CARBON** PAGE 8



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **64.4**

FRIDAY
FAIR

SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Day of the week as WNW swell tops out. Winds staying on the light side, best in the morning. Decent shot of mid-period WNW swell peaks, for waves running in the waist to stomach high range at good exposures. A little SSW swell blends in to help shape for the combo breaks and keep the summer points rideable on the small wave gear. Winds looking light all day, variable in the morning, W sea breeze for the afternoon.

SATURDAY
FAIR

SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Fading but still fun waves going into the weekend. Morning winds looking light. Easing mid-period WNW swell is still good for thigh-waist-stomach high surf at good exposures early morning, then waves taper off as the day goes on. Trend towards smaller surf continues through the end of the weekend. Light winds due early morning, afternoon WNW sea breeze looks to puff up a few knots.

Weather

Friday: Patchy dense fog before 10am. Otherwise, cloudy through mid morning, then gradual clearing, with a high near 68.
Friday Night: Patchy fog after 10pm. Otherwise, increasing clouds, with a low around 55. Calm wind.
Saturday: Patchy fog before 10am. Otherwise, partly sunny, with a high near 69. Calm wind becoming southwest around 5 mph.
Saturday Night: Patchy fog. Otherwise, cloudy, with a low around 55.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2025/12/12	Fri	04:15 AM	4.62	H
2025/12/12	Fri	10:42 AM	1.99	L
2025/12/12	Fri	3:54 PM	3.44	H
2025/12/12	Fri	10:02 PM	1.23	L
2025/12/13	Sat	04:55 AM	4.91	H
2025/12/13	Sat	11:47 AM	1.36	L
2025/12/13	Sat	5:22 PM	3.24	H
2025/12/13	Sat	10:45 PM	1.64	L
2025/12/14	Sun	05:29 AM	5.17	H
2025/12/14	Sun	12:37 PM	0.76	L
2025/12/14	Sun	6:38 PM	3.23	H
2025/12/14	Sun	11:23 PM	1.99	L
2025/12/15	Mon	06:00 AM	5.40	H

Daily Lottery

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POWERBALL
Draw Date: 12/10
10 16 29 33 69
Power#: 22
Jackpot: 1 M

Fantasy5
Draw Date: 12/10
1 2 5 10 17

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 12/9
19 32 41 49 66
Mega#: 6
Jackpot: 70 M

Daily 3
Draw Date: 12/10
EVENING: 2 9 4
Draw Date: 12/10
MIDDAY: 4 1 0

SuperLotto Plus
Draw Date: 12/10
10 19 30 33 42
Mega#: 14
Jackpot: 10 M

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 12/10
1st: 01 - Gold Rush
2nd: 04 - Big Ben
3rd: 06 - Whirl Win
Race Time: 1:46.54

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Santa Monica Daily Press

Classifieds

Summons

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL) Case No. 25SMCV00899 NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): HELENE BERK IRVIN, an individual; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive. YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): JEFFERY MAROZ, an individual. NOTICE! 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. ¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso. The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): Los Angeles County Superior Court, 1725 Main Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): J.Scott Russo, Russo & Duckworth, LLP, 3404 Via Oporto, Ste. 201, Newport Beach, CA 92663 949-752-7106. DATE (Fecha): 02/21/2025. Clerk, by (Secretario) David W. Slayton, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court, By W. Lee, Deputy (Adjunto) Clerk. Electronically FILED by Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles 2/21/2025 3:04 PM David W. Slayton, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court, By W. Lee, Deputy Clerk. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/05/2025, 12/12/2025, 12/19/2025, 12/26/2025

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025268656 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: MELODY GODFRED, 2632 WILSHIRE BLVD #360, SANTA MONICA, CA 90403, LOS ANGELES COUNTY. AI #ON 3451716. Registered Owner(s): WRITE IN COLOR, INC., 2632 WILSHIRE BLVD #360, SANTA MONICA, CA 90403. This business is conducted by: a Corporation. The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 01/2018. s/ MELODY GODFRED, PRESIDENT. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of LOS ANGELES County on 12/3/2025. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to publish: 12/12/2025, 12/19/2025, 12/26/2025, 1/02/2026.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025268677 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: SWISS COPYWRITING SERVICE, 4108 Del Rey Ave, Apt 520, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292, Los Angeles County. Registered Owner(s): Swiss Luster, 4108 Del Rey Ave, Apt 520, Marina Del Rey, CA 90292. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The date registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: 08/2022. s/ Swiss Luster, Owner. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 12/3/2025. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS to be published 12/5/2025, 12/12/2025, 12/19/2025, 12/26/2025

Name Change

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25STCP02338. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 111 North Hill Street, Room 118, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Petition of QIRAN WANG and HUAYI WEI for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner QIRAN WANG and HUAYI WEI filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: OLIVIA WEI to OLIVIA TSUN. 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: 01/03/2026, Time: 8:30AM, Dept: 95, Room: 539. 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: 11/24/2025. VIRGINIA KEENY, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/12/2025, 12/19/2025, 12/26/2025, 01/02/2026

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25STCP02335. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 111 North Hill Street, Room 118, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Petition of YUN MA and CHUNLIN YANG for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner YUN MA and CHUNLIN YANG filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: ALAN JUNHAO PENG to ALAN YUNYI YANG. 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: 01/23/2026, Time: 8:30AM, Dept: 45, Room: 529. 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: JUN 25 2025. VIRGINIA KEENY, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/12/2025, 12/19/2025, 12/26/2025, 01/02/2026

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GUEST COMMENTARY

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California's schools can't afford to cut counselors. They keep kids alive in dangerous times



Photo by Larry Valenzuela, CalMatters/CatchLight Local

SCHOOL: Two students walk through a school in Salinas on Feb. 11, 2025.

Weeks after a student and staff member were stabbed and four students arrested at Watsonville High, the school district that serves them is considering laying off every mental health clinician and most of its school counselors.

If you want a snapshot of how we are failing young people, especially boys, you can start there.

To balance its budget, the Pajaro Valley Unified School District is considering eliminating the equivalent of 15 full-time counselors, all 13 mental health clinicians and dozens of intervention staff at its schools — at a time when youth suicide is one of the leading causes of death for people ages 10 to 24.

Men and boys make up nearly 80% of suicides in the United States, a rate almost four times higher than for women. For LGBTQ youth, the picture is even more alarming. A national survey found nearly 39% seriously considered suicide in the past year, and 12% attempted it.

This crisis is not abstract. It is here. It is now. And it is local.

Young people rely most heavily on school-based support, so if you remove counselors and clinicians, you remove the adults best positioned to intervene when a student's silence becomes dangerous.

And when we talk about violence, context matters. What we frame as "school safety" is often a reflection of untreated pain.

When a boy explodes, we see a threat. When a boy shuts down, we assume he is fine. We rarely name what both can be — symptoms of a system that teaches boys to swallow everything and then acts surprised when the pressure finally breaks.

I see this every week in my work as project director of a countywide stigma reduction campaign on the Central Coast.

Our youth ambassadors — many of them Black, brown or LGBTQ — lead a movement called Break the Stigma Not the Vibe. They design billboards, bus ads and schoolwide messaging rooted in language they needed when they were younger.

ASKING FOR HELP WITH NO ONE TO ANSWER

Their message is simple: Asking for help is strength. You don't have to go through this alone. And you deserve to be seen before you collapse.

Their words will soon move across the Central Coast on buses and corridors, reaching thousands of students who may not talk to a teacher or open up at home. Sometimes visibility is the intervention.

Now, imagine pairing that visibility with the removal of every trained mental health professional on campus. That is the contradiction this moment demands we confront. You cannot cut lifelines in a suicide crisis and call it a safety strategy.

School counselors and clinicians are not extras; they are core safety infrastructure. They are the adults who

SEE **SCHOOLS** PAGE 12

GUEST COMMENTARY

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Crime is down and kids are back, but drugs still plague Los Angeles' MacArthur Park



Photo by J.W. Hendricks for CalMatters

PARK: Federal agents descend on MacArthur Park in Los Angeles on July 7, 2025.

A year ago, vendors had set up shop across the street from MacArthur Park in Los Angeles. They were dealing drugs and stolen goods from underneath makeshift tables at their stands.

Langer's, the neighborhood's historic deli, was threatening to leave for good. And assaults in the area were on the rise.

Today crime is down in MacArthur Park, Langer's is staying, and the drug vendors are gone — or at least displaced.

That's the good news about the city's yearlong attempt to bring safety and tranquility to MacArthur Park and its surrounding neighborhoods. There is progress.

The bad news is that the area remains blighted and filthy.

A walk through the park Monday morning found evidence of progress: most spaces were relatively clean and a couple young boys scurried around on the playground equipment, their watchful dads nearby.

But there were also painful reminders of how far this area has to go.

Stores along Alvarado Street were open, but customers were sparse. Litter filled spaces where fences keep out street vendors. Water from recent rains congealed beneath an underpass, forming a dank, dirty pool. And young men lay glassy-eyed on benches, staring vacantly, their mouths agape.

The city's campaign to restore MacArthur Park to some of its long-faded glory has within it some elements of the larger work Los Angeles itself faces. The park is a congregation point for unhoused men and women, it is a locus of drug sales and it sits amid one of the city's most heavily migrant communities.

It is, in all those respects, Los Angeles in microcosm. Its struggles are those of the larger city, and of urban America itself.

Recognizing that, city leaders focused attention on MacArthur Park in 2025, pouring money and resources into the area. Council member Eunisses Hernandez, whose district includes the park, cites $27 million in city investments in what she describes as "care first" programs that address drug overdoses, housing crises and conflicts between gangs.

Those investments have resulted in quantifiable results: the removal of more than 36,000 pieces of hazardous waste, including needles and other drug paraphernalia; distribution of more

SEE **CRIME** PAGE 15

ULLER

FROM PAGE 1

documents, the City's fraud concerns stem from several sources. Most recently the Los Angeles Times reported on fraud in a large sexual abuse settlement involving the County and the City has said the story raised similar concerns about the Santa Monica case. However, the City has long had suspicions about false cases.

"Years ago, the City Attorney's Office received an anonymous email alleging that local gang affiliates were encouraging individuals to falsely claim they were victims in exchange for a portion of anticipated settlement proceeds," said Chi.

Those concerns have been raised in court filings and when combined with a breakdown in the traditional settlement process, City Hall has decided to take at least a sampling of the most recent cases to trial.

Santa Monica has paid about a million dollars per individual in the approximately 230 settled cases so far to victims of Eric Uller, a former civilian police employee and Police Activities League volunteer who sexually abused children for more than a decade. The settlements resolved hundreds of claims from individuals molested between 1987 and 1999, with new claims suggesting costs may continue rising.

Uller exploited his position to prey on vulnerable children, primarily Latino boys from the Pico neighborhood. He posed as a law enforcement figure, using unmarked police cars and badges to lure victims, grooming them with gifts while threatening deportation or jail for disclosure.

Warning signs appeared as early as 1995, when a PAL employee reported inappropriate behavior but was warned against "spreading gossip." Despite multiple red flags over years—including reports of unsanctioned trips with minors and child pornography discovered on his work computer—no formal investigation occurred.

Police arrested Uller in 2018 following an anonymous tip, but he died by suicide before trial. The case ranks among the largest institutional child abuse scandals, approaching the scale of major cases like Penn State and Michigan State while placing extraordinary financial burden on a city Santa Monica's size.

The payouts contributed to Santa Monica's budget crisis and the city has since implemented comprehensive youth protection reforms.

However, a new round of about 180 claims have triggered additional scrutiny. According to the City, claims have been settled in the past based on plaintiff provided documentation and in person interviews. However, those interviews were not under oath.

In legal filings, the city has said the volume of claims now asserted – over 400 plaintiffs attributed to a single alleged perpetrator – has raised substantial questions about credibility and is unprecedented in comparable California cases.

At the same time ongoing mediation has broken down between the parties prompting the court action.

Plaintiff attorneys said they welcome the chance to head into court as selecting bellwether cases is a key accountability moment for the city. They said providing evidence and testimony, under oath, will expose what the City and PAL knew, when they knew it, and how failure in oversight contributed to harm.

"We welcome the selection of bellwether cases," said Catherine Lerer, whose firm McGee Lerer Ogrin represents over half of the plaintiffs in the current round of cases. "The community will finally learn what happened, who knew what and when, and how Eric Uller was able to sexually abuse children for nearly three decades. Survivors deserve answers, and so do the residents of Santa Monica."

However, she dismissed notions of fraud in claims.

"The City's attention should be directed toward examining how Eric Uller was able to abuse Santa Monica's children for almost three decades, and identifying the systemic failures that enabled his misconduct," she said.

Chi agreed that the trials will be about accountability.

"This evolution is not a retreat from accountability to real victims, rather, it reflects the City's responsibility to ensure that public funds are directed to individuals who were actually harmed, and not diluted by claims that may be inaccurate or fabricated," he said.

editor@smdp.com

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City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SANTA MONICA
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
SANTA MONICA CITY HALL

DATE/TIME: Monday, December 15, 2025, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: Council Chambers, (wheelchair accessible)
Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Room 250

PUBLIC HEARING:

2244 23rd Street (25ARB-0244): Single-Family Residential
To review a modification to the required additional minimum stepbacks for upper stories for a second-story addition to an existing one-story single-unit dwelling located within the R1 (Single-Unit Residential) Zoning District, pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.07.030(A)(2)(b)(i)(3).

1527 19th Street (22ARB-0170): Single-Family Residential
To review the design, colors, materials, and landscape for first- and second-story additions to an existing single-story residence, resulting in a two-story, 3,543 square-foot structure at the front of the parcel, located within the R2 (Low Density Residential) Zoning District.

817 16th Street (25ARB-0241): Multi-Family Residential
To review the design, colors, materials, and landscape for a four-story, 50-foot-tall, 14,587 square foot condominium development consisting of 8 units (6 market rate units; 2 affordable units), with one level of subterranean parking located in the R2 (Low Density Residential) Zoning District.

1752 Cloverfield Boulevard (25ARB-0232): Commercial
To review the design, colors, materials, and landscape plans for the construction of a 3-story, 45' tall, approximately 56,719 square feet (above grade) self-storage facility with four levels of subterranean self-storage floor area consisting of approximately 173,194 SF in the IC (Industrial Conservation) Zoning District in association with 25ENT-0179 (DRP).

More information is available online at https://www.smgov.net/Departments/PCD/Boards-Commissions/Architectural-Review-Board/ (en espanol tambien at (310) 458-2201 ext. 2431#).

The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. Those wishing to give written public comment shall email comments to planningcomment@santamonica.gov. Comments received **prior to 12 p.m.** on the day of the meeting will be distributed to the Architectural Review Board prior to the meeting and posted online. Please note the agenda item in your comments.

For disability-related accommodations, please contact (866) 311-7266 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.

TRANSLATION SERVICE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. Please contact planning@santamonica.gov at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

SERVICIO DE TRADUCCIÓN DISPONIBLE A PEDIDO. Comuníquese al planning@santamonica.gov al menos 72 horas antes de la reunión programada.

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

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Promenade

17th Annual SANTA Monica Pub Crawl Returns Dec. 13

The 17th annual SANTA Monica Pub Crawl returns Saturday, Dec. 13, to raise money for the Westside Food Bank and support those in need during the holidays.

The SANTA Monica Pub Crawl is one of the city's most beloved holiday events, when thousands of crawlers fill the streets of Santa Monica with merry and good cheer. The event has provided more than half a million pounds of food for the Westside Food Bank since 2008.

More than 20 bars and restaurants across the city will come together to offer exclusive $6-$9 drink specials and discounted food items to those with the official pub crawl wristband. The ticket also includes free entry into all locations, one free drink for the first 500 people, DJs, beer gardens, costume contests, prizes and entry into Santa's Official After Party at 1212.

In celebration of the City of Santa Monica's 150th anniversary, there will also be a block party on Third Street Promenade in the new "Entertainment Zone" with outdoor stages, DJs and winter-themed pop-up bars.

There are two festive routes to choose from: Main Street or Promenade. Attendees can also select the VIP Route Hopper ticket and enjoy specials at all locations. Crawlers can also enter contests and engage in a festive scavenger hunt for hundreds of dollars in prizes.

Pub crawl participants are encouraged to dress in Santa or holiday attire and gather in groups. Santa hats will be available for sale at each of the official starting locations. A "Sober Santa" ticket is also available for nondrinkers who still want to join in the fun.

Participating locations include Edgemar, Cabo Cantina, Jameson's Irish Pub, LuLa Cocina Mexicana, JuneShine, Library Alehouse, Tavern on Main, Ashland Hill, Barney's Beanery, Britannia Pub, Lanea, Ye Olde King's Head, Joe's Pizza, Holey Moley, Santa Monica Whaler, SoCal Vibes, Vamos Vamos, The Victorian and 1212.

For more information and a complete list of official pub crawl locations, specials and prizes, visit www.santamonicapubcrawl.com.

The event runs from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. Check-in is from 5 to 9 p.m. at either starting location: Cabo Cantina at 1240 3rd St. for the Promenade Route, or Edgemar Restaurant & Lounge at 2435 Main St. for the Main Street Route.

Tickets start at $20 for general admission, $40 for VIP Route Hopper and $15 for Sober Santa. Wristbands include $6-9 drink specials, discounted food items, one free drink while supplies last, priority entry, free cover charges, DJs and live entertainment, and entry into Santa's official after-party. A portion of all proceeds benefits the Westside Food Bank.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy photo
DISCOUNT: More than 20 bars and restaurants across the city will come together to offer exclusive $6-$9 drink specials and discounted food items to those with the official pub crawl wristband.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SMC

SMC Symphony Orchestra Performs Dec. 14

The Santa Monica College Music Department will present an afternoon of orchestral music with the Santa Monica College Symphony Orchestra, led by Conductor Mercedes Juan Musotto.

The program features Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia by Aram Khachaturian, Carmen Suite No. 1 by Georges Bizet and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5.

"These works showcase some of the most passionate and dramatic music in the orchestral repertoire," Musotto said. "Khachaturian's Adagio is sweeping and romantic, Bizet's Carmen is vivid and full of character, and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony takes the audience on a profound emotional journey."

The concert will be held Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4 p.m. in The Eli & Edythe Broad Stage at the SMC Performing Arts Center, 1310 11th St. at Santa Monica Boulevard.

Tickets are $15 general admission, plus a modest service charge. Tickets are free for students with any student I.D. and free for children. Advance tickets can be purchased online at smc.edu/tickets or by calling 310-434-3005 Monday-Friday. Tickets may also be purchased starting 45 minutes before the performance begins at The Broad Stage Box Office at the SMC Performing Arts Center. Free parking is available on premises. Seating is strictly on a first-arrival basis.

The concert is made possible by the generous support of the Colburn Foundation. More information is available by calling 310-434-4323. All performances subject to change or cancellation without notice.

> "These works showcase some of the most passionate and dramatic music in the orchestral repertoire"
> - Juan Musotto

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy photo

ORCHESTRA: The Santa Monica College (SMC) Music Department will present the Santa Monica College Symphony Orchestra, led by Conductor Mercedes Juan Musotto, in a program featuring Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia by Aram Khachaturian, Carmen Suite No. 1 by Georges Bizet, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4 p.m.

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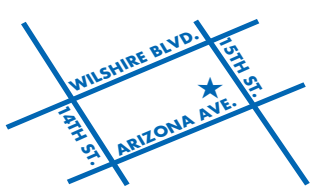
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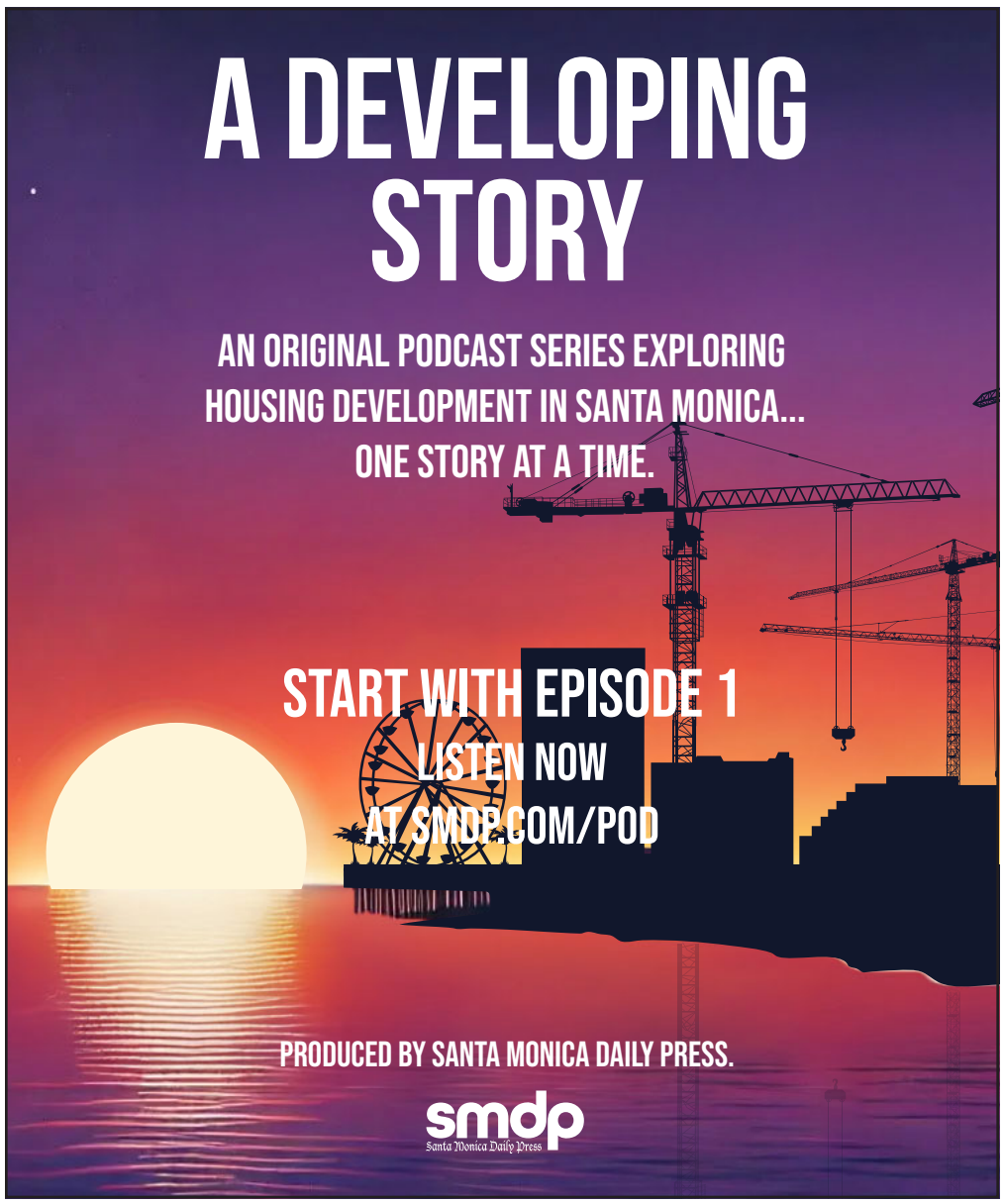


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COMMUNITY NEWS

SMC

SMC's Emeritus Acting Troupe to Perform 'Conversations: Scenes from Film and Theater' Dec. 13

Santa Monica College's Emeritus Acting Troupe will present its Winter 2025 Showcase, "Conversations: Scenes from Film and Theater," at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13.

The performance is free and will be presented online as a live virtual event. A Zoom link at the Dec. 13 event listing at smc.edu/calendar takes guests directly to the online event.

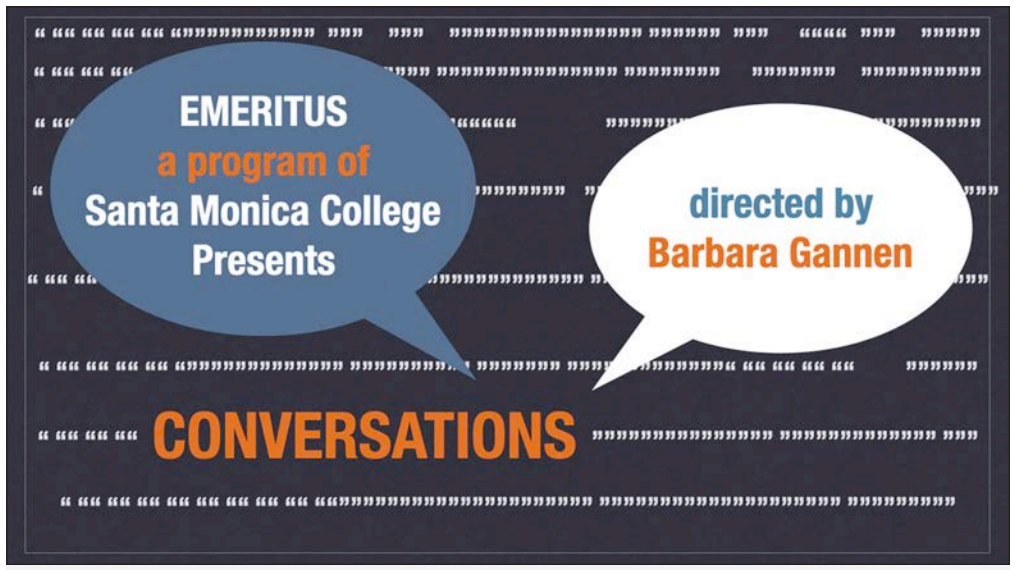
The performance, which features students in SMC's Emeritus acting classes, will showcase silly, serious and quirky scenes that inspire, entertain and offer something to think about.

"Conversations" director and longtime SMC Emeritus instructor Barbara Gannen notes: "How do we find love? Keep love? Lose love? Transcend loss? Why do we stay? Why do we go? AND — Who should we sue!!! Join us — 'cause we ask good questions!!!"

SMC's widely praised Emeritus program, founded by Santa Monica College in 1975 to serve the lifelong learning interests of older adults, offers more than 120 noncredit adult education classes and special programs that serve more than 3,000 students each year.

More information is available at smc.edu/emeritus or by calling 310-434-4306. Performances subject to change or cancellation without notice.

EDITED BY SMDP STAFF



Courtesy image

ACTING: Santa Monica College's Emeritus Acting Troupe will present "Conversations: Scenes from Film and Theater," a free, live, virtual event online on Saturday, Dec. 13, at 1 p.m.

CARBON

FROM PAGE 3

number of emission allowances and gave lawmakers more authority over spending the revenues.

The program gained a new name, cap-and-invest, which implies that, as the auction proceeds have reached multi-billion-dollar levels, politicians' chief focus for how the money is spent has changed from emissions reduction.

As a new report on the revisions from the Legislative Analyst's Office points out, cap-and-invest funds "can continue to be viewed as akin to tax revenues and be legally available to expend for any purpose." In other words, while the program is touted as financing emission-reducing programs, its billions in revenue can be spent on anything a governor and legislators want to finance.

The state's woebegone bullet train project has been receiving a quarter of auction revenues, roughly $1 billion a year. But in the new version it will be guaranteed a flat $1 billion a year to keep it alive — barely — as state officials try to scare up the many billions of dollars more needed for the bullet train to become a reality.

While supporters ballyhoo the bullet train as something that would have a major impact on emissions by reducing auto traffic, the High Speed Rail Authority's own projections indicate that, were it to be fully completed, it would reduce automobile emissions by scarcely 1%. Meanwhile construction actually increases emissions.

At Newsom's behest, the revised program will also channel $1.25 billion into supporting wildfire suppression, thereby relieving pressure on the state's deficit-ridden budget.

Legislators, in turn, have set aside another $1 billion as "discretionary" spending — meaning it can be spent on anything legislative leaders want.

Those three things will consume most of the money, while having minimal impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

When the Legislative Analyst's Office was describing auction proceeds as "akin to tax revenues," it was putting on paper something that's been apparent for years — that cap and trade is a backdoor tax on consumers, because industrial purchasers fold auction payments into the prices of what they produce.

An obvious example is gasoline. It's widely accepted that California's gas prices, the highest in the nation, include about 30 cents a gallon in cap-and-trade costs incurred by refiners. That $4 billion annual hit on motorists, moreover, is not being spent on improving roadways, but on a bunch of other things politicians fancy.

Dan Walters, CalMatters Opinion Columnist

COUNCIL

FROM PAGE 1

the state economy.

"This past summer, we saw nearly 50% unemployment levels in this industry, an industry responsible for over $42 billion in wages and over 800,000 direct and indirect and induced jobs across the state," Zbur said, noting that 19 of 22 productions approved in July were in the Los Angeles area.

The assembly member credited competition from other states and countries for driving production away from California, specifically citing Georgia, New York, Canada and the United Kingdom's tax incentive programs. He partnered with State Senator Ben Allen to modernize the program and retain high-quality jobs.

Zbur also addressed public safety and economic development in Santa Monica's downtown corridor, praising the city's realignment plan that includes a new police substation with eight to 10 daily officers and increased investment in the city attorney's criminal unit to file cases in approximately 90% of legally fixable cases.

Two years ago, Zbur worked on a retail theft package establishing consequences for retail crime while avoiding extremely long prison sentences for minor offenses.

"Public safety remains foundational to business confidence," he said.

The assembly member announced plans to explore legislative solutions addressing California Coastal Commission approval requirements that he said slow downtown business development. Zbur has directed his staff to examine bills reducing costs and limitations on changes of use for existing structures and changes that would

> Too often, businesses and individuals attempt to do things that should be simple, like changing the use of a property from a clothing store to a restaurant, open a new business in a vacant space, or create a pop up business that activates an area, and yet they face a seemingly impossible challenge, approval by the California Coastal Commission
>
> - Rick Zbur, State Assembly Member

empower Santa Monica to set policy around transportation, temporary events, housing and evolving uses.

"Too often, businesses and individuals attempt to do things that should be simple, like changing the use of a property from a clothing store to a restaurant, open a new business in a vacant space, or create a pop up business that activates an area, and yet they face a seemingly impossible challenge, approval by the California Coastal Commission," Zbur said.

In higher education, Zbur partnered with Santa Monica College on AB 648, giving community colleges flexibility to build student and staff housing on land they own or lease near campus by exempting projects from local zoning. The measure will affect housing construction on the college's Bundy campus, which spans Santa Monica and Los Angeles.

Zbur highlighted additional legislation he said aligned with Santa Monica values, including AB 715 combating antisemitism, AB 38 making it easier to electrify homes and businesses, cap and trade reauthorization, AB 410 and AB 84 protecting transgender and non-binary people, and AB 309 preventing the spread of HIV and viral hepatitis.

The assembly member extensively praised Negrete's mayoral leadership, particularly during January's Palisades Fire when 100 mile-per-hour wind gusts drove flames toward Santa Monica less than a month after her December swearing-in.

"Some people might falter, but not Mayor Lana Negrete," Zbur said. "Lana was everywhere, organizing resources, sharing information and providing the steady leadership that the city needed."

Zbur worked with Negrete to bring the National Guard to protect evacuated areas and support efforts to reopen the 10 Freeway and Pacific Coast Highway. Negrete also helped advance the FOUND Act, now state law, establishing clear procedures to support pets and their owners during evacuations. She testified multiple times in Sacramento to help

> It has been wonderful to get to know you, and I appreciate our friendship very, very much
>
> - Rick Zbur, State Assembly Member

pass the legislation.

"It has been wonderful to get to know you, and I appreciate our friendship very, very much," Zbur told Negrete. "It's one of the highlights of the last two years as you served as Mayor."

Zbur highlighted Torosis's professional qualifications, specifically noting the "valuable perspective" she possesses regarding economic development due to her work as a policy director for Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly Mitchell. He emphasized that this specific experience with economic development "will serve the city well" and predicted that she would bring both "commitment and energy" to the position of mayor

Zbur said his office is developing additional bills focusing on California affordability, protecting natural landscapes from federal threats and defending vulnerable communities.

editor@smdp.com





MEET *me under the* FIG TREE

SUNDAY | **DEC 14 2025** | **1 - 4 PM**

Join us for the **Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows** annual holiday community gathering under the historic Moreton Bay Fig Tree

Live entertainment, photos with Santa, seasonal crafts, and snow!

It's a time to CELEBRATE *and a time to* GIVE BACK

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FRIDAY | DECEMBER 12

DRUNK THEATRE: THE WILDEST IMPROV COMEDY SHOW!

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Santa Monica Playhouse 1211 4th St, Santa Monica. A comedian takes five shots of whiskey in a row and tries to perform an improvised play with five sober comedians. What could go wrong?! Drunk Theatre is the entirely improvised, unpredictable, and crazy comedy show that'll kick your weekend into overdrive. Reserve your spot now as limited seating and space is available. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/drunk-theatre-the-wildest-improv-comedy-show-/15793351/2025-12-12T08

BRUNCH FRIDAYS WITH LIVE MUSIC IN OUR GARDEN PATIO!

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Our newly launched Brunch Fridays just got vibey-er! Every week enjoy great eats, summer libations, and a featured music artist on our beautiful garden patio! So come toast to summer with our uniquely crafted brunch menu including our Turmeric Spiced Cloud Egg dish, Smoked Gouda Scramble with Smashed Ube, Vietnamese French Toast, along with Mama An classics such as Famous Garlic Noodles, Shaken Beef, and Seafood Egg Fried Rice! And of course, it wouldn't be brunch without bottomless mimosas & summer punch bowls, so grab your brunch crew and enjoy the fair along the beautiful backdrop of Al fresco dining. RESERVE NOW. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/brunch-fridays-with-live-music-in-our-garden-patio-/14639006/2025-12-12T11

LIVE MUSIC FRIDAYS AT THE SURFING FOX

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. 120 Colorado Ave CA Contact Info (424) 214-1830 matt.sedgwick@candrpr.com Visit thesurfingfoxsm.com to view menus and learn more Santa Monica. Erinn Alissa performs acoustic folk pop with her guitar Friday nights at The Surfing Fox. Enjoy a night of live music, tasty bites, and Foxtails! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/live-music-fridays-at-the-surfing-fox/14385252/2025-12-12T18

THE BROBOTS

9:30 p.m. Harvelle's Santa Monica 1432 4th St, Santa Monica. Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. Please note, we are 21 and over only! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-brobots/14721357/2025-12-12T21

SATURDAY | DECEMBER 13

SANTA MONICA-VENICE CHRISTMAS RUN

7:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Ocean View Park 2701 Barnard Way Santa Monica. Mark your calendars! Santa is coming to town for the return of the 48th annual Santa Monica-Venice Christmas Run on December 13, 2025! Experience this historic event in person as you dash down the beautiful streets of Santa Monica and Venice, California, including a long stretch along the famous Venice Beach boardwalk. Sleigh one of the 5K or 10K courses before jinglin' your way across the finish line where a holiday bash will be waiting for you with delicious treats and festive beverages that would make Santa's reindeer jealous. Learn more: christmasrun.com. Prices: 5K: USD 34.00, 10K: USD 44.00, Youth Run: USD 14.00. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/santa-monica-venice-christmas-run/14803694/2025-12-13T07

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET - SATURDAYS

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 155-199 Arizona Ave Santa Monica. Santa Monica Farmers Markets create thriving, vibrant communities that are inclusive, connected, and diverse by promoting the prosperity of California farmers and small food businesses, preservation of the agricultural arts and sustainable food systems. Did you know? The Wednesday market is the largest in Santa Monica and the one most often frequented by local star chefs! Over 60 farm stands bring locally grown, California produce and flowers, direct to you from farm to your table. Parking on surrounding streets or in structures along Second and Fourth Streets. Both the Wednesday and Saturday markets are 8:00am to 1:00pm, rain or shine, and may be closed for selected holidays. All four Santa Monica Farmers Markets accept Cal Fresh EBT and WIC as payment. Learn about how to prepare for the Farmers Markets. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/downtown-farmers-market-saturdays/14118465/2025-12-13T08

BEGINNER REFORMER PILATES AT GOOD BODY PILATES STUDIO

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Good Body Pilates Studio 3229 Pico Blvd. Santa Monica Good Body Pilates Studio Santa Monica. Start your Saturday feeling strong, centered, and energized with our Beginner Reformer Pilates Class at Good Body Pilates Studio, taught by expert instructor Kylie. This group class is perfect for those new to Pilates or anyone looking to reconnect with the fundamentals in a welcoming and supportive environment. No experience necessary! Located in the heart of Santa Monica on Pico Boulevard, right across from Trader Joe's, our boutique studio is surrounded by great local coffee shops and restaurants, making it the perfect place to kick off your weekend. Plenty of metered parking available on Pico Blvd, and both metered and free street parking available on Urban Ave. Learn more. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/beginner-reformer-pilates-at-good-body-pilates-studio/16094481/2025-12-13T10

17TH ANNUAL SANTA MONICA PUB CRAWL

5:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. Crawl for a Cause at the Largest Holiday Crawl on the West Coast! Join Thousands of Crawlers and Help Those in Need for the Holidays! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/17th-annual-santa-monica-pub-crawl/17476239/2025-12-13T17

THE GREAT DIVIDE

9:30 p.m. Harvelle's Santa Monica 1432 4th St, Santa Monica. Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. $15 on line. $20 at the door. Please note, we are 21 and over only! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-great-divide/16370616/2025-12-13T21

SUNDAY | DECEMBER 14

THE WATERFRONT - SUNDAY REAL FUNDAY BRUNCH BUFFET

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. The Waterfront 205 Ocean Front Walk Venice. Enjoy a bottomless brunch buffet Sundays at The Waterfront! The Waterfront Venice is a full-service restaurant celebrating Californian cuisine with views of the Pacific Ocean. Situated between Rose and Navy on the famous Venice Beach Boardwalk, our food & beverage menus celebrate California with carefully selected seasonal produce from local farms. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/the-waterfront-sunday-real-funday-brunch-buffet/14894114/2025-12-14T11

ALL ABOUT SANTA - THE RUDIE-DECARLO HOLIDAY MUSICAL FOR KIDS 2 TO 102

12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Santa Monica Playhouse 1211 4th St, Santa Monica. "An afternoon of theatre magic in which audience participation and brotherly love pave the way for another happy yuletide season!" raves LA Splash Magazine. It's the timeless Rudie-DeCarlo musical comedy ALL ABOUT SANTA. Where has Santa gone? And how can the inhabitants of the North Pole save the spirit of the holidays from the diabolical machinations of an all-too-commercial world? Complete with perky elves, zany inventors, toy soldiers and porcelain dolls, audiences boo the villain, cheer the heroine, and help to save the day in this delightful holiday event, perfect for the whole family! " 'Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist.' (Francis P. Church, NY Sun editor, 1897) That's the message of Chris DeCarlo and Evelyn Rudie at Santa Monica Playhouse. They have a way of writing a play that speaks on many levels, even when it's as simple as a Santa story. All About Santa explores the commercialization of Christmas, over-spending, and the value of love and personal involvement. Laughter is nearly continuous and certainly is contagious!" exclaims The Outlook. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/all-about-santa-the-rudie-decarlo-holiday-musical-for-kids-2-to-102/17390964/2025-12-14T12

CANDLEMAKING & WINE TASTING @ AJA

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. AJA Vineyards 1417 2nd Street Suite C Contact Info 310-9297828 amanda@ajavineyards.com We can't wait to see you there! This is a 21+ event Santa Monica. Join us Sunday December 14th, with our friend and owner of Glassed Over Taylor for a fun candlemaking class. Sip on AJA wines while you create one of our classic upcycle candles with your selected scents. Includes workshop, candle and 2 glasses of wine. We hope to see you there! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/candlemaking-wine-tasting-aja/17408624/2025-12-14T14

VENICE ELECTRIC LIGHT PARADE - SUNDAYS AT SUNSET

Windward Plaza 1501 Ocean Front Walk Venice. Join the Magic of the Venice Electric Light Parade Every Sunday Night! Looking for a unique and vibrant way to end your weekend? The Venice Electric Light Parade (VELP) is here to light up your Sunday evenings! Founded by Marcus Gladney, this family-friendly weekly event celebrates community, creativity, and safe cycling. Bring your LED-lit bicycle and join us for an unforgettable ride along the iconic Venice Beach. Details: When: Every Sunday evening. Meet 45 minutes before sunset. Where: Windward Plaza, Venice Beach. Who: Open to everyone! Bring your bike, lights, and good vibes. Cost: FREE to join! Experience the magic of glowing bikes, amazing sound bikes playing great music, and the welcoming energy of the Venice community. The parade follows a strict no-smoking or drinking policy, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for all. Why Join? Connect with old and new friends. Celebrate the artistic and cultural spirit of Venice. Enjoy a safe and fun environment for all ages. So, light up your ride, bring your friends, and join us this Sunday at Windward Plaza. Don't forget to turn on your lights and practice safe cycling at night! Let's ride into the sunset together! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/venice-electric-light-parade-sundays-at-sunset/14970341/2025-12-14T00

MONDAY | DECEMBER 15

PIZZA PARTY AT BODEGA WINE BAR

6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. 814 Broadway Santa Monica. Every Monday Night at Bodega, every bottle of wine you purchase gets you a pizza half off! 6pm-Close. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/pizza-party-at-bodega-wine-bar/11526040/2025-12-15T18

HomeState to open in Santa Monica on December 16

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

HomeState, a Southern California restaurant chain specializing in Texas-style breakfast tacos, will start serving food at its Santa Monica location at 720 Wilshire Blvd. on Dec. 16 and has a grand opening celebration scheduled for Jan. 4.

HomeState's menu features breakfast tacos, queso, brisket and Texas-strength margaritas. The restaurant makes handcrafted tortillas using Valdez's family recipe, serving what the company describes as Texas food culture to Southern California.

The corner location at Wilshire Boulevard and Lincoln Boulevard offered several advantages that attracted HomeState to the area. According to Valdez, she lived nearby when she first moved to Los Angeles from Austin in 2000 and worked at Burke Williams spa down the street.

"I used to visit this space back when it was Baja Fresh," she said. "We've always wanted to open in Santa Monica...The location at the corner of Wilshire and Lincoln was ideal! The large patio is perfect for enjoying tacos and margaritas, the parking lot is so helpful, AND you can see the ocean from the front sidewalk. What's more attractive than that?"

The local store happens to have a marquee sign in front that has been used to keep the community informed while they rebuilt the interior of the store and Valdez said they plan to keep having a little fun with the messaging as the store fully opens.

While they make no compromises on quality, Valdez has a strong commitment to hospitality as a core business principle, positioning itself as what Valdez calls a community center for each neighborhood where it operates.

"It's what matters most. It's what people remember. It's why guests come back," she said. "Combined, these create a trusting relationship, loyal guests, friendly and recognized faces between guests and team members leading to a true sense of community. That's what we aim to be, a community center for each neighborhood we are lucky to be a part of."

The restaurant describes its approach as "serving hospitality first and tacos second" while providing high-quality food at an affordable price point.

Valdez, a Texas native, founded the regional chain after experiencing some homesickness when moving to California and being unable to find the kind of food she grew up with. The local opening coincides with HomeState's 12th anniversary. Founder Briana "Breezy" Valdez opened the company's first location in Hollywood on Dec. 9, 2012.

The company now operates eight locations throughout Southern California, with two additional sites planned beyond Santa Monica. An El Segundo location is scheduled to open in early 2026.

The Santa Monica location will share design elements common to all HomeState restaurants, including signature blue wallpaper, custom-built wooden tables, red wood shelving at the entrance and a wall featuring Band Taco artwork. The new location's bathroom features wallpaper showcasing Central Texas icons.

The restaurant will begin its soft opening at 7 a.m. Dec. 16, inviting the community to preview the new location during the holiday season. Guests can decorate the restaurant's holiday tree with HomeState taco ornaments, enjoy complimentary hot chocolate on the heated patio and sample the menu as the establishment settles into its new space. The location will operate daily from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

During the Jan. 4 grand opening, the first 50 visitors will receive wristbands allowing them to return with a guest for free tacos daily for one week. Local brewer Amigo Coffee Roasters will provide complimentary coffee during the celebration, with doors opening at 7 a.m.

HomeState created the Band Taco Program, which brings together music and food while supporting neighboring communities. The program partners with artists to develop original, limited-time tacos, with proceeds donated to nonprofit organizations. Artists including Spoon, Questlove, Phoebe Bridgers and Leon Bridges have created tacos through the program, which has generated more than $500,000 to date.

For more information, visit myhomestate.com.

editor@smdp.com



DEVELOPMENT

FROM PAGE 1

clean, safe, and inviting again for residents, businesses, and the millions who come here because this place feels special."

Inside City Hall, leaders say the culture is shifting. Deputy City Manager of Strategic Initiatives Peter James described the transformation as overdue and decisive. "It's refreshing to have a City Manager who paints a clear vision," he said. "We're seeing a tremendous change in pace and an awakening inside the organization." James said the city is moving away from slow-moving, top-down governance and toward more collaborative, responsive structures. Rather than relying solely on commissions and task forces, the city is looking to form new advisory groups and business councils that can make decisions quickly, deploy resources immediately, and test ideas in real time.

Community Development Director Jing Yeo, who will mark 20 years with the city in February, reinforced that rebuilding trust requires reliability and predictability. She emphasized the transformation happening within planning, building safety, and code enforcement. Her department is implementing AI tools, guaranteed turnaround times, contracted services to reduce bottlenecks, and flexible pathways for adaptive reuse. "Improving the customer experience is central to what we do," she said. "Revitalizing a city requires everyone. We need each partner bringing their strengths—and we need to make it easy to work with us."

As the conversation expanded, panelists underscored the importance of public-private partnerships as the cornerstone of Santa Monica's comeback. With the city realigning internally and property owners eager to invest, leaders described this moment as a rare window where shared priorities, clear communication, and rapid action could move in tandem. The private sector called for more direct collaboration on economic development, events, design interventions, and tenant recruitment, while city officials acknowledged the need to decentralize decision-making and empower business leaders as co-creators, not just stakeholders. This willingness to integrate strategy, resources, and governance across both sides, panelists said, may be the single most important shift determining whether Santa Monica's revitalization becomes sustainable.

Developers and business owners echoed that sentiment. Jake Zacuto, founder of Zacuto Group, spoke for many in the room when he said, "We're all here because we love this city and want to see it prosper. Events like this—where everyone is at the table—are how we get there." Local hospitality entrepreneur Peter Trinh described Santa Monica's brand equity as depleted but recoverable, saying the city's decades of cultural experiences created a strong foundation. "The bones are still here," he said. "If we come together, we won't just recover—we can lead the region."

DTSM board member and Cypress Equity Investments Chief Development Officer Bruce Fairty emphasized that private and public partners are more aligned than they have been in years. "There used to be a void," he said. "Now city staff Peter, Susan, Jing are rowing in the same direction. It's a concerted effort." Fairty expressed the need to reactivate the Promenade with meaningful experiences, from music festivals to cultural programming. "We need real events and a lot of them to give people a reason to stay."

Roberto Vazquez, HED Sector Leader, Housing and Mixed Use, highlighted the city's adaptive reuse ordinance as one of the most significant opportunities for transformation. The ordinance allows older, underutilized office buildings to convert to housing without triggering demolition requirements, a change he described as "a real economic recovery tool." With incentives for low-rise structures, additional mixed-use potential, and fee reductions, Vazquez said downtown is positioned for a more diverse and lively residential base. Yeo added that the city is pairing this ordinance with major flexibility and experimentation on 2nd and 4th Streets.

Throughout the forum, a shared vision emerged: Santa Monica must lean into what makes it unique the beachfront, the culture, the atmosphere and recreate the experiences that once defined it. Negrete pointed to upcoming tentpole moments such as the Super Bowl, FIFA World Cup, LA28 Olympics, and the revitalization of Route 66 as opportunities to reintroduce Santa Monica to the world. "We need a playbook for Santa Monica," she said. "One holistic team."

For the first time in years, city officials, developers, and business owners expressed a sense of alignment and urgency. As Mayor Negrete concluded, "This is our moment. We're coming back together."

Michelle Edgar, Special to the Daily Press

SCHOOLS

FROM PAGE 4

notice when a student stops being themselves, when grades slip, when friendships change or when a child who laughs easily is suddenly withdrawn.

We have to stop treating mental health as a side conversation. These cuts are happening in winter — when depression, isolation and suicidal ideation increase.

They are happening in communities still recovering from violence, and after the federal government removed the "Press 3" LGBTQ-specific option on the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — a resource that has supported more than a million people. We are watching lifelines shrink at the moment young people need more of them.

California has invested heavily in youth behavioral health in recent years. But investment means little if school boards eliminate the positions that translate those state dollars into daily, life-saving support.

If we are serious about preventing suicide, especially among boys and historically marginalized youth, then counselors, clinicians and trusted adults must be the last thing on the chopping block — not the first.

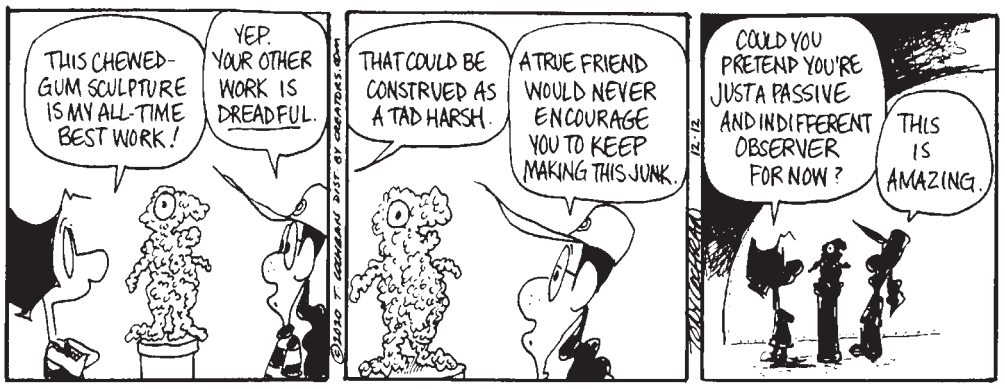
I say this not just as someone who works in mental health, but as someone who has lost people I love to suicide. Sometimes the difference between survival and silence is a single adult who knows your name and notices when your light dims.

We have a choice in front of us. We can keep cutting lifelines and hope for the best. Or we can decide that in a youth suicide crisis, the most dangerous decision we can make is to remove the people who keep kids alive.

Ayo Banjo leads a stigma reduction campaign funded through the California Youth Behavioral Health Initiative.

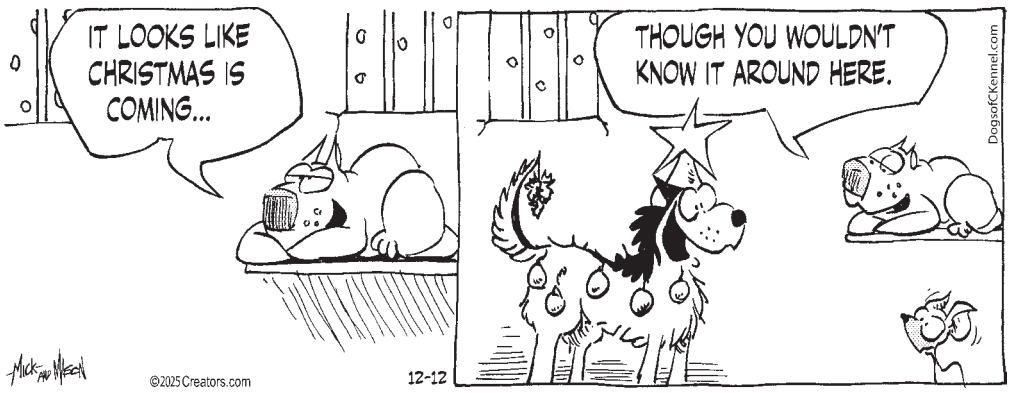
Agnes

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

© australianwordgames.com.au 6787

New threads

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

Acrylic
Anklet
Belt
Blouse
Boots
Breeze Knit
Brim
Caps
Coat
Combed cotton
Gloves
Grommet
Hand
Hat
Heels
Jeans
Mini
Nylon
Office
Oxford
Pants
Parka
Polar fleece
Poplin
Raglan
Ramie
Safety
Sarong
Sherpa
Shoes
Socks
Staple
Suit
Tearing strength
Tencel
Ties
Tights
Tops
T-shirt
Twill
Velcro
V-neck
Work
Yoke

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 12)

Welcome to your Year of Living Magnetically. What you need most is out there. In fact, it's everywhere, and it's as drawn to you as you are to it. Your authenticity attracts prosperity, love and wishes fulfilled. People trust you, and your influence grows. More highlights: You figure out how to make your money make money for you. Mentors come out of the woodwork. Social horizons expand with fun people. Pisces and Aries adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 12, 30, 26, 39 and 7

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You've already lived through a pattern, so there's no reason to be blindsided by the recurring conflict or the stressful scenario that keeps coming back around. You have the data you need for wise reflection.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Chasing your dream will require lost sleep, emotional vulnerability and lots of uncertainty. But you knew what you were signing up for. You weren't expecting a free ride. Your struggle will feel purposeful.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). The one who's supposed to be in charge is either inept or absent. You might not want to step up, but since you understand what needs to be done and people respect you, you'll make quick work of it.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll work toward giving others a smooth, novel and meaningful experience. Ultimately, it's about creating an atmosphere where people feel comfortable enough to be themselves. They'll keep coming back, and much good springs from that.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). The connection you feel with someone goes beyond words or logic. It's like you're communicating on multiple planes. This kind of uncanny attunement doesn't come along every day. It will be worthwhile to note the details of your perception.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Like most smart, thoughtful people, you notice that some of what drifts through your mind is not accurate, helpful... or even yours! Today, there will be some benefit to an action taken unthinkingly. Heed instinct, and even impulse.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's easy to cheer for heroes in stories who conquer trouble, but it's not so fun to live that plot. And yet, here you are. The struggle you're facing now is what's building your strength and legend.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). There's power in precise language. Today, the person who explains something best wins the room. Take time to define your terms and choose words carefully. Some may not mean what you've always assumed they do. Clarity is influence.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). The stress and sweat you put into creating organized processes will be well worth it. This is what allows you to work well and build your resources, which will include practical supplies and money, but also love, knowledge and wisdom.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). We usually expect competition from rivals or outsiders. But sometimes it comes from within your own circle. With close ones, competition can take the form of teasing, one-upping or withholding praise. Extra empathy and boundaries will be necessary.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Venting has its place, but you're wired for solutions. If there's no fix in sight, you'd rather steer attention toward what's working. Today, there's progress to be made by simply putting your energy and resources behind what's gaining traction.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). It's been hard to find happiness lately, like it's hiding from you. This doesn't have to be tricky. Forget the medicines, methods or formulas. Joy is simpler than that. People, humor, movement, music - those are the daily doses that make your spirit feel alive again.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

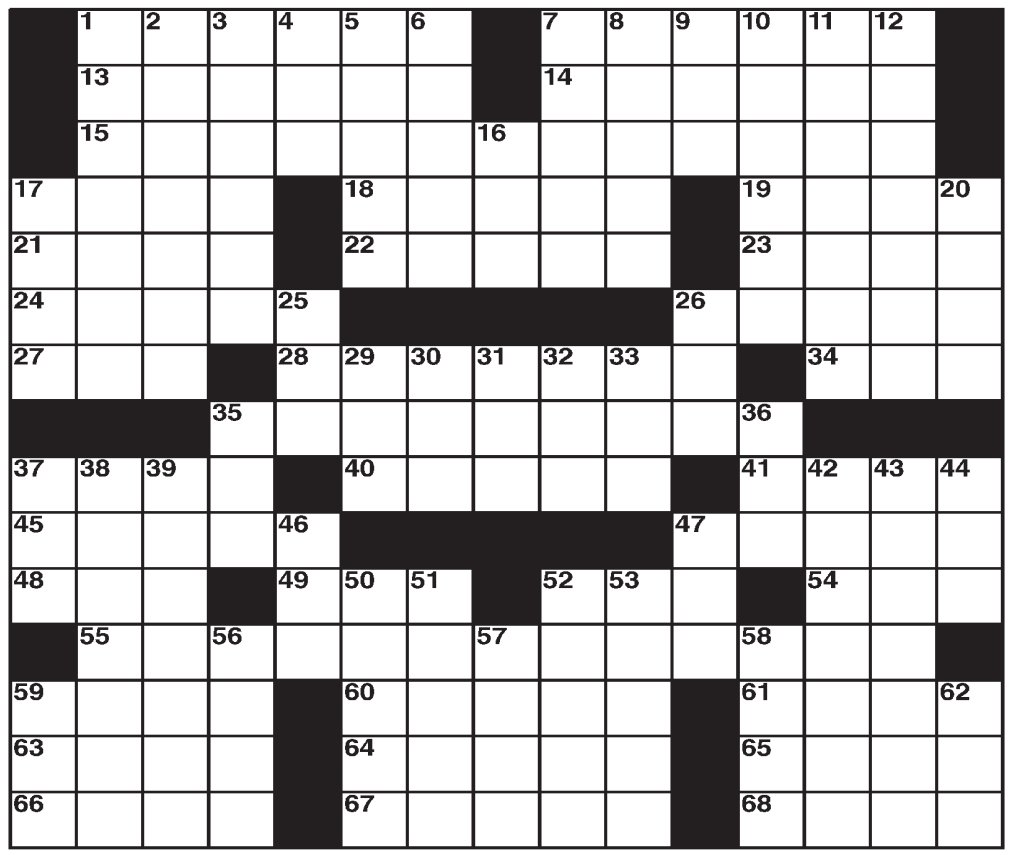
SWEET DREAMS by S.N.
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 From dawn to dusk
7 J. Edgar, for instance
13 Car assembler in Kentucky
14 Narrow crescent shape
15 Source of the advice
17 Annie and Nettie alternative
18 "__ by land, two..."
19 Hot starter
21 Flight paths
22 Wealth-building advice, part 1
23 Former Vatican cash
24 Jrs.' hurdles
26 Quilt contents
27 Valvoline rival
28 Soybean starter
34 Former fast flier
35 Part 2 of advice
37 Nimble and peppy
40 Pour out fully
41 Lighten up on
45 Patient's prep place
47 Economic stat
48 Gender abbr.
49 Cell's predecessor
52 *NCIS* shower
54 Where RRs meet
55 Part 3 of advice
59 Light as a feather
60 Poetic "previously"
61 What we share
63 Playful smooch
64 Ninny
65 *Wimpy Kid* diarist
66 Hook helper
67 End of advice
68 Tech sch.

DOWN

1 Most unfavorably
2 Mortgage rate maximum
3 Apollo, as a musician
4 *Palme* __ (Cannes prize)
5 Consumed, old-style
6 Greek New Age pianist
7 Ever-shifting
8 Opera descriptor
9 Vb. form
10 Swiss cereal
11 Breath Savers competitor
12 Innate essences
16 Founding Father, familiarly
17 Draws upon
20 Sassy
25 Lunar region
26 Oral OMG
29 Fabric feature
30 Card reader of a sort
31 Unruly hair
32 30-Down input
33 Shortest month
35 Rocky Mtn. state
36 Poetic dusk
37 Letters on some lotions
38 Top-shelf
39 Deep regret
42 End a session
43 Ties down
44 Bus. card abbr.
46 EMTs' masks and gloves
47 Expert ending
50 Twosomes
51 Far from fine
52 *Odyssey* magician
53 Edit out audibly
56 Where GE trades
57 Fine-tune
58 Meditation master
59 Core muscle group
62 USMC NCO



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12/12/25

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

CRIME

FROM PAGE 5

than 17,000 doses of Narcan; cleaned sidewalks; painted curbs and dozens of residents housed.

In some cases, those interventions have literally saved lives. The council member's office said 138 overdoses have been reversed by crews assigned to walk the parks and be alert for danger.

It's thus heartening to see at least glimmers of progress.

The fences installed in early 2025 succeeded in boxing out vendors who were using the neighborhood to sell drugs and stolen goods. The increased police patrols helped chase off some local dealers and pushed some of the open drug use outside the perimeters of the park.

Those successes are directly attributable to city interventions by Hernandez and others. But the larger goal remains elusive.

This is not a community at peace, nor has it turned the corner from blight into prosperity.

The streets smell of urine, and the air wafts a scent of weed and other drugs. The litter is degrading.

The overall effect is one of exhaustion. Storekeepers don't look at drug users with compassion or a desire to help. They shoo them away from storefronts, tired of their smell and grime.

All of which serves as a reminder that this is hard work, that solutions to drugs or homelessness are not pulled from a shelf and rolled out into neighborhoods, that even $27 million of city investment does not change a community overnight.

Money and effort are essential to progress, but they do not guarantee it. Only commitment, work and time can be truly transformative.

It's tough sledding under the best circumstances, and these are hardly the best. That's at least in part because the federal government — which could have been a useful partner in this work — has chosen to be an active subverter of it.

It was here that President Donald Trump and his coiffed minion, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, chose to launch their summer assault on immigrants. On July 7, ICE agents, complete with a Blackhawk helicopter and horses (yes, horses), swarmed through and above the park, flashing their faux military gear and shouting at pedestrians.

The resulting theater accomplished precisely nothing in terms of the goals ICE set for itself — rounding up the "worst of the worst" and sending them back to home countries — but it produced two other results: It chased migrants indoors, where they have been sheltering ever since, and it smoothed a political path for Mayor Karen Bass, who had been foundering up to that point but has since redefined her political identity as the city's bulwark against Trump and his mean-spirited nonsense.

And so the work to make MacArthur Park safer abruptly became a showcase for city and national politics, not to mention a preview of the unrest that Trump has spent the rest of the year provoking in other cities — Washington, D.C.; Portland; Chicago; New Orleans. Each has had a turn in the barrel, and each can point to Los Angeles as the testing ground for the new authoritarianism Trump has brought to America's cities.

In the meantime, however, the sight of ICE agents stomping around in the park was enough to chase some immigrants and others who merely "look illegal" indoors. That has left neighborhoods feeling tense and deserted. Last week, the normally bustling health clinic at the corner of Westlake and 6th Street had just one family in the waiting room.

Looking back on the year, neither Bass nor Police Chief Jim McDonnell was willing to declare victory in MacArthur Park. In separate interviews, each acknowledged that the chain link fences that disrupted illegal vending have become unsightly and should be viewed as temporary fixtures, not permanent installations.

"They served their purpose," Bass said, adding that the city intends to soon replace them with planters or other fixtures.

Both mayor and chief were pleased to see crime coming down in the area, but both recognize that the park is unfinished work. "It's been overall good," Bass said, "but it's up and down."

Next year may bring a new emphasis on design solutions. In addition to planters along Alvarado, Hernandez has suggested blocking Wilshire Boulevard as it passes through the park, restoring the area to its original configuration.

And the councilmember and mayor jointly endorsed a proposal to develop a fence that would surround all of MacArthur Park, regulating flow in and out, rather than simply having park visitors spill onto the sidewalks, as so many drug users do today.

Not all of the neighbors love that idea – there's very little that everyone in this community agrees on – but it offers a chance for some decorative enhancement in an area bereft of much. The fence is being designed now and could go up next year. If so, it will be the latest effort in this arduous work.

"It is," Bass said, "a long process."

Jim Newton CalMatters Contributor

GET IT DAILY...

ORLA
Mediterranean by Michael Mina

BRUNCH WITH SANTA

Santa and his elves bring holiday cheer to Orla with festive music, joyful photo moments, and a lively, family-friendly atmosphere. Enjoy a Mediterranean take on brunch, elevated with seasonal flavors and holiday favorites.

Saturday, December 6, 13 & 20
11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Reserve your table via the QR code



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