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Santa Monica Daily Press
TUESDAY
12.25.18
Volume 18 Issue 36

Today's paper continues year end coverage with the second part of our Best Of content. This edition contains stories selected by Santa Monica Daily Press Staff and stories popular online. Tomorrow's paper will begin the Year in Review summarizing news for the year.

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Best of The Daily Press Part 2

Popular stories from 2018 chosen by SMDP staff

Model shop celebrates 70 years of building community

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

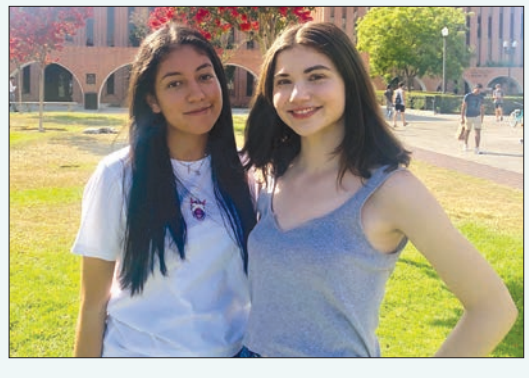
Editor's Note: This story was first published on Jan. 11, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

Like the kits it sells, Evett's Model Shop is far more than the sum of its parts and that's saying something given the quality of its

SEE **EVETT** PAGE 3









File Photos

BEST OF: This year, the Daily Press Staff chose mostly feature stories that featured interesting residents. Stories popular online focused on crime and scooters.

From Samohi alumnus to Pentagon tour guide

ANGEL CARRERAS
Daily Press Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story was first printed on Aug. 16, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

As students head back to school, some will scoff, roll their eyes, kill time on their iPhones and ditch class because, well, it's school. But for some, school is solace. A

SEE **MARINE** PAGE 6

Housing's corporate takeover is an open secret

"(They) found a little rabbit hole...and drove a truck through it."

KATE CAGLE
Daily Press Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story was originally printed on Aug. 27, 2018. It is reprinted here as art of our year end coverage.

The units come with flat screen televisions, modern furniture, dishes and towels. Kitchens are optional. In some cases, a

SEE **HOUSING** PAGE 8

Origami art folded into new scramble intersection markings

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Editor's Note: This story was first printed on Jan. 20, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

Origami paperwork creates delicate sculptures through intricate folds. Each crease has

SEE **ORIGAMI** PAGE 3


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WISE & Healthy Aging is a nonprofit social services organization.

What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Tuesday, Dec. 25

City services closed
City property closed for the day.

Wednesday, Dec. 26

Kwanzaa Crafternoon
Create crafts and learn about how Kwanzaa celebrates family, community, and African American and Pan African culture. For families. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 2 - 3 p.m.

Santa Monica Certified Farmer's Market
Today, the Wednesday Farmers Market is widely recognized as one of the largest and most diverse grower-only CFM's in the nation. Some nine thousands food shoppers, and many of Los Angeles' best known chefs and restaurants, are keyed to the seasonal rhythms of the weekly Wednesday Market. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 27

A Lego Building Afternoon
Join organizers for fun with LEGO building. Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main St, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Current Events Discussion Group
Join organizers for a lively discussion of the latest news with your friends and neighbors. Fairview Branch Library, 2101 Ocean Park Blvd, 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 28

Holiday Break Movie: Incredibles 2 (2018)
From Pixar, everyone's favorite superhero family is back in this fun-packed adventure that finds the Parrs emerging from retirement to fight a new villain. (118 min.) Fairview Branch Library, 2101 Ocean Park Blvd, 2 - 4 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 29

Preschool Explorers: Snow
Explore snow with stories and hands-on activities. Ages 3-6. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

2nd Annual Polar Bear Swim
This event features a Polar Bear Swim, whether you just take a quick dip or do the 300 yard buoy swim is up to you. All ages encouraged. Pool admission will be charged for those Polar Bears that want to soak or swim in the warm pool, take a hot shower and munch on the tasty snacks provided. Pool Admission: $10/adults, $5/senior adults 60+, $4/youth 1-17. Regular Pool Rules apply while swimming at this event. Youth younger than 8 years old must be accompanied by an adult while in the pool. If you have any questions, please call 310-458-4904 or email beach.permits@smgov.net. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH.

Sunday, Dec. 30

Guest House Open
Visit anytime between 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. for a self-guided or docent tour. No reservations needed. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH.

Monday, Dec. 31

New Year's Eve Dance Party
Make noisemakers and get your boogie on to ring in the New Year! Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main St, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Noon Year's Eve Celebration
Listen to stories and make crafts before we ring in the New Year at noon! For families. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 11:15 a.m. - 12 p.m.

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

ORIGAMI

FROM PAGE 1

to add to the work while preserving the structural and artistic contributions of each prior movement. The actions build, one on top of the next, until a unique work of art emerges.

It seems far removed from the world of urban planning and specifically, how to paint a cross walk. However, the origami process, both literal and figurative, is directly responsible for how you cross the street in downtown Santa Monica.

Four downtown "scramble" intersections (2nd / Broadway, 4th / Broadway, 2nd / Santa Monica and 4th / Santa Monica) received new paint recently but the markings had to adapt to what is perhaps the best kept secret in the city's arts world: instructional origami designs embedded into the existing streets.

The four intersections are part of the Downtown Transit Mall, a small square of Downtown that features dedicated bus lanes between Ocean, 5th, Broadway and Santa Monica. The area received several art installations in 2000 including the hidden paperfolded streets.

"Artist Robin Brailsford, inspired by Santa Monica's eclectic Pacific Rim location and population, has used a combination of mosaic techniques, granite pavers, and bronze origami elements to create a whole new look for this busy downtown area," said the city on its website.

Brailsford said there are several elements built into the transit mall related to the Pacific Rim theme. She said the glass patterns in the bus shelters are set in an I Ching pattern referencing the ancient Chinese fortune telling text, mosaics in the sidewalks reference patterns from Chinese culture or Japanese kimonos, the streets are themed either blue (for the ocean) or green (for the land) and she worked with artist Robert Lang to install four original origami features.

At the center of each intersection is a square section of the street featuring embedded lines. If those lines were applied to a sheet of paper, the lines would correspond to folds necessary to create an origami animal that is indigenous to Santa Monica. At two intersections, nearby water fountains feature examples of the completed origami (a dragonfly and a frog). At the other intersections, the original works (a sea urchin and a Garibaldi fish) have been replaced with a sea turtle and a flying fish because as folded, the original sculptures were a little too sharp to be near people's faces when drinking.

For Lang, the installations were a rare opportunity to bring his origami into the public space. He said paper can actually last quite a while when properly cared for, but that care requires it to be kept dry and often behind glass to prevent damage. However, the Santa Monica installations create a very different experience.

"The longevity is there if you use archival papers," he said of origami. "However, it is fragile. Paper doesn't like direct sunlight, doesn't like humidity or wetness. The thing that was exciting to me about this was here was a way of making it not fragile … Here it's great, they are out there, people can touch it, can handle it much more intimately than they would if it was behind glass."

The bronze castings in Santa Monica are one of a kind. Lang created actual paper origamis that were coated in wax and then covered in a ceramic shell. The process destroys the original paper, melts the wax and leaves a mold for the molten bronze. Removing the metal from the mold destroys the ceramic case preventing the creation of any additional copies.

For Lang, the crease patterns embedded in the street are just as noteworthy as the finished products they create.

"They are deeply significant," he said. "They are in some way a plan of the art work but they are another view of the subject, they are another artistic representation of the subject. In a way, they show the interior of the origami as well as the outside surface. It's kind of the x-ray view of the origami artwork, I loved being able to have that connection as well."

Lang said his one twinge of regret about the original project was the realization the crease patterns would be inaccessible to many people due to constant traffic. While the scrambles were installed to help with traffic flows the newly allowed diagonal travel path will bring thousands of pedestrians across the works, greatly increasing their visibility and the origami scrambles have been painted in a way that preserves the crease maps.

Lang said the Santa Monica project was one of the greatest artistic experiences of his career and he credits the experience for helping him move into other mediums including an ongoing collaboration with another artist that uses silicon molds to cast multiple bronzes from a single origami.

While Brailsford said she wishes she'd had the chance to work with the city to incorporate the scramble markings into the larger art project, she said she had fond memories of working in Santa Monica and has always hoped to expand the art installation to Arizona.

"The trouble being ahead of the curve is your ideas seem too crazy for people," she said. "We did all these things but they could have been bolder."

For more information about Brailsford, visit http://lithomosaic.squarespace.com/robin-brailsford. For more information about Lang and to see renderings of the in-street crease patterns, visit www.langorigami.com/article/santa-monica-bronze-sculptures.

EVETT

FROM PAGE 1

parts: a veteran who parlayed a single model into a career, a formerly homeless master-builder who now repairs priceless movie props and a beloved matriarch keeping her husband's passion alive.

The shop and its family of employees will celebrate 70 years in business this Saturday with refreshments, a few giveaways and a lot of shared memories dating back to the time Santa Monica built real planes. For many attendees, it will be a bittersweet celebration without the store's founder.

Colby Evett was part of the city's early aeronautics industry working as a plant foreman at the Donald Douglas Aircraft Company for 13 years. He opened the model shop with his first wife, Mary, in 1948 and by 1955 he had left the aircraft industry to work in the store full time. At that time, the store moved from Pico Blvd. to its current Ocean Park location.

Colby was more than just a hobbyist, he was a pioneer in the emerging field of radio control. He acquired a ham radio license and spent five years developing the technology to pair a model airplane with radio control, enabling ground based controllers to fly their planes. He continued with his passion for decades, evolving from wooden plans with paper skins to replicas of jet aircraft complete with their own small jet engines.

Colby was unable to fly in his later years as his health declined and he died in 2013 from complications from pneumonia. However, his legacy at the store continue to provide a creative outlet for locals with the building bug.

Longtime customer Brad Summers began building models as an activity at his grandparents' house and said he values the community around the shop. The specialized knowledge of the employees and good selection of products are valuable, but he also likes seeing the work of other local builders in the windows.

"It's convenient, there's no waiting for it to be delivered. You can walk in and get what you need … It's also nice to deal with somebody. I've known Gene and the guys for years and you've got to come in for the cookies."

The selection of homemade baked treats are Yvonne Evett's secret weapon in the ongoing battle against online stores.

"You don't get treats with Amazon," she said.

Yvonne was not a model enthusiast when she became Colby's second wife but she grew to share his love for the business and said she keeps the store open to stay connected to Colby. She said she and her late husband were a good fit and enjoyed their time traveling together. According to Yvonne, Colby's passion for the RC business blossomed within the community and the remote-controlled vehicles are now the bulk of the store's sales. She said it appeals to generations that want something more interactive.

"That's what people like to do more," she said.

The store does more than just sell the vehicles and has a thriving business building vehicles for customers or repairing vehicles.

Store employee Luke Orrin now runs the RC side of Evett's. Orrin, a Marine Corps veteran, had a passion for models as a kid and got into the business when he noticed a backlog of repairs in the store that had piled up due to Colby's ill health. He traded a model as payment for a repair and the work impressed Colby who brought Orrin on as the new RC technician.

Orrin has since brought in a few local youth to teach them the same building skills he learned and he said the teaching experience has inspired him to look for more ways to connect with kids. The store entered the annual 4th of July parade last year and in addition to expanding their parade entry, Orrin wants to develop stronger connections with youth through extracurricular activities.

Orrin said coming to work somewhere he loves is as valuable as the paycheck.

"It's really important to stay connected to the thing that makes you happy and excited," he said of working in a model shop.

That's a sentiment shared by coworker and master model builder Gene Duarte.

"I build because I like to do it," he said. "It's just part of my lifestyle, my creative outlet."

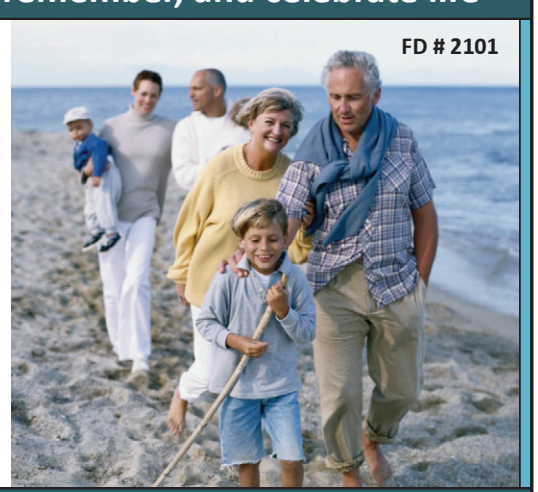
Duarte came to the business when he helped the store sell some rare kits online and he's built a reputation for his physical construction skills.

Duarte takes custom orders from clients for specific builds. Sometimes the builds are for established kits or advanced collectibles but his ability to execute fine detail work has become an in-demand skill for the movie industry's physical prop world and startup companies that want prototype products. He's currently booked out for about three months on special project work but he said the demand ebbs and flows over the course of the year.

Yvonne said she hopes to see friends new and old this Saturday, January 13 for their birthday celebration from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. at the store, 1636 Ocean Park Blvd. Call (310) 452-2720 for more information or visit https://evettsmodelshop.com.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
BEFORE THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA
CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Proposed Urgency Interim Ordinance Extending Urgency Interim Ordinance 2592 (CCS)

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to introduce for adoption an urgency interim ordinance extending Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance 2592 (CCS) to establish interim regulations for the demolition permit review process relating to the preservation of historic resources.

On November 13, 2018, Council adopted an emergency interim zoning ordinance to establish temporary regulations for the demolition permit review process set forth in Santa Monica Municipal Code ("SMMC") Section 9.25 (Demolition and Relocation Ordinance). These interim regulations were established to safeguard the city's historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage while also balancing legal and procedural considerations. The original emergency Interim Zoning Ordinance (IZO) amending SMMC Chapter 9.25 went into effect immediately after Council adoption on November 13th and will expire in 60 days unless otherwise extended by Council up to a total of 60 months. Staff recommends that this proposed extension of the IZO continue for one year until November 13, 2019 to provide an opportunity for further study key issues and monitor implementation before making permanent changes to SMMC Chapter 9.25

Date/Time: Tues., Jan. 8, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.
Where: City Council Chambers, Second Floor Santa Monica City Hall
1685 Main Street, Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. You may comment at the Planning Commission public hearing, or by writing a letter. Written information will be given to the City Council At the meeting.

Address your letter to: City Clerk
Re: Demolition Interim Zoning Ordinance Extension
1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401
Or email to: **councilmtgitems@smgov.net**

MORE INFORMATION
If you want more information about this project, please contact Roxanne Tanemori, Principal Planner at (310) 458-8341, or by e-mail at Roxanne.tanemori@smgov.net. The Zoning Ordinance is available at the Planning Counter during business hours and on the City's web site at www.smgov.net. The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. If you have any disability-related accommodation request, please contact (310) 458-8341, or TYY Number: (310) 458-8696 at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Santa Monica "Big Blue" Bus Lines #1, #2, #3, Rapid 3, #7, #8, #9, #10R, and #18 service the City Hall and the Civic Center. The Expo Line terminus is at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).
Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the Public Hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Peter James en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-8341.



What's the Point?

David Pisarra — Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Publicity Stunt By Police

Editor's Note: This story was first printed on July. 24, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage

The Santa Monica Police Department impounded over one hundred Bird and Lime e-scooters this past weekend and did a masterful job with the publicity and public relations efforts to increase awareness that the e-scooters are not to be used on the bike path. There were photos of the lined up e-scooters, and then there were tossed willy-nilly into the back of a truck with the stereotypical handsome police officer looking tough. The pictures made the rounds of Facebook, NextDoor and other social media outlets.

I get it. E-scooters are nothing more than this summer's Pokemon Go madness. The social hysteria and fascination with the e-scooters is facing tremendous backlash and the "law and order" contingent is out in full force to rail against this summer's fun. It makes for great photo ops, it lets the police look like they're all about protect and serve and the anti-scooter lobby feels vindicated.

This is a PR goldmine for the SMPD. They can't go wrong with this awareness campaign. Seriously, who is going to be against safer streets and rider safety? I mean how do you stand up against the armed officers (even if they are in short pants!) and say "you're being a buzzkill, man" and point out the hypocrisy of their actions?

Like this: The police do not regularly, consistently and equitably enforce the law and to choose to enforce this particular code section, on this particular day, which just so happens to have a photographer right there and a press release ready to go, is indicative of the propaganda that is being put out. The police regularly ignore bike riders on the boardwalk where they don't belong. The police regularly ignore homeless people defecating and urinating in public. The police regularly ignore littering, spitting, and conveniently for themselves do not have to adhere to the no talking or texting while driving law.

This weekend's stunt was clearly over on Sunday as I was watching the bike path from the Loews Santa Monica Beach hotel, there were tons of people stopped on the bike path to watch the acrobatics and ring swingers, and there were bikes and e-scooters just trundling along.

Enforcement of any law is always a discretionary choice for a police officer. How many of us have been released from being detained with just a warning? I know I have many times, for many types of infractions. The erratic and arbitrary enforcement of laws though, makes it harder to achieve compliance in the long term. When sometimes I'm ticketed, and sometimes I'm not, it's human nature to take your chances – but that betrays the safety arguments that are made in favor of any particular law.

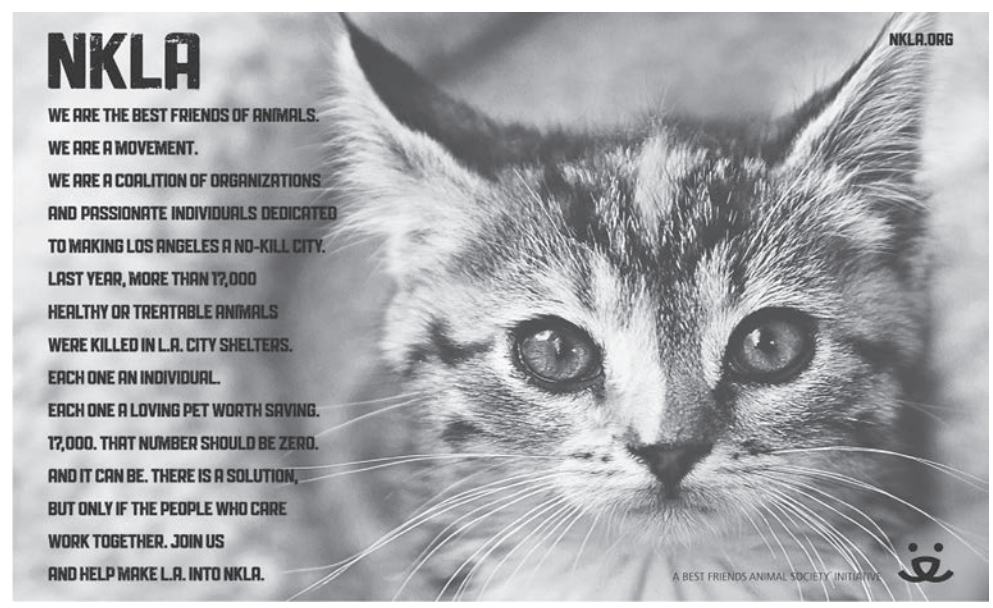
Speeding is illegal because it is unsafe and dangerous to others. But if the speed limit is not consistently enforced, how am I supposed to know what is the TRUE limit? The police department can make all the bold moves and pull publicity stunts all the time, but if the public knows that 90% of the time they're going to get away with something, they will ignore the law.

Even after this weekend's big splashy public relations campaign by the Santa Monica Police Department, I noted that there many, many, people riding the e-scooters along Ocean Avenue, down Pico, all over the city. The truth of the matter is this: they are fun, they are convenient and they are practical from a transportation perspective to make short hops when you don't want to drive. Parking is stupidly expensive in city structures and if I can take an e-scooter and avoid the costs of gas, wear and tear on my car, parking fees (and the semi-regular extortion by the parking ticket demi-gods) I'd much rather take an e- scooter.

Do I believe that there will be massive regulation coming down the pike from the City Council on this issue? Absolutely. No government has ever let the people have access to fun, practical solutions without finding a way to tax the life out of them. Will next summer be very different from this one with the e-scooters being super available? Guaranteed.

But for now, the e-scooters make great press for the police and provide a viable solution for local transportation when the City hasn't.

David Pisarra is a family law attorney focusing on fathers' rights and men's issues in the Santa Monica firm of Pisarra & Grist. He can be reached at dpisarra@pisarra.com or (310) 664-9969.



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Laughing Matters

Jack Neworth
Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Jerry's Summer Vacation (And the Edgemar Follies)

Editor's Note: This story was first printed on Oct.. 19, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage

In the fall, as kids in grade school, we'd often be asked to write an essay, "What I did over ,my summer vacation." My family went to Balboa every summer and frankly, I got tired of writing the same story year after year. (Apparently, judging from emails, some readers think I do that now week after week.)

I'm writing this "essay" for my good friend, Jerry Rosenblum, because even at 96, he had a far more eventful and exciting summer than I did. First off, he was busy with his Instagram account, posting selfies of his Emeritus College classes and singing karaoke anytime there's an open mic. Actually, Jerry's long-time"bestie," Katie Miller, 27, does his postings. Jerry currently has 16,900 Instagram followers in just 1 year. (I've been on Twitter since 2009 and I have a grand total of 918 followers. Go figure.)

Many of Jerry's Instagram followers post questions for him about his secret for a long and contented life. Katie videos Jerry and posts his answers. It's like his own personal podcast.

Also this summer, Jerry finally finished his memoir What Goes Around, Comes Around, and sent it off to the publisher. It's a charming collection of vignettes about the unusual number of celebrities he's encountered during his 60 years as a men's clothing salesman. (Forty-five years in Santa Monica.) Jerry's book will come out in June, 2019, when he will be 97. (Rumor is he's already working on a sequel.)

But Jerry's biggest adventure this past summer came on his visit to Brooklyn (Flatbush) where he lived when he was 6. Amazingly, the apartment building is still standing and so is the grade school he attended in 1928.

A friend of Katie's in the D.A.'s office generously arranged for Jerry to be given a tour of his neighborhood in a police car. Not surprisingly, the two cops got a real kick out of Jerry. That said, I can only imagine what people might have wondered about Jerry in the back of a squad car. (Given Robert Redford's latest movie, Old Man and the Gun, maybe they thought Jerry was a nanogenarian bank robber.)

Before his trip, Jerry had written a song (I added a few touches to the lyrics) and "recorded" it at a local studio. It's the catchy tango melody of Adios Amigos, and an homage to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the 28 year-old who, on January 20th, will become the youngest female congress woman in history! Despite being outspent 18 to 1 by the incumbent, on June 26, Ocasio-Cortez won the Democratic primary in New York's 14th congressional district covering parts of the Bronx and Queens. Amazing!

With her stunning victory, Ocasio-Cortez instantly became in high demand to campaign for progressive candidates nationwide. So Jerry didn't get to meet her in person but she loved his song that Katie posted on Instagram to which Alexandria responded so appreciatively.

"I really needed that," she said after a long day on the campaign trail. With a twinkle in his eye, Jerry says, "I hope Alexandria lets me fly to NYC to join her at a campaign rally where I'd sing her song." Given Jerry's enthusiasm, he'd likely bring the house down.

In the meantime, this week's been hectic for Jerry. On Tuesday, he did a podcast at the Village Workspaces studio in W. L.A. The interviewer was the company CEO, Oliver Barry, a Santa Monica resident whose favorite restaurant is, as is Jerry's, Fromin's. In the hour-long podcast, Jerry answered questions about his remarkable vitality and still manage to belt out three songs, a cappella! (Is he a pistol or what?)

Jerry's currently hard at work on his latest production, "The Edgemar Follies" at the Edgemar Theater on Main Street. The show features a group of very talented seniors ranging in age from 60-something to 90-something.

Actually, Jerry has led this group in the past numerous times, always to standing room only. "The Follies" emcee is Archie Barkan, 89, who, as a young man, did stand-up in the Catskills. The singers include: Inga Neilsen, Laurie Raskin, Kalani Whittington, Valarie Swift Bird, Joanne Montgomery Elaine Webster , Tracy Lovett, Christine Blue and Paul Junger. Bringing comedy to the ensemble is the hilarious Jeremy Vernon, 86, whose credits include Mork and Mindy, The Dean Martin Show and The Flying Nun.

The singers will be accompanied by pianist, Gary Nesteruk, another Santa Monica resident. (Whom I'm guessing also loves Fromin's.) Fittingly, Jerry's going to close the show with I'm Glad I'm Not Young Anymore.

With only 18 days until the mid-terms, Jerry still hopes his next performance will be on stage with Ocasio-Cortez. It's obviously a long shot but, if it happens, you'll definitely read about it here. After all, it's bound to be way more exciting than, for example, my "What I did for Halloween."

To see Jerry's song and Ocasio-Cortez's thank you, Google "YouTube Jack Neworth" and click on the link. Jack is at jackdailypress@aol.com.







City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS BEFORE THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Proposed Urgency Interim Ordinance Extending Urgency Interim Ordinance 2594 (CCS)

A public hearing will be held by the City Council to introduce for adoption an urgency interim ordinance extending Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance 2594 (CCS) which prohibited fast food restaurants on the Third Street Promenade. The urgency interim ordinance was adopted to prevent the proliferation of fast food restaurants on the Promenade and to ensure that the Promenade maintains its authentic characteristics and provides visitors with a distinctive experience not found in most downtown shopping districts.

On November 27, 2018, Council adopted the initial urgency interim ordinance prohibiting fast food restaurants on the Promenade. The interim ordinance is set to expire on January 11, 2019. The proposed urgency interim ordinance extension would continue until November 26, 2019 to provide an opportunity for further study and analysis of the future of the Promenade through the "Promenade 3.0" visioning process.

Date/Time: Tues., Jan. 8, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.
Where: City Council Chambers, Second Floor Santa Monica City Hall
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, California

HOW TO COMMENT
The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. You may comment at the Planning Commission public hearing, or by writing a letter or e-mail. Information received prior to the hearing will be given to the Planning Commission at the meeting.

Address your letter to: City Clerk
Re: Fast Food Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance Extension
1685 Main Street, Room 102
Santa Monica, CA 90401
Or email to: **councilmtgitems@smgov.net**

MORE INFORMATION
If you want more information about this project, please contact Tony Kim at (310) 458-8341, or by e-mail at tony.kim@smgov.net. The Zoning Ordinance is available at the Planning Counter during business hours and on the City's web site at www.smgov.net. The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. If you have any disability-related accommodation request, please contact (310) 458-8341, or TYY Number: (310) 458-8696 at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. Santa Monica "Big Blue" Bus Lines #1, #2, #3, Rapid 3, #7, #8, #9, #10R, and #18 service the City Hall and the Civic Center. The Expo Line terminus is at Colorado Avenue and Fourth Street, a short walk to City Hall. Public parking is available in front of City Hall and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).
Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65009(b), if this matter is subsequently challenged in Court, the challenge may be limited to only those issues raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Santa Monica at, or prior to, the Public Hearing.

ESPAÑOL: Esto es una noticia de una audiencia pública para revisar applicaciónes proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Si deseas más información, favor de llamar a Peter James en la División de Planificación al número (310) 458-8341.



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MARINE

FROM PAGE 1

temporary, hours-long haven from horrors that occur at home. For Nolan Wiley, currently a lance corporal in the Marines, his high school experience at Samohi saved his life.

Speaking on the phone with the Daily Press, Wiley is amiable, confident, and borderline brazen. As he discusses his job as the VIP tour guide at the Pentagon, he says his love for history was his safety net for applying to the job but primarily his "height, natural charm, and glowing smile" that got him the position, he says in a joking-not-joking manner.

It's this overflow of confidence and amiability that makes it difficult to believe that Wiley struggled with suicidal thoughts during his march to adulthood."It was... tough," Wiley says, reflecting on his past. "I think to a lot of people, and to me, it was evident that I didn't care about anything, really, or myself."

Wiley describes a childhood fraught with uncertainty and constant chaos around him.

When he was 10, Wiley's parents divorced, Wiley's father gaining custody of Nolan's older brother and sister. Not wanting to lose custody of her son, Wiley's mother found a job in real estate in Laguna Beach, uprooting Nolan and his little brother from Maryland to the west coast.

The real estate market soon crashed, forcing his family to move again, this time to Ventura. With his mother unable to make ends meet, they bounced around motels, eventually becoming homeless and living out of their car.

With his mother unable to provide for the family, many duties fell upon the adolescent shoulders of Nolan, including taking care of his little brother. He'd walk him to school, take him to the library, "anything to help continue his education, keep his head up" in an uncertain time for all of them.

After yet another move, this time to Santa Barbara to live with his mother's friend, Wiley hit rock bottom; he learned that his father, estranged from he and his brother due to the divorce, had died.

"He was a big part of my childhood," Wiley said, a momentary tremble to his voice. "I just lost my drive. I put on a lot of weight and stopped caring about myself. I did so poorly in school that they recommended we move somewhere that I could get help."

A high school counselor at Santa Barbara recommended Wiley and his family move to Santa Monica and enroll in Samohi, a school the counselor said provided a supportive environment. Wiley moved, again.

In new surroundings, he struggled to adjust.

Wiley often kept quiet, isolating himself completely from students and teachers in an effort to minimize more hurt. Why engage when this new environment, these new people, could very well be temporary again?

He was a raw, open nerve, a young man made of porcelain and "on the edge". His brother was usually the motivating factor to keep going, but around this time, Wiley said he was beginning to lose his will to live.

"When I got to Samohi, I just kind of existed," he said. "I didn't care. Some people noticed."

A counselor at the school talked Wiley into taking an auto class where he soon met Connor Williams, a student that took to Wiley. The two immediately hit it off.

"He came up to me and started talking to me on his own," Wiley recalls. "I never knew it then, but he ended up becoming a brother to me. He kept me going and was always there when I needed him to be. He was the only person I was ever actually ever to open up to because he never judged me... He brought me back from the edge, by being my friend."

In addition to his lifesaving friend, Wiley credits Samohi staff for saving him, a broken boy who just needed someone, anything that resembled stability in his life. He says some teachers, specifically Berkeley Blatz and Matthew Flanders, took notice of him in a caring way.

"I always had a problem with people asking why I was down. [Flanders and Blatz] didn't question, they just offered me support."

He says the teachers would have small but meaningful interactions with him, asking Wiley where he was going and what he was up to lately, and would even stay after school with the young man to assist him in navigating life and schoolwork.

"They were always there when I needed help."

After graduating, Wiley worked at a restaurant in Brentwood, unsure what to do with life post-high school. He said he became "kind of a drone," working and going home. Working and going home. Working...

"One day I looked at myself in the mirror and realized I wasn't happy with me or my life," he said.

Wiley slipped into a depression and began putting on weight again.

During a walk in a mall, a couple of Marines noticed Wiley alone on a bench, unhappy. They struck up conversation and felt maybe getting into shape would make Wiley happier. Wiley declined, but eventually warmed up to the idea.

Besides feeling that the two Marines genuinely had his best interests at heart, Wiley says the idea of joining the military intrigued him.

"I wanted to do something better. I knew I wasn't the best version of myself." Additionally, Wiley says, his father served in the Navy as a pilot, solidifying his decision. A way to honor the man he was unable to say goodbye to.

The decision brought Wiley something he never had growing up: A consist loving and caring environment. Finally, stability.

"They're my family. A brotherhood and sisterhood, and I love them," he says, emphasizing the word 'love'. "They accept me for me. They've been there for me, I've been for them. Even the people that I don't like best or vice versa, they'd take a bullet for me and I'd do the same for them."

During his role as an infantryman ("the tip of the spear, ground force guys you see in the movies," he says), Wiley marched in funerals and different events for both the Obama and Trump administrations. Impressing his superiors, he was chosen to be a tour guide.

After memorizing a 36-page document in 15 days and charming people with his storytelling ability, he was moved up from regular tour guide to VIP tour guide, now at the Pentagon. "Again, my good smile landed me here," he jokes.

During his stead as VIP tour guide, he's shown the Pentagon and provided historical stories to tourists, sports teams visiting the area, a Secretary of Defense and Pearl Harbor survivors.

Not too long ago, he found some more stability in his life — he met his wife during a break from a tour.

"We met at a cafe in the area. She comes from a Navy family...We both had difficult childhoods, so we were able to connect on a lot of things," Wiley says, his enthusiastic voice slowing to a crawl. After a momentary silence, Wiley flashes his amiable personality. "I like to think my smile and charm went a long way there, too."

Man dies after jumping from The Pier as cold weather blows in

KATE CAGLE
Daily Press Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story originally ran Feb. 20. It is republished here as part of our year-end coverage.

Cold temperatures and windy conditions complicated rescue efforts for firefighters Monday who searched for a man who jumped off The Santa Monica Pier and battled an early morning brushfire above the Pacific Coast Highway. A Los Angeles County helicopter eventually located the body of the missing swimmer 600 yards south of the Pier and declared the man dead on scene.

The National Weather Service issued a warning for Gale Force winds late Sunday night as a cold front moved into Los Angeles County. The alert warned of dangerous sea conditions and encouraged boaters to seek shelter within a harbor. Hours later, Santa Monica Fire Department responded to a brushfire on the bluffs about a quarter of a mile south of the Annenberg Beach House.

"My dad woke up and saw the red and blue lights reflecting on an outward facing wall inside our house," said Molly Philbin who grew up in a house right across from the fire. "When he walked out the fire was pretty high on the cliffside, maybe like 100 feet. It had spread to some of the palm trees."

Philbin said the fire department had recently cleared brush from the area. No one was hurt and firefighters were able to contain the fire.

A few hours later, a fisherman called 9-1-1 from the Santa Monica Pier, saying he saw a man throwing rose petals into the Pacific Ocean before jumping off The Pier.

"When we first got on the scene it was kind of dark still and we weren't able to locate him," said Los Angeles County Fire Lifeguard Public Information Officer AJ Lester. A search and rescue team immediately deployed, including divers, paddleboarders, the Baywatch Rescue Boat from Marina Del Rey and Copter 18. However, with gusty winds up to 20 knots, choppy waves and a water temperatures around 58 degrees, Lester says hypothermia would have set in quickly for the jumper.

"All the blood rushes into your core and your muscle shut down," Lester said. "Then your organs shut down. A person in that degree of water with that wind chill is not going to last long swimming - maybe 10 to 15 minutes before they have complications from hypothermia."

The helicopter located the body which was recovered by the boat near tower 22. The Santa Monica Police Department is now investigating the circumstances that led up to the man jumping. Lt. Saul Rodriguez says it was likely a suicide.

"We train on a regular basis for this type of incident," Lester said. "It was dark this morning and unfortunately we weren't able to locate this person faster and have a better outcome."

The weather is forecasted to improve Tuesday and Wednesday, according to the National Weather Service.

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HOUSING

FROM PAGE 1

housekeeper comes by to keep things tidy.

Officials say it's no coincidence that hundreds of apartments in Santa Monica sound more like hotel rooms, as landlords realize corporate rentals get around the city's strict anti-AirBnb ordinance while taking advantage of incentives meant to build housing to solve a statewide shortage of affordable places to live.

"It's really amazing. The blatant abuse of these residential units for use, really, as a hotel," said Chair Amy Anderson at a recent Planning Commission meeting.

The trend is pervasive, with approximately 39 apartment buildings in downtown Santa Monica advertising at least some units for corporate or vacation travelers looking to rent here for just over 31 days - the threshold for a "short-term rental." The city's strict AirBnb ordinance requires a host present for any stay shorter than that, a tactic to preserve precious rental units in a beachside town with skyrocketing property values, a booming tourist industry and a sophisticated workforce.

"It seems to be a hybrid of Airbnb and corporate housing that's being used to move hundreds, if not thousands, of units off the market," City Councilmember Sue Himmelrich said. She and Councilman Kevin McKeown have urged city staff to look at ways to close loopholes and update outdated laws that define corporate housing as apartments with offices, pools or similar amenities.

"The goal is to get them to stop doing this so (renters) can have neighbors again," said former Planning Commissioner Jennifer Kennedy, who also urged staff to address the issue.

Renting an apartment to a corporation is not illegal. Neither are month-to-month leases. The Rent Control Board only recently made moves to define a tenant as a "human being." It's just one way officials are suddenly trying to close the revolving door of month-to-month leases in traditional housing.

The spread of corporate rentals is particularly concerning to rent control tenants because landlords can charge significantly more for short term stays in furnished units. Residents at 421-427 San Vicente Boulevard said their owner approached them with buyout offers about six months ago. Six tenants took five-figure buyouts, worried they could otherwise face eviction under the Ellis Act, tenant Gary Hudson told the City Council recently.

Hudson said the units were promptly remodeled, furnished and stocked with pots, pans and other basic necessities. They are now advertised on Apartmentfinder.com for "32 days to 6 months" lease terms.

"Amazing for Summer vacation or for corporate needs," the advertisement said. "Wifi, internet, TV package and all utilities included in price."

An 830 square foot one bedroom, one bath apartment there is currently advertised for $2,995 a month online.

The Daily Press reached out to TMB Associates, the property management company, for comment but did not hear back as of press time. The banana tree lined courtyard now balances the interests of long term tenants seeking peace and quiet near the ocean and visitors in town for a quick trip.

"There's no code of conduct," Hudson said of vacationers who leave trash outside their doors and throw parties. "If you were in a hotel, you would be kicked out of a hotel."

City officials were stunned this summer when another rent control building reopened after massive remodeling with subdivided units. The majority of long-term tenants at 1238 and 1242 Tenth Street took buyouts when Neil Shekhter, the owner of NMS Properties, purchased the building and began upgrading the aging units two years ago. (The units are now owned by WS Communities, a spin-off of NMS.)

Sources who have toured the property tell the Daily Press the apartments, now as small as 206 square feet, are leased separately on a short-term basis.

"How can you legally turn a rent controlled apartment into a hotel in front of everybody's eyes?" long-term Tenth Street tenant Gert Basson asked the City Council. Basson said the property managers and construction crew harassed long term tenants to get them to take buyouts and leave. He resisted and has been living outside of his apartment on a relocation order for nearly two years.

Planning Manager Jing Yeo said apartments in Santa Monica must be at least 375 square feet and have a bathroom and a kitchen. The Tenth Street property is now under investigation by Code Enforcement.

"They did appropriately get building permits and the plans show that they were dwelling units," Yeo said. "It appears that some partitions, or what have you, were added after the fact."

Companies affiliated with Shehkter and WS Communities have submitted plans to potentially subdivide units in two other rent controlled buildings, according to sources within City Hall who requested anonymity because the issue is under investigation.

"There's a lesson there of how that person got around the system," said Planning Commissioner Mario Fonda-Bernardi. "(They) found a little rabbit hole...and drove a truck through it."

The apartments on Tenth Street are managed by My Suite, LLC, a relatively new company managed by Shekhter's son, Adam, according to business records from the Secretary of State. The same company manages four other buildings here, including Pacifico at 1445 9th Street, which is also under rent control, and two downtown NMS properties.

"MySuite, an NMS Company, has a job posting on ZipRecruiter that says they have 400 plus units under construction and 2,500 plus units under development," Kennedy said. "They call these 'turnkey living solutions' for vacation rental or a place that feels like home from day one. Only the very wealthy can afford turnkey living solutions."

With dozens of apartments in the pipeline all over town, Kennedy hopes the city can close loopholes or amend development agreements to ban corporate rentals in new housing, particularly at Lincoln and Colorado.

"I'm specifically concerned that one company that's already doing this around town will be doing it at one of those sites," Kennedy said.

Trill app brings the social back to networking

LILY RICHMAN
Special to the Daily Press

Editor's Note: This story originally ran on Sept. 10, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

Upon learning that roughly 40 percent of transgender people have attempted to commit suicide, four high school girls decided to take action.

Their response was The Trill Project, an app that has been downloaded approximately 15,000 times and has accumulated more than 20,000 posts since its launch in June. The corporation is currently valued at $1 million.

Trill is an anonymous social networking application. Originally created as a vehicle for members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies to freely express themselves, Trill sees itself as a novel platform for social media interaction.

"Trill takes the best parts of what it's like in a social network to form connections with people and have friendships and talk to your peers, but also integrates professional support," said Georgia Messinger, Trill's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Marketing Officer.

Trill, whose name is derived from combining the words "true" and "real," allows users to follow tags on such topics as "lgbtq+" or "friends" to track posts about a particular topic. Users can also join a smaller Community with people who share similar interests or tags.

Rather than allowing users to pick his/her own username, Trill seeks to preserve anonymity by assigning usernames based off one of 15 colors selected by each person.

"If you can make something cool like Snapchat or Instagram that people want to go on every day because it's fun and there are games ... but you can also get professional support and have moderators on-hand, then you basically get rid of all the negative stuff that anonymous social networks have fostered," 18-years-old Messinger, said.

Messinger is a National Center for Women & Information Technology national awardee.

The app is scheduled to re-launch on Sept. 10, World Suicide Prevention Day, with a plethora of new user profile colors, including new yellows, blues, and purples. The new iteration will also feature a user support score to quantify contributions to the Trill community, a mechanism for offering compliments and a mood meter to measure feelings.

The Trill Project was one of five teams selected from over 1,000 applicants to receive funding from Founders Bootcamp, an accelerator for high school students' startups. Trill received $50,000 in exchange for a five percent stake in the company.

Founder Roger Kassebaum began Founders Bootcamp with his former student, Managing Partner Richard Dahan, with the goal of empowering and aiding young entrepreneurs. Kassebaum facilitates connections and mentorships between the high schoolers and experienced professional mentors.

Messinger, now a freshman at Harvard University, and 17-year-old Ariana Sokolov, Trill's Chief Executive Officer and a freshman at the University of Southern California, worked throughout the summer with the four other Founders Bootcamp teams at Cross Campus, a Santa Monica coworking office space on Colorado Boulevard. Their days typically consisted of morning workshops and evening guest speakers. Messinger said the teams sometimes stayed until 3 a.m. working.

The five teams pitched their startups to the Tech Coast Angels, the largest LA angel investment group, in August. TCA members offered critiques, advice and encouragement, according to Kassebaum.

Trill was first conceived in January as part of the annual Technovation challenge to create an app that tackles an issue important to one's community. The idea for Trill garnered widespread support. The team received hundreds of responses to an Instagram question "What would you tell if nobody knew you were telling it?" and over 10,000 people reblogged a Tumblr post discussing the proposed app.

Sokolov said users have praised the project for paying attention to an underserved community.

Sokolov, who began coding at 8-years-old, is a two-time winner of the Arizona Congressional App Challenge and a three-time winner of a scholarship to Apple's Worldwide Developers Conference. She said user safety is her biggest priority.

Other anonymous apps like Yik Yak, Whisper and After School fall into the trap of marketing themselves with gossip, according to Messinger. Trill Project, however, is "branded completely differently," she said.

Trill uses volunteer moderators to review posts and watch for indications that a user may be harming his/herself, harming someone else, or is being harmed. Trill currently has about 50 moderators, all of whom apply for the position and receive training to facilitate conversations. If a user cyberbullies someone else, Trill removes their account and blocks that IP address from creating another profile.

Because the app is anonymous, moderators are not able to get into direct contact with users, but they can attach trigger warnings to posts that contain serious mental health concerns like suicide and comment on posts with links and phone numbers for emergency resources such as the National Hopeline Network; the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network; nearby medical facilities and more.

"I'd like to think that people who would not have been getting support before are getting support," said 17-year-old Lucas Gelfond, Trill Director of Moderators and TEEN LINE listener. "I really do believe that it's having an impact, and that's inspiring."

Trill also employs machine learning algorithms that study moderators' behaviors and will be able to sort through posts more efficiently in the future. Messinger said the algorithms could potentially be licensed to other companies to identify people in crisis.

"I think their algorithms and the professional help they have online can help some people during those weak moments and make them a lot healthier and happier," said Kassebaum, who taught high school science for around 40 years prior to starting Founders Bootcamp. "If they can save some lives, that's incredible."

Trill and the other Founders Bootcamp startups will pitch their ideas to Silicon Valley venture capitalists on Oct. 24 to raise a seed round of funding. The corporation hopes to reach 100,000 users by that time.

The Trill Project is available for download in the App Store. For more information, visit https://trillproject.com.

WELL NEWS BY SCOTT LAFEE

Best medicine

- Patient: "I have CDO."
- Doctor: "CDO? I've never heard of it. What is it?"
- Patient: "It's like OCD, except the letters are in alphabetical order, the way they should be."

Self-Exam

- Q: Do feet really get bigger with age?
- A: Quite possibly, yes, but not due to growth (at least not past a certain age). Over time, the tendons and ligaments in your feet may weaken, causing arches to flatten. That results in feet becoming wider and longer. It doesn't happen to everyone, but folks who are overweight or have certain conditions like diabetes are more prone. The average gain is roughly one shoe size by age 70 or 80.

WORD UP!

kaleidoscopic

1. continually shifting from one set of relations to another; rapidly changing: the kaleidoscopic events of the past year.
2. changing form, pattern, color, etc., in a manner suggesting a kaleidoscope.
3. of, relating to, or created by a kaleidoscope.

MYSTERY PHOTO

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The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize. Send answers to editor@smdp.com.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

	S	I	L	K		B	M	W	S			L	O	G
B	I	D	E	N		E	E	R	I	E		A	C	E
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G	O	L	D	E	N	R	I	N	G	S		E	A	R
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S	C	O	W	L		D	E	A	R		O	N	S	
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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

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

Newsday Crossword

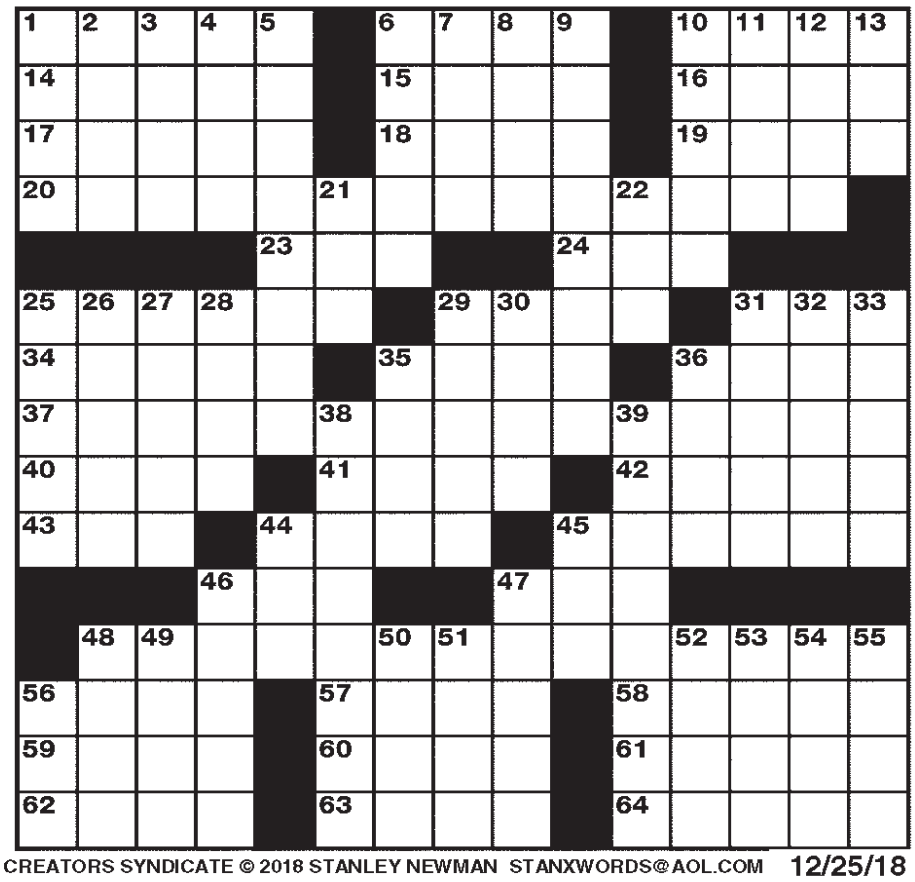
GLOBAL POSITIONING by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 "In what way?"
6 Stage show-offs
10 Story line
14 "It's so easy, __ can do it!"
15 Be adjacent to
16 Coin in France and Italy
17 Kingly or queenly
18 "Have a __ day!"
19 Eagle's talon
20 Made a mistake
23 Whichever
24 Skillet, for example
25 Spain's capital
29 Backyard tool building
31 Writing implement
34 Large body of water
35 Graceful swimming bird
36 Sandwich cookie
37 World of government
40 Ireland nickname
41 Western defense grp.
42 No later than
43 MD's hospital coworkers
44 Nine-digit IDs
45 Shows to be true
46 Female deer
47 Tot's "little piggy"
48 Clark Kent's newspaper
56 Earth's natural satellite
57 Barbershop sound
58 Bring together
59 Drinks delicately
60 Approximately
61 Pepsi and Coke
62 Great joy
63 Butterfly-catching implements
64 Prepared to pray

DOWN

1 Group of cattle
2 Above
3 ". . . it's off to work __"
4 Ginger cookie
5 Stuff on a portrait artist's palette
6 Good at home repairs
7 Just slightly
8 Greatly
9 Becomes harder to climb
10 Pie nut
11 Pause in the action
12 Word-of-mouth
13 Pull from behind
21 Bring to a halt
22 Wicked
25 Sulking one
26 Squirrel's snack
27 Sandwich shops
28 Drought-ending weather
29 Hits, as a housefly
30 Angelic topper
31 Before the boob-tube era
32 Spooky
33 Christmas songs
35 Read electronically
36 "This can't be!"
38 Available fresh now, as fruit
39 Fortunate random chance
44 Ready-made lawn
45 Bubble gum sound
46 Thick, as fog
47 Keyboard goofs
48 Hard work
49 Be optimistic
50 Regarding, in a memo
51 Grocery shopper's reference
52 Author unknown: Abbr.
53 Cleopatra's river
54 And others, for short
55 Experiment
56 Flavor enhancer initials



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2018 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 12/25/18

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 25)

You'll gain skill, grow in confidence and enhance your health and vitality. You'll even become a snappier dresser. None of these things contributes more to your life than a single quality you already possess. That quality is warmth. Warmth starts relationships and adventures. Warmth draws loved ones back to you. Libra and Leo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 1, 22 and 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
There's fun in the role shift that happens today. It's like you suddenly got a permission slip to behave in a way you've always wanted to but never thought you could.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
It will be energizing to go shoulder to shoulder with loved ones, even if the task at hand technically qualifies as work. Touch is the highest form of communication. Also, when in doubt, go in for the hug.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)
The cosmic gift won't come wrapped. You've an extra special sense for knowing the right thing to say and when to say it. You'll help many with this talent, and more folks will come to you for wisdom in the days that follow.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)
The opportunity to connect fully, with all of your senses, to what's going on around you today will be ever-present, as though all you have to do is plug in, and outlets are everywhere.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
We are all more impressionable than we think, with personalities that can change with the company we keep. This is much to your advantage today as the cheer keeps ramping up and your heart keeps following it to new heights.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
As it turns out, you're a supernatural being. There's more to you than your past, your present or your future. The day's events will strike a chord in you and you'll feel the truth of your everlasting soul.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)
The complexities of the personalities around you will emerge like holly berries, red and dangerous, to be enjoyed and admired at a distance. If they are dangled before you, don't bite!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)
The attention you get will be your favorite kind -- specific to you, an acknowledgment of what you've worked very hard to achieve, well-deserved and the right portion size, too.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Because you don't miss a beat when it comes to hooking into laughter, beauty and music, it will be easy to get completely engaged in the action. Life seems to be happening through you, not to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
Words can't really adequately describe the big feelings, but try anyway. It means so much when you do, and you're certainly better at this than anyone around today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Because you're one of two people who want the same thing -- to get from point A to point B as smoothly and safely as possible -- there'll be comfort and companionship in today's unfolding.

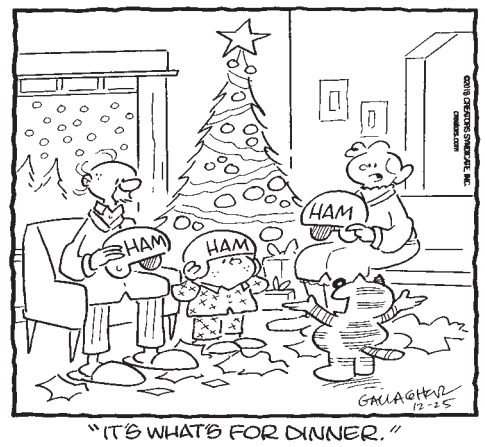
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
You're upbeat and full of energy, making things happen and resonating a cheerful tone while positive influences are all around you. It's about as smooth a day as you've had in months.

Christmas Moon

This Christmas, the Leo moon infuses traditions with heart that, like the Grinch's, triples in size. "Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more." -- Dr. Seuss, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!"

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Heathcliff
By PETER GALLAGHER



"IT'S WHAT'S FOR DINNER."

Strange Brew
By JOHN DEERING



Agnes
By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel
By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



Zack Hill
By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



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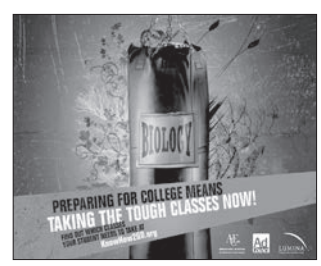
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Monster attack sinks Santa Monica pier in Hollywood film

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Editor's Note: This story was first published on March 30, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

Santa Monica's civic leaders are concerned about the retail apocalypse damaging the city's economy but if Hollywood is to be believed, the city's tech industry can withstand an actual apocalypse.

The Santa Monica pier and some adjacent downtown streets play a role in the recently released Pacific Rim Uprising, with the film's monsters, known in context as Kaiju, destroying the world-renowned local landmark and fighting a locally built guardian robot.

Executive Producer Cale Boyter said the scene was specifically written with Santa Monica in mind because the iconic location was a natural fit for the world of Pacific Rim where giant monsters hailing from underwater rifts attack the human population.

"We wanted to movie to open in a coastal city that was well known around the world, a location that's visually iconic," she said. "Story-wise - we wanted to show how the world has changed since the initial Kaiju invasion, and one of the ideas that we unveil is that folks with resources/money pack up and head in-land towards areas that were less decimated by the Kaiju attack. So, in our story – towns like Santa Monica become more fringe communities while inland towns like Sioux City Iowa expand into tomorrow's urban centers."

Santa Monica is not the only city crushed in the film and Boyter said locations are often very willing to participate in a big-budget film, even if it means their digital destruction.

"We shot in cities all over the globe and I was actually surprised by how many locations and even landmarks and companies have wanted to be part of our big battle sequences, including our final, gonzo disaster set-piece," she said.

The humans of Pacific Rim defend the planet with giant robots, called Jaegers, that stand well over 200 feet tall and the sheer size of the combatants required the scene to extend into the city itself.

"We needed to create a sort of post-apocalyptic Santa Monica of tomorrow," said Boyter. "And we needed to create a bigger runway for our opening action set-piece where there's a big Jaeger chase that happens right in the middle of downtown."

The film's efforts to capture a realistic depiction of the city extend to surprisingly small details such as real-world accurate street signs.

The production spent time filming in the city, using helicopters and using some Hollywood magic to accomplish shots that were impossible to get in the real world.

"We did aerials via helicopter in and around Santa Monica," she said. "Then we also did drone work for specialty shots which happened down in the Gold Coast in Australia. We did this because I don't think it's possible to legally fly a drone down Lincoln the way we would have needed to achieve the effect that we were hoping for. So, we took the plate from our Australia shoot and essentially joined it with scans of the Santa Monica plates – creating the effect you see in the movie."

She said the actual filming is relatively easy but the special effects work takes several months to accomplish and becomes more complicated as the film's settings grow more complicated.

"The process I described with Santa Monica was also duplicated in Tokyo on a much bigger scale," said Boyter. "We essentially made (what we call) Mega Tokyo out of Seoul, Korea. A ton of detail work was applied to this process – months of it in fact. We were always trying to capture essential elements of the real world aesthetic of a location while finding unique ways to infuse it with touches that ultimately establish the world of the film and the Pacific Rim universe itself."

Boyter said the paradox in working with science fiction is real-world details are necessary to sell the experience. So, a film about giant robots punching inter-dimensional monsters actually requires accurate street layouts to make it work.

"I think we worked so tirelessly to accurately capture a location like Santa Monica because our movie is so fantastical conceptually, that it becomes essential to tether it to a world that folks in theaters can recognize and relate to in some manner," she said.

Pacific Rim Uprising is now playing in local theaters.

Local firefighters recall Thomas Fire inferno

KATE CAGLE
Daily Press Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story was first published on Jan. 8, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

The wildfire spread like the devil skipping stones.

Sparks flew through hot Santa Ana winds saturated with ash, bounced off metal gutters and wedged into roof shingles where they smoldered into a blaze.

Looking back, the handful of Santa Monica firefighters who drove into the midnight inferno on Dec. 4 had no idea they were headed to the start of the biggest wildfire in California history. When they reached Ventura County there was no command post yet. No "central com." No disaster declaration. A 50 acre brush rapidly spread out of control as families evacuated, packing up their loved ones and leaving everything else to fate.

Local firefighter Dominick Bei refers to that night as "the first 36," as in the first 36 hours of what turned into twelve sleepless days battling the Thomas Fire.

"Every house was completely engulfed in flames," Bei said, who had never seen anything like it in his near decade of service. "Every corner you turned there was a new house on fire."

The fire was spreading too quickly to save every house. Sheer instinct directed decisions over where to point hoses filled with precious water.

"We were just taking initiative and going to homes that were on fire next to homes that could be saved," said Captain Johnny Maccini who led the initial attack. "I wish we could have done more, saved more property."

A month later, the Thomas Fire has destroyed more than 1,000 structures – 700 of them family homes - and charred 440 square miles of coastal foothills and national forest through Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. A 32-year-old San Diego firefighter was later killed by the heat and smoke. A woman died fleeing the flames. Last week, President Donald Trump declared it a major disaster.

But to the twelve Santa Monica firefighters who were there on the ground, the disaster is in the details as the heat melted cars and reduced cherished family photos and heirlooms to ash.

"You see a lot of disturbing things," Maccini said. "It's the holidays and there's Christmas trees and presents inside these houses and we're watching them burn up."

Maccini and Bei were part of a strike team from Santa Monica, Culver City, Beverly Hills and Los Angeles that responded to a request for mutual aid when the fire began. Santa Monica sent two engine companies, Engine 3 and Engine 8, along with a deputy chief, a battalion chief, a captain and an additional firefighter – adding up to twelve total personnel.

As captain, it had ultimately been Maccini's decision to bring along the rookie, Zach Mendoza, that night. It was his very first day as a Santa Monica firefighter.

"We knew he had some brush experience," Maccini said, of the recruit from Cal-Fire. "There's only one way to get experience and that's through doing it. It's better than any other teacher. You go twelve days straight and don't sleep for 36 hours, that's how you get experience."

"At the time it was just a series of tasks," Mendoza said. "A series of orders we had to do. But when you walk into homes and you see Christmas trees and presents and pictures it personalized it. It made it more real."

Even the more seasoned Santa Monica firefighters remark those first 36 hours are ones they will never forget. The sight of the destruction, the feel of the heat, even the taste of a few spoonfuls of a single spaghetti MRE Bei had stashed away in the truck that provided the only meal during the initial fight. On Tuesday, they will be honored by the City Council for their "fortitude, dedication and valor," along with firefighters sent to the Skirball and Creek fires.

Maccini says they were just doing their jobs.

"I feel honored to be out there with these guys, watching them deal with physical, mental and emotional stresses you can't imagine. Things you encounter in war time situations," Maccini said. "These folks who lost their houses, who right now they're still trying to figure out where they're going to live. They had a torn down holiday season. These people need the help and the attention."

SMC Hall of Famer and civil rights activists returns to speak on MLK Day

KATE CAGLE
Daily Press Staff Writer

Editor's Note: This story was first published on Jan. 16, 2018. It is reprinted here as part of our year end coverage.

On the fiftieth anniversary year of Tommie Smith thrusting his fist into the air at the 1968 Olympic games in Mexico City, silent gestures are once again dominating the news.

As he addressed the audience inside World Peace Ikeda Auditorium on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Smith did not mention Colin Kaepernick, the football player who ignited a political firestorm with his decision to kneel during the National Anthem to protest racial injustice.

However, he discouraged his listeners from taking a back seat to history.

"I did not throw a rock and hide my hand so don't sit in the back row and miss the opportunity of an open forum," Smith said in a broad speech that touched on faith, hope and unity.

Smith was just 24 years old when he broke the 20-second barrier on the 200-meter sprint, claiming Olympic gold in just 19.83 seconds. The moment that followed became one of the most iconic moments of the 1960's: as the National Anthem played, Smith and bronze medalist John Carlos bowed their heads and raised black-leather fists into the air.

Looking back, Smith said he was "blessed…to stand at a time when standing for social and racial equality was not a safe indulgence. Especially on a globally magnified stage." He called it an S.O.S., a "stand of silence." Much like Kaepernick today who spent 2017 as an unsigned free agent after his silent protests, Smith and Carlos were booed and then suspended by the U.S. Olympic Committee. At the time, sports writers complained the two men had politicized the games.

Smith went on to play football: three seasons for the Cincinnati Bengals. Ten years later, the only man to hold an astonishing 11 world records at the same time, became a Santa Monica College professor and coach. Smith coached young athletes here for nearly 30 years before retiring with his wife to Georgia in 2005. He is now in the SMC Sports Hall of Fame.

Back in Santa Monica for his MLK day speech, Smith told the audience to fight against "social ignorance."

"Don't forget that a difference in opinion or understanding strengthens your platform to contribute," Smith said.

Five local students were presented with education awards by the Westside Coalition: Isabel Cortes (Culver City High School), Emma Fabros (Culver City High School, May Kono (Santa Monica High School, Malaysia Long (Lawndale High School) and Andrew Rodriguez (Susan Miller Dorsey High School).

The Chair of the Human Relations Council, Dr. Karen Gunn, presented Step Up with the Community Light Award at Monday's program for "enacting the spirit of Dr. King by serving community members experiencing mental health issues."

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Westside Coalition was founded in 1986 in partnership with the City, SMC, Westside Interfaith Council, NAACP Santa Monica Venice Branch, and other organizations. Their mission state is "to educate adults and youth, to inspire community participation, and to promote the ideals of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for understanding, knowledge and healing."

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