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WEEKEND EDITION
12.15.18 - 12.16.18
Volume 18 Issue 28

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Santa Monica Daily Press

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Judge orders district based elections for City Council

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The City of Santa Monica has been ordered to discontinue at large elections and adopt a district based system but the judge only mandated the borders for one district, leaving the remaining details unclear.

Judge Yvette Palazuelos previously issued a tentative ruling, siding with the Plaintiffs Maria Loya and the Pico Neighborhood Association that the City's at-large voting system violates the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA). Her tentative ruling was just a few sentences and did not elaborate on possible solutions to the CVRA violations.

Both sides were in court earlier this month to present more information regarding proposed solutions and Palazuelos issued an amended ruling on Dec. 12.

"The Court enjoins and restrains Defendant from imposing, applying, holding, tabulating, and/or certifying any at — large elections, and/or the results thereof, for any positions

SEE **JUDGE** PAGE 6

Sultan begins reign on Rent Control Board

MADELEINE PAUKER
Daily Press Staff Writer

The new member of the Rent Control Board sees a growing tenant harassment problem in Santa Monica and wants to strengthen the City's power to address it.

Veterans rights attorney Naomi Sultan was sworn in

Tuesday, joining four other board members, three of whom are also attorneys. She said she wants to immediately start reevaluating the City's approach to preventing and enforcing laws against tenant harassment. Landlords are harassing tenants more and more as property values continue skyrocketing because they can raise rents when rent-controlled

tenants move out.

Sultan said she has heard of landlords starting construction on their buildings without offering tenants another place to live or refusing to fix maintenance issues. Other actions prohibited under Santa Monica's 1996 Tenant Harassment Ordinance include lying to make a tenant leave, taking away services that come with the

apartment and abusing the right to enter an apartment.

"They really have a financial incentive to turnover tenants, especially tenants who have been there longer, which means elderly folks who often have disabilities are particularly vulnerable," she said.

Sultan said the board needs

SEE **SULTAN** PAGE 5



FIG TREE DONATIONS

Over a thousand Santa Monicans gathered at the Miramar Hotel to celebrate the holiday season with live performances by the Santa Monica High School Chamber Orchestra, Santa Monica High School Jazz Combo and Walk Street Blues during the annual Meet Me Under the Fig event. Attendees were asked to bring non-perishable food to be donated to The Westside Food Bank. In total, over 8,000 pounds of food was collected, all of which will be distributed to those community families most in need. The event was hosted by Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows and MSD Capital, L.P.

Courtesy photos

Council to debate options for evicting corporate housing from the city

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

City Council will embark on a wide-ranging discussion of corporate housing in Santa Monica at their Tuesday meeting to eventually craft more specific rules that will prevent permanent housing from being used for temporary residences.

According to City Staff, the corporate housing problem is still small compared to the broader housing market but there are signs developers and landlords are looking to explore the corporate housing market. Staff said existing rules do not adequately cover the kinds of housing options available and direction is needed from

Council to guide new policies.

"Council's concerns were precipitated by recent practices that appear to attempt to divide existing rent-controlled housing units, resulting in illegal increases in allowable density but not meeting the definition of corporate housing," said the staff report. "There has also been anecdotal evidence that rent-

controlled units are being used as temporary housing, whether for approximately 6-month leases for students or other durations of less than one year. This kind of housing typically has a higher monthly price point than typical annual leases. Rent-controlled housing is a particularly valuable resource in providing predictability in

housing costs for tenants looking to establish ongoing residency, thereby promoting neighborhood stability."

The city has rules defining corporate housing including temporary stays of more than 30 days, stays by individuals with permanent address elsewhere and housing

SEE **COUNCIL** PAGE 7



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Calendar

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WEEKEND EDITION, DECEMBER 15-16, 2018

Santa Monica Daily Press

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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Saturday, Dec. 15

Santa Monica Certified Farmers Market

The Saturday Downtown Farmers Market, also known as the Organic Market, opened in May 1991. As Santa Monica's second CFM, it had a different mission to fulfill. With the passage of the California Organic Foods Act of 1990, consumers were eager for more organic produce and another market for weekend shopping. The Organic Market boasts the largest percentage of Certified Organic growers of the City's four markets. 8:00am-1:00 pm.

Open Worksession with Echo Park Film Center

In honor of the 120th anniversary of the Santa Monica Camera Obscura, Echo Park Film Center's nineteen-member cooperative is creating a film that celebrates the beloved optical device. Titled 'I'll Be Your Mirror,' it's a poetic documentary that utilizes analog film tools and animation techniques along with archival imagery and first-person accounts. Drop by during EPFC's work sessions to see how the project is progressing and help out with filming, animation, voice overs, soundtracks and more. No experience necessary - free cinematic fun for everyone! Cost: Free! Palisades Park 10:00am-12:00 pm.

Ocean Park Fiction Winners Book Group

This book group reads and discusses prize-winning fiction. The group meets the 3rd Saturday of the month from 11:00am-12:30pm. Ocean Park Branch Library 11:00am-12:30 pm.

Poetry with Brendan Constantine

Register online or call 310-458-2239 December's theme is, 'Repeat After Me.' Are you writing the same poem over and over? Do you feel you need to break out of a rut? Before you try anything drastic, spend a day with poet Brendan Constantine. The universe may be trying to tell you something! Don't take any vows or abandon good work for the sake of vanity. There may be a way to reinvigorate your art AND address the heart's unfinished business. All levels welcome. 11am-2pm. Cost: \$30 Palisades Park 11:00 am-2:00pm.

Super 8 and Eco-processing with Echo Park Film Center

Using the classic home-movie camera, participants will explore the history, application and tender sophistication of small format filmmaking. After capturing some Super 8 images on a stroll around Pacific Palisades Park, we'll

return to the Camera Obscura Arts Lab to process our film using a developer we'll make from organic ingredients such as instant coffee, local flowers and seaweed! Stick around after for a brief screening of two Echo Park Film Center "City Symphonies." Workshop Facilitators: Andrew Kim, Nicole Ucedo and Penelope Uribe-Abée. Cost: \$5 Palisades Park 12:00pm-4:00 pm.

American Stories Group

The Christmas Letters by Lee Smith Pico Branch Library 1:30pm-2:30 pm.

CoderDojo Workshop

Practice computer science and coding skills with volunteer mentors from the LA CoderDojo. Use laptops provided by the library or bring your own. Ages 11-17 Registration starts Nov 10. Main Library Children's Activity Room 3:00pm-5:00 pm.

Guest House open

Visit anytime between 11am-2pm for a self-guided or docent tour. No reservations needed. Annenberg Community Beach House 11:00am-2:00 pm.

Sunday, Dec. 16

Snowy Plover Beach Walk 8:30-10am

Explore the habitat and life cycles of the federally threatened snowy plover with the Audubon Society. Please RSVP. Annenberg Community Beach House 8:30am-10:00 am.

Gallery OPEN 9am - 4pm

Annenberg Community Beach House 9:00 am-4:00pm.

A Watercolor Journey with Timothy Kitz

\$35 cash drop-in (please bring exact change!) Join watercolorist and urban sketcher Timothy Kitz in a 6-week immersive watercolor course, open to all levels and drop-ins welcome. Timothy will share tips about both medium and technique while going through weekly demo exercises to hone your compositional vision, principles of color values, color mixing and brush work. The gorgeous views framed by the Art Lab's picture windows overlooking the ocean will provide ongoing inspiration. Palisades Park 10:00am-1:00 pm.

Monday, Dec. 17

Swim Center Annual December Closure 2018

The Santa Monica Swim Center will be closed beginning Monday, December 17, 2018 and will re-open Monday, January 7, 2019. Maintenance and repair items will be worked on during this closure. Santa Monica College 5:30 am.

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Citywide
Santa Monica Education Foundation
Launches \$50,000 Anonymous Match

The Santa Monica Education Foundation is ending 2018 with an opportunity to secure \$50,000 to fund programs in Santa Monica schools from an anonymous donor. The donor will match all donations to the Ed Foundation dollar for dollar, up to \$50,000, between December 10 and 31, 2018.

“We are grateful to this extremely generous family for offering such an incredible opportunity for our school community,” said Linda Greenberg, Executive Director of the Ed Foundation. “The dollars raised by this match will directly fund programs in Santa Monica classrooms next year. Donations will allow students to expand their creativity in the arts, innovate in STEM classes, and experience the well-rounded education we all want for our students.”

Like all contributions to the Ed Foundation, donations made during the match will fund personnel, programs and professional development at Santa Monica public schools next year. Funding supports arts education, instructional aides, STEM, student wellness programs and more.

These programs include Project Lead the Way, a four-year engineering course at Santa Monica High School. 4th year Project Lead the Way students recently took 1st place out of 50 teams at the 2018 Jet Propulsion Laboratory Invention Challenge Los Angeles Regional Competition and are now advancing to the competition finals.

The funds raised also support 5th grade ballroom dance classes. In 10 weeks of ballroom dance training, students learn to waltz, tango and more, while gaining poise, self-esteem, social skills and respect for their fellow dancers. The program culminates with a dance showcase for parents at each school. Project Lead the Way and ballroom dance are just two of the many programs across Santa Monica funded through donation to the Ed Foundation. For more information or to make a donation to support Santa Monica students, go to smedfoundation.org.

To learn more about the Ed Foundation, visit <http://smedfoundation.org>.

SUBMITTED BY ANN CONKLE, COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS MANAGER

Citywide
SMC Receives \$100,000 National
Endowment for the Humanities Grant

Santa Monica College (SMC) has received a \$100,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for an art history project entitled “Mapping and Preserving the Hidden Histories of Santa Monica” to be spearheaded by SMC professors Briana Simmons and Walter Meyer. The announcement was made in a Dec. 12 NEH press release; SMC’s grant was the largest award granted in Southern California.

The NEH announced a total \$14.8 million in grants to support 253 humanities projects in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico; an additional \$47.5 million was awarded to fund 55 state humanities council partners. SMC will use the \$100,000 NEH grant to fund a three-year curriculum development project that will create a digital database of art history narratives of a region including Santa Monica, Venice, and Malibu—but with a special emphasis on telling stories not often told, or heard.

Professors Meyer and Simmons will lead SMC students in developing the database, researching locations such as the Inkwell (a Santa Monica beach that was designated for African-American citizens, and where SMC student Nick Gabaldón and others helped challenge Jim Crow racism and open public beaches for all). The digital research and archiving project will align with eight Art History courses—SMC’s Art History program serves around 2,000 art and non-art majors each semester—and the database will be made available to students of other humanities courses at the college.

“Santa Monica College is constantly seeking ways to move beyond the established narrative and to push the envelope in how we prepare our students to become responsible and creative scholars,” said Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery, SMC Superintendent/President. “I am enthusiastic about the potential that this project championed by our Art History professors bears to do just that, while creating a vital, inclusive repository of diverse stories not often heard.”

Briana Simmons—who holds a PhD in Latin American Art History from UC, Santa Barbara—said that the motivation for this project was “to develop a more contemporary strategy for engaging Santa Monica College’s diverse students and to help them forge a deeper connection with art history, and to see themselves in the stories they will help tell.”

Simmons and Meyer will work with local community organizations such as the City of Santa Monica, the Santa Monica History Museum, the Santa Monica Conservancy, and the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) founded by artist/scholar Judith Baca, to

identify the best locations for research. The art, architecture, and history of the locations will be integrated into the research project, which will be a part of a series of SMC’s Western Art History and Latin American Art History courses; Art Appreciation: Introduction to Global Visual Culture; Art of Asia (Prehistory to 1900); and Introduction to African Art History.

Simmons’ partner in the project, Walter Meyer—who holds a Master’s degree in Art History from the University of Southern California, and is the Art History faculty lead at SMC—will help coordinate the college’s relationship with community partners, and collaborate with other humanities departments at SMC to expand the reach of the database that will be created.

“It is tremendously exciting to further develop the digital humanities at SMC and to think of all the benefits this research project will create,” said Meyer, “not just for the students who will help develop the digital database, but for the entire community who will, as a result, see Santa Monica and West Los Angeles in a whole new way!”

Grant awards from the NEH will support humanities initiatives at a wide swath of institutions: historically black colleges, Hispanic-serving institutions, and more. Other Southern California recipients included Natalie Operstein of UCLA who received \$60,000 for a linguistic analysis of Lingua Franca (a language used for interethnic communication in the Mediterranean from the medieval period to the 19th century); Satoko Shimazaki of USC who will research and write a book on the impact of new recording technologies on Japanese kabuki theater in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; and Vanguard University, who received \$98,317 (the second largest grant award to a Southern California recipient) to develop and implement a summer bridge program based on American history and culture for at-risk students.

“From cutting-edge digital projects to the painstaking practice of traditional scholarly research, these NEH grants represent the humanities at its most vital and creative,” said NEH Chairman Jon Parrish Peede. “These projects will shed new light on age-old questions, safeguard our cultural heritage, and expand educational opportunities in classrooms nationwide.”

For a full list of grants by geographic location and to read the NEH’s official press release, go to neh.gov/news. For more information on Santa Monica College’s art history research project, write Briana Simmons at Simmons_Briana@smc.edu.

SMC offers Associate degrees in Art and Art History and has one of the best foundation art programs in the state of California. SMC Art graduates are recruited and given scholarships by the best art schools in the country including California Institute of the Arts, Art Center College of Art and Design, San Francisco Art Institute, the Chicago Art Institute, Rhode Island College of Art and Design, and the California College of Arts and Crafts. To learn more, visit the Art department’s website at smc.edu/art.

SUBMITTED BY GRACE SMITH, SMC PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

SAN FRANCISCO
California high court blocks pardon of man who killed at 14

In a rare step, the California Supreme Court has blocked Gov. Jerry Brown’s attempt to issue a pardon to a 37-year-old Cambodian refugee facing deportation for killing and robbing a woman when he was 14 years old.

The court offered no public explanation for its rejection on Wednesday of Borey Ai’s pardon. The governor is required to obtain the court’s approval for pardons for twice-convicted felons. The court rejected two other pardon requests two weeks ago. Court watchers say those rejections were the first of their kind in decades.

Ai was charged as an adult and convicted in 1997 of second-degree murder and robbery and sentenced to 25-years-to-life in prison. He was paroled in 2016 and federal immigration authorities began deportation proceedings, which can be blocked by a pardon.

PAUL ELIAS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sacramento
Report details firefighters’ harrowing work in Paradise

A report on firefighter injuries in a deadly Northern California wildfire details the harrowing conditions they faced and a few close calls with death.

The report released Thursday by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said the Camp Fire overtook three firefighters working to stop the blaze Nov. 8.

It says two inmate firefighters were burned when they tried to escape the flames and ran into barbed-wire fences. A fire captain also was burned.

Two firefighters were injured the next morning when a propane tank exploded.

The fire decimated the town of Paradise, killed at least 86 people and destroyed 14,000 homes.

Cal Fire spokesman Scott McLean says the burned captain, who received the worst injuries, was released from a hospital more than a week ago.

KQED News in San Francisco first reported on the injuries.

BRIAN MELLEY, ASSOCIATED PRESS



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US says 7-year-old who died in custody had not appeared ill

BY COLLEEN LONG, ASTRID GALVAN
& SONIA PEREZ D.

Associated Press

U.S. immigration officials on Friday defended their actions in the detention of a 7-year-old Guatemalan girl who died two days after she and her father were taken into custody along a remote stretch of the U.S. border.

The girl, identified by a Guatemalan official as Jackeline Caal, had gone days without food and water, a Department of Homeland Security statement said. Yet immigration officials said she did not appear to be ill when detained.

A Border Patrol form completed shortly after she was stopped said she was not sweating, had no tremors or visible trauma and was mentally alert. "Claims good health," the form reads. Jackeline's father appeared to have signed the form, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

But, hours later, after Jackeline was placed on a bus, she started vomiting. She was not breathing when she arrived at a Border Patrol station. Emergency medical technicians revived her and she was flown to a hospital in El Paso, Texas, where she was found to have swelling in her brain and liver failure, officials said. She later died.

The agents speak Spanish, but the father and daughter were from an area in northern Guatemala called Raxruha in Alta Verapaz and may have spoken a Mayan dialect, not Spanish.

An autopsy was scheduled to determine the girl's death. The results could take weeks.

"The agents involved are deeply affected and empathize with the father over the loss of his daughter," said U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Kevin McAleenan. "We cannot stress enough the dangers posed by traveling long distances, in crowded transportation, or in the natural elements through remote desert areas without food, water and other supplies."

The girl's identity was provided to AP by an official with Guatemala's foreign ministry, who identified the father as 29-year-old Nery Caal. The official requested anonymity because he was not authorized to share information. It was later confirmed by

Customs and Border Protection officials.

Caal was driven to El Paso and was at the hospital when his daughter died, officials said. He is not detained.

Jackeline's death comes as increasing numbers of children and families are making the dangerous trek north from Central America and as immigration officials are being increasingly criticized for their treatment of migrants who arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border. Homeland Security's watchdog will review what happened in the girl's case, federal officials said.

The pair were taken into custody at about 9:15 p.m. Dec. 6 in a group of 163 people in remote New Mexico, about 90 miles from the nearest Border Patrol station in Lordsburg. The group was apprehended by four Border Patrol agents. The rugged, mountainous area is mostly deserted, home to ghost towns and abandoned buildings from Old West homesteader days. It's an unforgiving terrain where Geronimo made his last stand and it remains largely isolated with no cell service and few paved roads.

There's a small Border Patrol operating base near where the group was found with food, water and bathrooms, but no medical help. They were found near the Antelope Wells port of entry, which was closed when they arrived. It's not clear if they had been trying to cross legally.

The migrants were bused from the area to Lordsburg in two groups, including about 50 minors without parents in the first group, officials said. The girl and her father didn't start the 90-mile journey until about 4:30 a.m., when the bus returned.

The father said the girl was vomiting on the bus. When they arrived at the Border Patrol station in Lordsburg at about 6:30 a.m. Dec. 7, she was not breathing, officials said. Emergency medical technicians discovered the girl's fever was 105.7 degrees Fahrenheit (40.9 degrees Celsius), and she was airlifted to a hospital. She died shortly after midnight on Dec. 8.

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley called Jackeline's death "a horrific, tragic situation" and called for "commonsense laws to disincentivize people from coming up

SEE BORDER PAGE 5

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SULTAN

FROM PAGE 1

to both develop new policies to protect tenants from harassment and assess whether Code Enforcement, which investigates tenant harassment, has enough resources to adequately enforce the law. This could mean adding more staff to the department or creating a separate group to focus on enforcing harassment laws.

Sultan said she is also looking to protect rent-controlled housing by shoring up the loopholes in the city's short-term rental law. City Council will be exploring that issue in a study session at its Dec. 18 meeting.

"Companies are able to use them to house either short-term employees or rent them as extended hotel stays to wealthy folks even though they're supposed to be rent-controlled units for folks here in the long term," she said. "We need to look at

changing some of the definitions within the law because corporations know exactly what they're allowed to do under loopholes created by the law."

Santa Monica Municipal Code describes corporate housing as a residence designed for use by individuals who will reside on the property for a minimum stay of at least 30 consecutive days, but who otherwise intend their occupancy to be temporary.

Buildings that include certain amenities, like maid service and furnishings, is also considered corporate housing.

While Sultan is aiming to hold more landlords accountable to the law, she wants to ensure they are treated fairly and given due process. She also hopes to hold more events like the annual Landlord/Tenant Forum, which was held earlier this month, to try to prevent disputes between landlords and tenants.

madeleine@smdp.com

BORDER

FROM PAGE 4

from the border," crossing illegally.

Guatemalan consular officials said they have spoken with the father who was deeply upset.

"It is important to show that, unfortunately, the places where migrants now enter are more dangerous and the distances they travel are greater," consular officials said.

Immigration officials said hundreds of people who have been overcome by the harsh desert and sweltering conditions are saved by Border Patrol every year.

When a Border Patrol agent arrests someone, that person is processed at a facility but usually spends no more than 72 hours in custody before either being transferred to Immigration and Customs Enforcement or, if the person is Mexican, being deported home.

Immigrants, attorneys and activists have long raised issues with the conditions of Border Patrol holding cells. In Tucson, Arizona, an ongoing lawsuit claims holding cells are filthy, cold and lacking basic necessities such as blankets. A judge overseeing that lawsuit has ordered the agency's Tucson Sector, which patrols

much of the Arizona-Mexico border, to provide blankets and mats to sleep on and to continually turn over surveillance footage from inside the cells.

Agents in Arizona see groups of more than 100 people, sometimes including infants and toddlers, on a regular basis.

Arresting such groups poses logistical problems for agents, who have to wait on transport vans that are equipped with baby seats to take the migrants to processing facilities, some which are at least a half-hour north of the border.

The death of the 7-year-old comes after a toddler died in May just after being released from an family detention facility in Texas and as President Donald Trump's administration attempts to ban people from asking for asylum if they cross the border illegally. A federal appeals court has temporarily blocked that ban, but the administration asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reinstate it Tuesday.

The Washington Post first reported the girl's story late Thursday.

Galvan reported from Phoenix, and Perez D. from Guatemala City. Associated Press writers Elliot Spagat in San Diego and Russell Contreras in Albuquerque, New Mexico contributed to this report.

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JUDGE

FROM PAGE 1

on its City Council," said her ruling. "The Court commands and orders that from the date of entry of this judgment, Defendant's elections for, and any seats on, the City Council shall be district-based elections, as defined by the California Voting Rights Act, and in accordance with the map attached hereto."

The map provided outlines borders for a Pico neighborhood district but no others. While the ruling prevents the City from holding any additional at-large elections it doesn't mandate any special elections to replace the current council.

A map submitted by the Plaintiffs had drawn a total of seven districts.

City Hall had argued that any district maps should be the result of public input. The map provided by the court outlines a Pico district similar to the one proposed by the Plaintiffs but makes no mention of other districts either in quantity or in size.

"We are pleased that the first amended tentative decision appears to reject the plaintiffs' request to replace the City's at-large election system - adopted by the voters in 1946 and twice affirmed by the voters at the polls - with a seven-district map drawn by the plaintiffs' hired expert without opportunity for public input," said City Attorney Lane Dilg in a statement.

She said the city continues to believe at-large elections are fair and disputed the assertion that Latino-preferred candidates have not won in the city.

The City has previously said it will appeal any ruling the favors the Plaintiff but a decision on any appeal won't be made until

a final ruling is issued. The most recent document is an amendment to the tentative ruling and is not yet final.

"We look forward to reviewing the statement of decision to be issued by the court, and we are pleased that the court appears to have affirmed that any district-based system imposed in Santa Monica will be drawn with a Pico Neighborhood district as set forth by the court but with public hearings and a full opportunity for community input with respect to other districts," said Dilg.

Attorney Kevin Shenkman represented the Plaintiffs in the case and said the order issued by the court needs further clarification before any conclusions can be drawn regarding specific districts. However, he said the judge's order was clear on several points: the City lost the case, at large elections violate the CVRA and no City Council election can be held without first establishing districts.

"The court tasked us plaintiffs with preparing the statement of decision for the Court's review comment and revision if appropriate, and I'm not entirely sure what we should put in that statement of decision to accurately reflect what the court is saying here and intends," he said. "So I think we may need to get clarification from the court in order to faithfully put together that statement of decision."

He said it's not clear how a future council election would be organized based on this week's judgment but the language in the ruling indicates only district-based elections can be used for the Council races, eliminating the possibility of a hybrid system.

Both sides said the final ruling will hopefully clarify some of the ongoing questions.

editor@smdp.com

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COUNCIL

FROM PAGE 1

that includes at least two specified amenities. Under that definition, all corporate housing is banned in Santa Monica but staff said the rules are easy to circumvent if providers simply limit the units to one of the banned amenities. Staff said the housing market has also evolved beyond current definitions with some providers offering a kind of subscription based model that falls outside any existing rules.

According to the staff report, some new housing has already been earmarked by developers for temporary rentals of more than 31 days and the policy raised questions about height and density bonuses being given to projects that will not become permanent housing.

The Rent Control Board took action on the issue earlier this year clarifying that a corporation cannot rent a controlled unit in the City and stating the high turnover corporate housing model has always been outlawed in Santa Monica.

No new laws will be passed Tuesday but council will be asked to discuss how to define short term vs. medium or long term tenants and how to define a permanent resident. They will also be asked to consider ways to protect permanent housing stock, curb abuse of permanent housing for corporate uses and accommodate the diversity of housing needs in the city.

Specific discussion points will focus on the intensity of enforcement options available to staff and what kind of punishments can be put in place to curb bad behavior.

"Once staff receives clear policy direction from Council, staff will conduct further research and anticipates seeking input from the Planning Commission, Housing Commission and Rent Control Board prior to bringing back an ordinance for adoption at a future Council Meeting," said the staff report.

Council will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 18 in City Hall, 1685 Main Street. Closed session begins at 5:30 p.m. and open session will not begin before 6:30 p.m.

editor@smdp.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

LOS ANGELES

Apple strikes deal to produce new 'Peanuts' content

Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the "Peanuts" crew will have a new home on Apple's streaming service.

Apple has struck a deal with DHX Media to produce new "Peanuts" content. The global children's content and brands company will develop and produce original programs for Apple including new series, specials and shorts based on the beloved characters.

"Peanuts" was created by Charles M. Schulz in 1950.

DHX will produce original short-form STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) content that will be exclusive to Apple, including astronaut Snoopy.

Peanuts Worldwide and NASA recently signed a Space Act Agreement, designed to inspire a passion for space exploration and STEM among the next generation of students. ASSOCIATED PRESS



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5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

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Santa Monica Daily Press

SURF FORECASTS

WATER TEMP: 61.3°

SATURDAY - FAIR - SURF: 2-3 ft waist to stomach high occ. 4 ft
More WNW swell due. Small SSW pulse.

SUNDAY - FAIR - SURF: 3-4 ft waist to shoulder high
Reinforcing WNW swell. Fading SSW pulse.



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DAILY POLICE LOG

The Santa Monica Police Department Responded To Calls For Service.

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF THOSE CALLS CHOSEN BY THE SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS STAFF.

Battery just occurred 2900blk Main St 12:45:40 a.m.

Public intoxication 2800blk Main St 12:28:38 a.m.

Animal related incident 2600blk 28th St 12:49:04 a.m.

Armed robbery just occurred 300blk Santa Monica Pier 01:21:44 a.m.

Petty theft report 2600blk Centinela Ave 01:47:23 a.m.

Trespassing 1200blk Euclid St 12:50:46 a.m.

Bike theft report 1500blk 2nd St 01:25:35 a.m.

Traffic/vehicle stop 2200blk Pico Blvd 02:12:18 a.m.

Disturbance of the peace 900blk 7th St 02:12:04 a.m.

Traffic/vehicle stop 1800blk 19th St 02:37:02 a.m.

Traffic/vehicle stop 800blk Michigan Ave 02:49:53 a.m.

Traffic collision - no injuries 18th St / Broadway 02:16:07 a.m.

Traffic hazard 1800blk Ocean Ave 04:40:40 a.m.

Audible burglar alarm 12th St / Wilshire Blvd 06:23:24 a.m.

Mark & tag abandoned vehicle 1800blk Main St 04:49:04 a.m.

72 hour psychiatric hold 600blk Broadway 07:18:01 a.m.

Trespassing 1400blk 6th St 07:40:16 a.m.

Audible burglar alarm 1100blk Montana Ave 07:46:43 a.m.

Grand theft report 1500blk 2nd St 06:38:55 a.m.

Traffic hazard 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 06:54:35 a.m.

72 hour psychiatric hold 600blk Broadway 07:18:01 a.m.

Grand theft report 1500blk 2nd St 06:38:55 a.m.

Traffic hazard 1500blk Pacific Coast Hwy 06:54:35 a.m.

Trespassing 800blk 4th St 07:00:40 a.m.

Malicious mischief just occurred 2900blk Wilshire Blvd 07:46:30 a.m.

Exhibition of speed 11th St / Idaho Ave 08:14:12 a.m.

Traffic/vehicle stop 16th St / Wilshire Blvd 07:01:54 a.m.

Violation of temporary no parking signs 1000blk 6th St 07:38:23 a.m.

Construction noise 400blk 22nd St 07:18:35 a.m.

Suspicious person 900blk 15th St 08:28:17 a.m.

Burglary report 1200blk Marine St 07:33:51 a.m.

Suspicious circumstances 2600blk Main St 08:39:36 a.m.

Trespassing 1400blk 18th St 08:36:26 a.m.

Indecent exposure just occurred 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 09:04:47 a.m.

Traffic collision with injuries 20th St / Ocean Park Blvd 09:34:54 a.m.

Malicious mischief report 1200blk 12th St 09:00:09 a.m.

Identity theft 1700blk Berkeley St 09:11:59 a.m.

Burglary investigation/walk through 1200blk Lincoln Blvd 08:37:33 a.m.

Trespassing 800blk Pacific Coast Hwy 08:41:43 a.m.

Forensics request - fingerprint 1200blk Marine St 07:58:03 a.m.

Traffic/vehicle stop Lincoln Blvd / Michigan Ave 09:34:47 a.m.

Traffic hazard Lincoln Blvd / Michigan Ave 09:10:10 a.m.

Violation of temporary no parking signs 1300blk Stanford St 08:59:11 a.m.

Animal related incident 1000blk Wilshire Blvd 09:39:57 a.m.

Vehicle parked in alley 200blk Ocean Ave 09:28:45 a.m.

Suspicious vehicle 1400blk Maple St 09:31:40 a.m.

Vehicle parked in alley 2500blk Santa Monica Blvd 09:55:07 a.m.

Search warrant 1500blk 19th St 05:21:07 a.m.

Trespassing 1400blk 5th St 09:38:08 a.m.

Found property 300blk Olympic Dr 10:40:18 a.m.

Trespassing 1200blk 12th St 10:00:03 a.m.

Vehicle blocking driveway 700blk 9th St 10:36:54 a.m.

Trespassing 1300blk 2nd St 09:44:12 a.m.

Traffic collision - no injuries 23rd St / Oak St 10:18:04 a.m.

General parking problem 1700blk 11th St 10:25:06 a.m.

Assault w/deadly weapon now 1800blk Lincoln Blvd 10:49:16 a.m.

Vehicle parked in alley 300blk Montana Ave 11:04:16 a.m.

Fight 2nd St / Colorado Ave 11:36:53 a.m.

Public intoxication 600blk Santa Monica Blvd 11:14:52 a.m.

Child abuse 2400blk Main St 11:27:37 a.m.

Person down 800blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:00:48 p.m.

Suspicious person 300blk Santa Monica Pier 12:18:53 p.m.

Person down 800blk Santa Monica Blvd 12:31:40 p.m.

Encampment 1200blk 12th St 12:24:21 p.m.

Battery just occurred 1300blk 3rd Street Prom 12:34:47 p.m.

DAILY FIRE LOG

The Santa Monica Fire Department Responded To Calls For Service.

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF THOSE CALLS CHOSEN BY THE SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS STAFF.

EMS 2400 block Lincoln 12:02 a.m.

Traffic collision with injury Lincoln / Interstate 10 1:24 a.m.

EMS 2000 block Arizona 1:53 a.m.

Traffic collision with injury 4th / Pico 5:05 a.m.

Automatic alarm 600 block Pico 6:05 a.m.

EMS 0 block Ocean Park 6:24 a.m.

EMS Ocean / Colorado 7:21 a.m.

Automatic alarm 300 block Ocean 8:46 a.m.

EMS 1200 block Lincoln 9:20 a.m.

EMS 20th / Delaware 9:30 a.m.

EMS 800 block California 11:08 a.m.

Trash/dumpster fire 4th / Ocean Park 11:19 a.m.

EMS 400 block Ashland 12:01 p.m.

EMS 1200 block 15th 12:02 p.m.

EMS 1700 block Ocean 12:26 p.m.

EMS Main / Strand 12:57 p.m.

EMS 1700 block Main 1:17 p.m.

EMS 800 block 2nd 2:41 p.m.

EMS 700 block Strand 2:54 p.m.

EMS 900 block 2nd 3:31 p.m.

Traffic collision with injury 900 block Ocean 3:36 p.m.

EMS 200 block Santa Monica 5:02 p.m.

Automatic alarm 1300 block 15th 5:06 p.m.

EMS 2100 block Ocean 6:01 p.m.

EMS 300 block Santa Monica Pier 6:07 p.m.

Traffic collision with injury 4th / Colorado 7:27 p.m.

Automatic alarm 3100 block Main 7:40 p.m.

Automatic alarm 100 block Pacific 8:06 p.m.

EMS 200 block Arizona 8:54 p.m.

DAILY LOTTERY



Draw Date: 12/12
4 9 21 29 64
Power#: 26
Jackpot: 246M



Draw Date: 12/11
4 38 39 54 59
Mega#: 12
Jackpot: 262M



Draw Date: 12/12
6 11 15 35 42
Mega#: 16
Jackpot: 31M



Draw Date: 12/13
1 20 25 27 32



Draw Date: 12/13
MIDDAY: 9 4 3
Draw Date: 12/13
EVENING: 1 3 1



Draw Date: 12/13
1st: 02 Lucky Star
2nd: 10 Solid Gold
3rd: 09 Winning Spirit
RACE TIME: 1:42.97

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

WORD UP!

luculent

1. convincing; cogent.

2. clear or lucid: a luculent explanation.

WELL NEWS BY SCOTT LALEE

Stories for the Waiting Room

■ Non-fatal injuries exact their own costs. In 2013, there were more than 31 million non-fatal injuries treated in hospitals, resulting in \$168 billion in hospital and home care, emergency transportation, drugs and physical therapy expenses.

■ The estimated cost for future lost work due to permanent disability was even higher: \$223 billion. Average estimated cost per injury, including medical care, lost work and lost quality of life, was \$66,857.

■ Falls and being hit by an object were the most common cause of injury, accounting for more than one-third of total injuries.

MYSTERY PHOTO

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Send answers to editor@smdp.com.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1

Streisand's *Funny Girl* husband
- 11

Hangouts with multiple TVs
- 15

Quaint picnic pastime
- 16

On hand
- 17

Urban agriculture establishment
- 18

Name on the Fed head list
- 19

Sharp appetite
- 20

"On the night ___ the pending battle . . .": Whitman
- 21

Most tender
- 23

Run for potential customers
- 25

Air France's 2003 Smithsonian donation
- 28

Brad's Drink (1893), today
- 29

Coerce
- 32

Grumman's vacuum navigator
- 33

Nancy Loves ___ (book collection of comics)
- 36

Unspecified
- 37

Surface for a 32 Across
- 38

Participated slyly
- 41

Stop for a Corsica ferry
- 42

Limits of negotiation
- 43

Stays home
- 44

After
- 45

Metaphor for uncommonness
- 47

Hint
- 49

Right to decide
- 50

Mercury or Mars, many years ago
- 53

Doesn't use
- 55

First roomie, often
- 57

Hernando's -ando

- 59

Fiddler on the Roof performance
- 60

Subject of the 2007 bio *The Animated Man*
- 64

Guileless
- 65

Committee meeting assignment
- 66

It dropped its cursive-writing requirement in 2015
- 67

Subjects of multiple Beach Boys tunes
- DOWN
- 1

Goal for many aspiring pickers
- 2

Protested to a veterinarian, maybe
- 3

Make up
- 4

WWII Dambusters' employer

SATURDAY STUMPER by Brad Wilber
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

- 5

His cross is on the Union Jack
- 6

Frosty glaze
- 7

Stem
- 8

"Sweet!"
- 9

___ water
- 10

Tracts without solid footing
- 11

10000 W. ___ Avenue, 60666 (hub's address)
- 12

They get Emmys every year
- 13

Word from the French for "brewhouse"
- 14

Pragmatist's anathema
- 22

Vote (for)
- 24

Granite, once
- 26

Wales' second city
- 27

Consumer's sticking point
- 30

Exemplary
- 31

Foodservice giant in the Fortune 500
- 33

Muckraker's target
- 34

They may carry bubble gum
- 35

Any city
- 37

Water painted by Cézanne
- 39

Heavy duty
- 40

Honeysuckle found in forests
- 45

Cell dweller
- 46

Claimant to paranormal powers
- 48

Confer
- 51

Range northeast of Provo
- 52

Display derision
- 54

Crawled back and forth, perhaps
- 56

Pop ___
- 58

Hangouts with multiple TVs
- 61

It means "sharp"
- 62

EMT supervisors
- 63

Printed disclaimer

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

Shutdown looms as Trump weighs next move on border wall

BY LISA MASCARO, MATTHEW DALY & CATHERINE LUCEY

Associated Press

Congress is racing to avoid a partial government shutdown next Friday over President Donald Trump’s border wall. But you wouldn’t know it by the schedule, as lawmakers left town waiting for the White House’s next move.

The House is taking an extended five-day weekend, returning Wednesday night. The Senate returns Monday after a three-day absence.

The ball is in Trump’s court, both sides say, and the president met Friday with top aides to discuss his spending strategy. There’s an expectation on Capitol Hill he’ll reach out soon to offer lawmakers a plan.

The president said this week he’d be “proud” to shut down the government over the \$5 billion he wants for the wall on the southern border, but he has since taken a softer tone, tweeting, “Let’s not

do a shutdown, Democrats - do what’s right for the American People!” But Trump doesn’t have the votes from the Republican-controlled Congress to support funding for the wall at the level he wants.

Democratic congressional leaders, Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Nancy Pelosi, made a counter offer during a contentious meeting at the White House of no more than \$1.6 billion, as outlined in a bipartisan Senate bill. The money would not go for the wall but for fencing upgrades and other border security. Democrats also offered to simply keep funding at its current level, \$1.3 billion.

Without a resolution, parts of the federal government would shut down at midnight Dec. 21.

Trump met on Friday with legislative affairs director Shahira Knight and budget director Mick Mulvaney to discuss strategy. Some White House aides were startled by Trump’s embrace of a shutdown during his meeting with Democratic leaders, though

others argued that it was another example of Trump sticking with his campaign promises.

“The president made it very clear: He does want a border wall. He does want border security. He wants to protect the American people,” White House spokesman Hogan Gidley told reporters on Friday.

While Trump has long rallied for the border wall with Mexico, a centerpiece of his 2016 campaign, Republicans on Capitol Hill never fully warmed to the plan, and they are less likely now to round up the votes for it after losing the House majority in the November election.

Each passing day brings Democrats closer to taking control of the House, and with Christmas approaching, enthusiasm for a prolonged fight over the wall was waning even among some Republicans who support it.

“We’re out of time,” said Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., who lost a bid for re-election last month.

Denham backs the wall as part of a

broader immigration overhaul, but said Republicans would be better served by approving a short-term budget resolution that postpones the wall fight until January while keeping the government open.

“Allow the next Congress to come in, get seated, committee chairs to get filled, and then actually have a full debate on a bipartisan solution,” Denham told CNN Friday.

Democrats, meanwhile, are not inclined to give an inch, as seen by the backing Pelosi received after confronting Trump during their televised meeting in the Oval Office. She’s poised to become House speaker when the new Congress convenes Jan. 3.

As of Friday, Trump had neither accepted nor rejected the Democrats’ proposal, according to the Democrats. He told them he would take a look. Trump will need Democratic votes either way, now or in the new year, for passage.

SEE **SHUTDOWN** PAGE 11

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 15)

The year will be marked by whimsy flights and remembered for the strange and fun environments you visit. More highlights of the solar return include the attainment of meaningful jewelry or personal treasure, a new turn in a relationship and a commute that presents opportunity for daily improvement. Taurus and Pisces adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 30, 22, 27 and 14.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

If you feel pressure to say what the other person wants to hear, you’re being (perhaps subtly) manipulated. Take a step back. Consider the relationship. Proceed with caution.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

If you find yourself stretching for some easy way to describe yourself, you shouldn’t have to at this point. It’s a hint that the other person just isn’t getting you – not your problem. Other people will. Move on.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

If you’re going to worry, make it work for you. Worry provides you with a quick look at potential pitfalls and a peak into your unconscious mind. Categorize your worries into reasonable and unreasonable. That’s a start.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

If you’ve been pessimistic and distrustful, it’s only out of a need to protect and defend yourself. You’re also brave and confident once you’ve made your mind up – a joyful pioneer.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

From love to shampoo, everything has its cycle. What worked before may work again, although maybe not quite as well. Put feelers out for new alternatives.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Adults don’t always do the adult thing, and children can take on adult responsibilities that rob them of carefree youth. These missives need to be recognized and set right.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

You’ll scrutinize your work or habits before another person has a chance to. This way, you know you’re putting your best self forward. It’s an extra effort.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Vitality follows those on the edge of the known. Anyone doing what they know they can do is playing it too safe to feel successful. Also, the one who is the least afraid of looking foolish wins.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

You’ll act on behalf of those unable or unwilling to take action themselves. This you do out of a sense of duty, but that doesn’t mean you have to be too serious in your approach. Execute the task with a light heart.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

No human is constantly on the spiritual high road. Anyway, a lower indulgence may serve you just fine. It’s one of those crazy days when the superficial thing you think might make you happy actually does.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

There’s no need to seek opportunities for heroism. Be consistent and cheerful, just like you usually are. That’s what everyone needs right now. And don’t be surprised if this makes you indispensable.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Future you is sending a message back in time: Please don’t block me into long contracts. Future you is going to need some freedom to do the future-you endeavors you can’t conceive of from where you’re standing today.

Lunar Lessons

If the king does a good job, he’ll go down in history. The peasant, on the other hand, speculates that reward may never come. That’s why the peasant’s contribution is purer and nobler. As the moon comes up against the tests of Saturn, those who fare well are the ones who resolve to do their highest and best regardless of who will know.

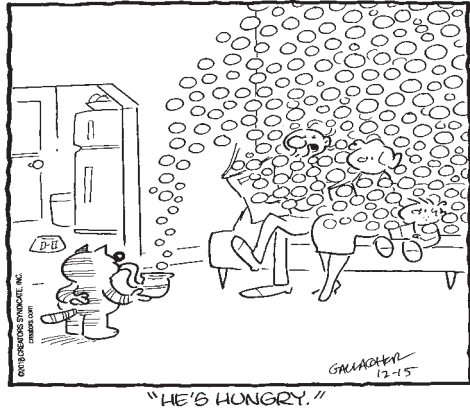
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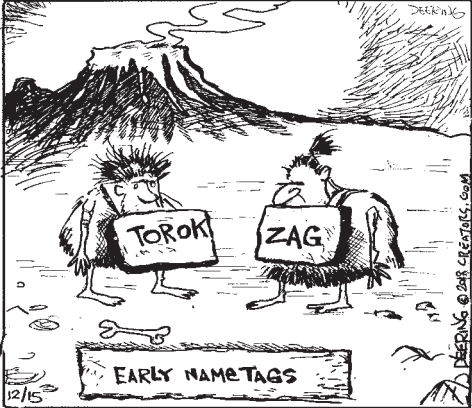
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



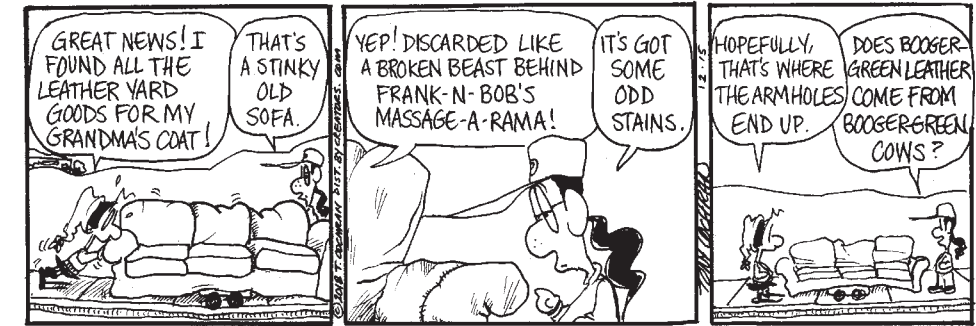
Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



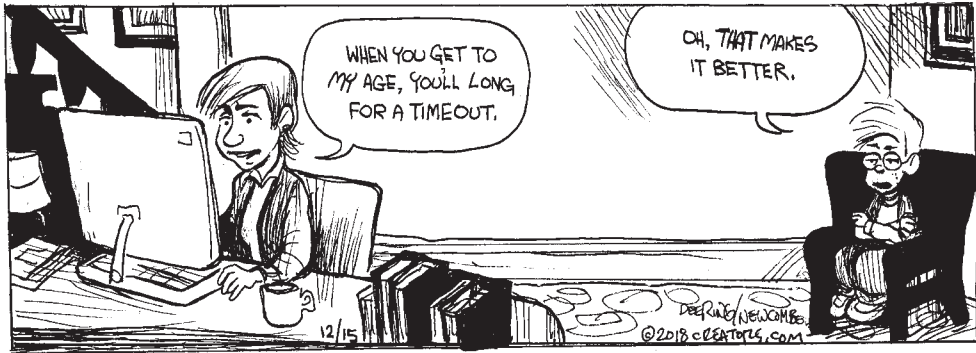
Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Priest takes pope’s mandate - good deeds for all - across US

JOHN ROGERS
Associated Press

Father Jim Sichko has a 50-state congregation and a simple mandate from the pope: Go forth and do good deeds. That’s why the Roman Catholic priest found himself standing by the drive-thru of a popular Hollywood fast-food joint on a recent windy, rain-swept afternoon buying lunch for everyone who stopped by. The next day he’d be at a gas station in Kentucky, topping off people’s tanks. Then it would be on to Arizona where he would — well, he wasn’t quite sure what he’d do there, but he’d think of something.

At a Starbucks last Christmas, he tipped each of the baristas \$100 after learning the annual brouhaha over whether the coffee chain’s holiday cups are Christmassy enough had caused tips to plummet.

Sichko is a papal missionary of mercy, a rarified group of 700 from around the world, including 100 from the United States, who were appointed directly by Pope Francis in celebration of a “Jubilee of Mercy” that began in December 2015 and has since been extended indefinitely.

Missionaries were assigned to travel the world spreading kindness, forgiveness, joy and mercy to everyone they encountered. Some responded by using their newly granted authority from the pope to perform confession and forgiveness of sins basically anywhere at any time. Others took to radio airwaves or retreats to offer messages of joy.

Sichko, a Kentucky-based preacher, came up with an idea different from the others and got his bishop at the Diocese of Lexington to sign off on it: He’d travel his country

performing random acts of kindness in all 50 states.

He’s provided groceries for half a year to a man with HIV and paid for medical services for a struggling Muslim family. This Christmas, he’s headed to an elementary school in Corbin, Kentucky, where more than a quarter of the population lives in poverty. There he’ll surprise the school’s 100 second-graders with shiny new bicycles.

“The first question people ask is, ‘Why are you doing this?’” Sichko says between bites of his double-double cheeseburger at the crowded In N’ Out restaurant down the street from the Hollywood Walk of Fame where he’d just bought lunch for everybody.

“My question,” the balding, bespectacled 51-year-old cleric adds with a smile, “is why not?”

“My approach is not so much speaking about the word of God, although I do a lot of that, but showing the presence of God through acts of kindness that kind of shock the individual and kind of cause them to, maybe cause them to stop for a little bit,” he said. “Or maybe, which I hope, to again bring kindness to others.”

He is candid in saying the church itself has much work to do in restoring its image after years of priestly sex and pedophilia scandals that he calls “horrific and tragic and disgusting.”

“We have a lot of atonement to be doing,” he says, adding that shocking people with random acts of kindness can be a first step in that direction.

To say he shocked his lunchtime In N’ Out crowd would be a bit of an understatement.

One woman, overlooking his white clerical collar, asked Sichko if he was a

politician.

“No, I’m not a politician. I’m a priest,” he replied, nearly doubling over with laughter.

“How did this happen,” a stunned Hardy Patel asked.

“Just decided. I’m in a good mood.”

“Early Christmas?”

“You got it. Pay it forward.”

“I will do, I will do,” Patel told him before driving off with his cheeseburger, then circling back to thank Sichko personally and take a selfie with him.

“Here’s my selfie with the pope,” Sichko told Luis Tostado a few minutes earlier as they posed for one by Tostado’s Chevy Silverado.

Sichko’s selfie shows him standing next to Francis as the pontiff cradles a bottle of 23-year-old Pappy Van Winkle Kentucky bourbon the priest gave him during a visit to the Vatican. He isn’t sure if the pope is a bourbon man, but if not, the smile on Francis’ face indicates he does have a sense of humor.

Sichko says he still doesn’t know why the pontiff, who had never met him until 2015, chose him as a papal missionary of mercy. Ordained 20 years ago — “I always wanted to become a priest, ever since I was a little kid” — he was the pastor at St. Mark Catholic Church in Richmond, Kentucky, when he got the call.

Now he spends five days a week on the road paying for burgers and bicycles and handing out hundred-dollar bills, like the one he slipped 17-year-old Nicholas Vadi when he learned the teenager and his mom were celebrating Vadi’s birthday at the fast-food restaurant.

“I raise my own salary, living expense, insurance, everything,” Sichko says, adding he sends out “appeal letters” twice a year to parishioners and raises the rest from paid inspirational speaking engagements.

“And then I give it away,” he says, laughing.

Recently he’s started marketing “Miss Marie’s All Natural Spaghetti Sauce” online and hopes to get it into stores shortly. But even the money from that goes to help others. It’s divided among a Texas hospice that cared for his late mother, for which the sauce is named, and a church program to benefit the poor in Appalachia.

It was his mother and her sauce, Sichko says, that likely ingrained in him the desire to help others. Every Tuesday she’d whip up a batch and serve it over pasta for lunch to the hungry garbage collectors who worked the route in their neighborhood.

Now he’s using it to keep her memory alive and to help spread the Gospel to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

“This is not just a Catholic thing,” he says. “This is a human event.”

SHUTDOWN

FROM PAGE 10

The mood on Capitol Hill has quickly shifted as newly elected members arrive to set up offices on Capitol Hill and dozens of Republicans head for the exits. Outgoing House Speaker Paul Ryan’s pre-election prediction of a “big fight” over the wall has run up against the reality of the changed circumstances.

Thursday was supposed to be the House’s final day in session for the year, but lawmakers instead were told to return Wednesday night. Already Republican attendance during the lame-duck session has been spotty, and it’s unclear how many votes Ryan will be able to garner in the final days of the GOP’s majority in the House.

Even if a bill with the wall funding passes the House, it is almost certain to fail in the Senate, where Republicans hold a slim majority, and Democrats have pledged to block it from receiving the necessary 60 votes needed to advance.

Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., the incoming minority leader, said on the House

floor as lawmakers left for the long weekend that he thinks “going into a shutdown is stupid,” but he offered no immediate plan to resolve the standoff.

Fellow California Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, the top Democrat on a subcommittee for homeland security spending, said it makes no sense to be “squandering” \$5 billion on the wall when the nation has so many other security vulnerabilities.

“Republicans are driving our nation to the brink of another disastrous government shutdown - at a time of great economic uncertainty and right in the middle of the holiday season,” Roybal-Allard said in the Democrats’ weekly address.

For now, Republicans still control the House, the Senate and the White House, she reminded listeners. “They have the responsibility and the power to keep our government open.”

If the two sides do not reach agreement, about one-quarter of the government would be affected, including the departments of Homeland Security, Transportation, Agriculture, State and Justice, as well as national parks.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

SACRAMENTO
California mandates 100-percent zero-emission bus fleet

California is moving to eliminate fossil fuels from its fleet of 12,000 transit buses, enacting a first-in-the-nation mandate that will vastly increase the number of electric buses on the road. The California Air Resources Board voted Friday to require that all new buses be carbon-free by 2029. Environmental advocates project that the last dirty buses will phase out by 2040.

While clean buses cost more than the diesel and natural gas vehicles they’ll replace, advocates of the mandate say they carry lower maintenance and fuel costs. The supporters hope creating demand for thousands of clean buses will bring down the price of those buses and eventually other heavy-duty vehicles like trucks.

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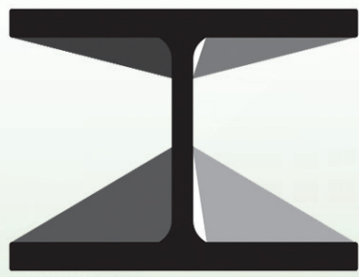
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