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WHAT'S UP WESTSIDE .....PAGE 2
THE YEAR IN BUSINESS .....PAGE 6
BRIEFS .....PAGE 7
CRIME WATCH .....PAGE 9
COMICS .....PAGE 10

Year in Review: Government









Matthew Hall

2016: It was a busy year for local government including coastal access issues, opening of Expo, reopening of the California Incline and development.

The Daily Press will publish a series of articles in the coming week summarizing the year's news. Summaries have been loosely grouped by topic and our annual roundup of the year's most read stories will appear this Friday/Saturday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City Hall began work on a new zoning document to govern Santa Monica's coast. The new plan will update a 1992 document and if approved the LCP would streamline potential coastal development by centralizing authority with the City of Santa Monica as opposed to the current system that requires the involvement of the California Coastal Commission.

Santa Monica passed a new minimum wage ordinance that will reach $15 by 2020. While several nearby agencies, and entire States, ultimately moved to a $15 minimum wage, Santa Monica's rules are more generous. They include more paid time off, allow unions to bypass the rules in negotiations and set a higher standard for hotel workers.

Santa Monica moved forward with plans for a new downtown fire station. The project is a three-story, 45-foot high building totaling approximately 28,690 square feet in size. Up to 20 firefighters will work in the station.

Final recommendations were released for the future of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. The Civic Working Group recommended an entertainment/arts complex with a private operator as the best option for rehabilitating the building and meeting the community's desire for a professional performing arts venue. In response to community desires for a sports field on the site, Council agreed to study the options including a temporary field adjacent to Samohi.

The Big Blue Bus revised service in anticipation of Expo opening. Service changes included a focus on north-south travel including new routes to Marina Del Rey. The route to the Marina generated controversy when neighbors complained the street was too narrow to accommodate the bus resulting in the route shifting.

Debate continued on the possibility of a new movie theater in Downtown Santa Monica. Council directed staff to begin negotiations with a developer for use of the city-

SEE **REVIEW** PAGE 3

In 2016, politics dominated our pop culture and vice versa

BY JOCELYN NOVECK,
AP National Writer

Our politics is often reflected in our popular culture, and vice versa — especially in an election year. That relationship seemed closer than ever in 2016, when a TV personality was elected president, reality shows and beauty contests were referenced in presidential debates, and even a Broadway show ignited partisan sparring.

At times, it seemed like the election overshadowed everything, but of course there was more. The diversity issue again roiled Hollywood. The old-style musical made a glamorous comeback. One of Hollywood's most scrutinized couples called it quits. And we said a series of painful goodbyes: to legendary rock stars, cinema and TV greats, and The Greatest himself. Our annual, highly selective journey down pop culture memory lane:

JANUARY:

Ground Control to Major Tom: We shall miss you. The death of DAVID BOWIE casts a pall over the pop culture scene as the year begins. The elegant rock star succumbs to cancer — an illness he fought in secret — just a few days after his 69th birthday and the release of his final music video, "Lazarus," which begins with the line: "Look up here, I'm in heaven."

FEBRUARY:

A year after #OscarsSoWhite in 2015, the Oscars are ... #SoWhiteAgain! For the second year, all 20 nominated actors are white. The lack of diversity leads to some sweeping membership changes at the Academy.

SEE **CULTURE** PAGE 5

Season's Greetings!
from Todd Mitchell
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What's Up Westside

OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA MONICA

Wednesday, Dec. 28

Movie: Finding Dory (2016)

In this sequel to Pixar's smash hit Finding Nemo, lovable amnesiac Dory (Ellen Degeneres) decides to venture off in search of her lost parents. (103 min.) Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3 – 4:45 p.m.

Drum and Dance

Everyone can drum along in this energetic workshop! Ages 4 and up. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 11 – 11:45 a.m.

Farmer's Market

The Wednesday Farmers Market is widely recognized as one of the largest and most diverse grower-only CFM's in the nation. 2nd @ Arizona Avenue, 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 29

The Secret Life of Pets

Ever wonder what your pets do when you're not home? This animated comedy, from the humans behind Despicable Me, reveals the lives pets lead after their owners leave. (87 min.) Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3 – 4:30 p.m.

LEGOS and Games at Main

They provide the Legos, you provide the fun! New for December, easy family board games! Ages 4 and Up. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 2 – 4 p.m.

Friday, December 30

Kubo and the Two Strings

A young boy named Kubo must locate a magical suit of armor worn by his late father in order to defeat a vengeful spirit from the past. Featuring the voices of Charlize Theron and Matthew McConaughey. (101 min) Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 3 – 4:45 p.m.

Make it Noisy!

Make crafts to help ring in the new year! Ages 3 and up. Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., 2 – 3 p.m.

Saturday, December 31

Farmers Market

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 markets. 2nd @ Arizona Avenue, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Saturday, December 31

Beach and Guest House Closed

Guest House Closed Today for the Holiday. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 PCH.

Sunday, January 1

Library Closed

All Library locations are closed today.

Monday, January 2

Library Closed

All Library locations are closed today.

Tuesday, January 3

Ocean Park Film Series

Film title: "Top Hat" (1935) Film historian Elaina Archer screens and discusses this film about an American dancer who comes to Britain and falls for a model whom he initially annoyed, but she mistakes him for his goofy producer. (Film runtime: 121 min.) Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main St., 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Movie Screening: New Year's Eve (2011)

A stellar ensemble cast celebrates love, hope, forgiveness, second chances and fresh starts, in intertwining stories told amidst the pulse and promise of New York City on the most dazzling night of the year. (113min). Pico Branch Library, 2201 Pico Blvd.,

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

REVIEW

FROM PAGE 1

owned property currently used as a parking garage. However, council asked for a more robust economic analysis, better information about parking and potentially, a revised design.

WaiveCar added to the city's mobility options. The service allows on-demand use of a car with no or little cost to drivers. The cars are paid for by advertising sponsors.

In a reversal of existing policy, Council approved free library cards for residents and visitors alike. Council eliminated a $25 fee that had been imposed on non-residents applying for a Library card.

In response to a regional problem with mail theft, the Postal Service began modifying local mailboxes to account for the use of counterfeit mailbox keys. Southern California has long been a hotspot for mail theft and the post office said keys have been compromised allowing thieves to access mail boxes in businesses and apartments. At the same time, the Santa Monica post office has struggled with meeting the demand for postal workers. Officials said about one in five employees are trainees and high volumes of package delivery have stressed the ability of local mail workers.

Outreach began on potential redevelopment of the City's facility on Michigan Ave. The City Yards are home to hazmat services, traffic operations, street maintenance, housing of fleets, facilities maintenance programs and fire training. The redesign hopes to make the site more usable and more sustainable while hiding unpleasant uses from neighbors.

Quick thinking by nearby residents saved a plaque dedicated to Valerie Nordstrom Barnard. The plaque was part of a display near Joslyn Park that included a mural depicting the area's history. Damage along a retaining wall required the mural and plaque be removed but neighbors were able to secure the plaque with a promise to have it relocated somewhere new.

City Hall revised advertising policies for the Big Blue Bus. Advertising had been limited to commercial operations with the bulk purchased by movies, television shows or health care services. AIDS Walk Los Angeles had accused the city of operating illegally but the case was settled in 2014. The revision to the policy expands the number of potential advertisers that could be allowed on buses.

Sarah Letts announced her resignation from Community Corporation of Santa Monica, the city's largest affordable housing developer. Letts served as the organization's Executive Director for five years and said she will take a similar job with the Hollywood Community Housing Corporation.

Council formally adopted the Pedestrian Action Plan, codifying and centralizing existing pedestrian friendly programs under a consistent organizational structure while also creating a plan for future programs that will facilitate walking citywide.

The Expo line officially opened on May 20. Phase 2 of the line was a $1.5-billion, 6.6-mile light-rail project from Culver City to Santa Monica with seven new stations: Palms, Westwood/Rancho Park, Expo/Sepulveda, Expo/Bundy, 26th Street/Bergamot, 17th Street/Santa Monica College and Downtown Santa Monica. The first phase of the Expo Line between downtown Los Angeles and Culver City opened in 2012.

City Council passed new rules for lobbying local government. After two prior attempts at creating new rules council settled on a set that will define a lobbyist as anyone who is paid to communicate with any official or employee of the city for the purpose of influencing decisions. Those lobbyists must register with the city, disclose their clients and report who they've spoken to within 10 days of being hired or before the first meeting related to their lobbying, whichever comes first. Lobbyists are also required to disclose any gifts or expenditures

Santa Monica released the results of the 2016 Homeless Count. The point-in-time homeless count total is 728 individuals, a decrease from 738 (1 percent) in 2015. The street count is 416, an increase from 402 (3 percent) in 2015.

Santa Monica's electrical grid received infrastructure upgrades to improve reliability. According to Southern California Edison (SCE), the number and duration of power outages decreased in 2015 for the Santa Monica area at large and the City in specific. SCE has about 56,575 customers in Santa Monica spread among 48 circuits. The number of customers per circuit varies wildly from Palisades at Montana/9th St (10 customers) and Aircraft on Donald Douglas Loop (34 customers) to Riptide covering a swath of town from PCH to 7th and Wilshire to San Vicente (4,760) and Albatross that covers a narrow band from Wilshire to San Vicente between 7th and 9th (4,710 customers).

The California Coastal Commission held one of its roving meetings in Santa Monica. The commission has recently ousted its former executive director and appointed John Ainsworth as the interim leader. The Commission faced a year of criticism over its handling of development issues along the coast and internal politics.

In a continuing trend, more of the city's rent controlled units left the market and those that remained became less affordable. According to the annual report rent controlled units experienced more turnover, higher prices and less affordability over time, with officials pointing to a rebounding economy and overall greed as the causes. With vacancy decontrol laws allowing landlords to set units to market rate when a tenant leaves, the median rent for new renters is at least double that of longtime tenants,

Construction continued on two new hotels Downtown at the corner of 5th and Colorado. A Hampton Inn and Courtyard by Marriott were scheduled for completion in the summer or fall of 2016 but both have been pushed to 2017.

An independent investigation into the City of Santa Monica's ethical procedures determined Santa Monica officials experienced "lapses in judgment" in relation to the Elizabeth Riel case and that the City could enforce its anti-corruption laws. City Hall hired attorney John Hueston to address concerns about the way the city has handled ethics complaints related to the Oaks Initiative and the hiring/firing of Elizabeth Riel. Hueston concluded that Councilwoman Pam O'Connor acted inappropriately during the Riel situation and recommended the city revise its ethics rules. Councilmembers criticized O'Connor's actions but she faced no formal sanction.

Council discussed the sale of Mountain View Mobile Home Park. The park was a privately owned park until 2000 when it was purchased by the City of Santa Monica. Changes were made to the infrastructure and housing map before the city began searching for a new operator.

Bill Walker was hired as Santa Monica's new fire chief. Walker began work in May, overseeing the department's responders and civilian staff. His annual salary will be $257,988. The announcement capped a year of vacancy at the fire chief position following the departure of Scott Ferguson in April 2015.

A multi-year debate over the naming of two Pico Neighborhood ended with formal recognition for both candidates. A newly constructed park adjacent to the Expo maintenance facility will be named after George Ishihara, a World War II veteran and resident of the area. Council also directed staff to rename Stewart Street Park after Joe Gandara, a Santa Monica native killed in WWII at the age of 20. Gandara was also recognized with a dedication plaque at the Expo station.

As the cost of housing continues to increase, Santa Monica's most at risk renters got a little help from the Federal Government. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) agreed to significantly increase the value of housing subsidies under the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, formally known as Section 8, that provides aid to low income renters such as seniors, families and individuals with disabilities. Locally, the City of Santa Monica began work on its own rent subsidy program and officials will return with a draft of the local program in 2017.

Tourism continued to support the local economy, according to figures presented by Santa Monica Travel and Tourism (SMTT). About 8.3 million visitors came to the city in 2015, an increase of 5.3 percent. International visitors account for about 48.2 percent of total visitors and 56 percent of total spending. Officials said the industry supports about 13,500 tourism jobs, a slight decrease from 13,700 in 2014. The Transit Occupancy Tax, paid by hotel guests, increased by 2.5 percent to $46.6 million and goes directly to the city's General Fund. Retail sales tax generated by visitors increased $12.4 percent to $11.9 million.

The Landmarks Commission declared a cluster of buildings at the foot of the Santa Monica Pier to be landmarks and the new rules will likely prevent the applicant from converting the space into the city's 22nd Starbucks location.

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District will have to create, and adhere to, a new transportation plan if they want to avoid a significant increase in the price of parking downtown. City Hall revised parking rates downtown including at the Civic Center lot where about 200 SMMUSD employees park. The new rates could increases costs for the district by $209,000 a year but Council directed staff to provide options for the district to save money, but only if SMMUSD developed a plan to reduce traffic before January 1, 2017,

Council approved a Development Agreement for a new, 7-story building at the site formerly occupied by Fred Segal (500 Broadway). The project is a mixed-use 7-story (84 feet) building consisting of 301,830 total square feet, including 24,217 square feet of basement area, 35,428 square feet of ground floor commercial space (including a grocery store/market), 249 residential rental units, and 524 parking spaces within a four-level subterranean parking garage.

Council increased the number of possible alcohol outlets downtown while also installing a temporary ban on converting full-service restaurants to "fast-causal." Both decisions came during an extension of temporary zoning rules governing the downtown area that include requiring a development agreement for projects over 32 feet in height but allow less stringent reviews for less dense projects.

A coalition of apartment owners sued the

SEE GOVERNMENT PAGE 4

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GOVERNMENT

FROM PAGE 3

Rent Control Board alleging the board's prohibition on charging tenants for water use is a violation of state vacancy decontrol laws.

The Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority and the City of Santa Monica settled a lawsuit over the price of land at the Downtown station. Santa Monica will receive $20 million for a nearly 34,000-squarefoot plot of land at 402 Colorado Ave., where the terminus station has opened.

COAST, Santa Monica's first open streets event, included about two mile of car-free streets along Ocean Ave and Main St. Local businesses, organizations, community groups, and the City helped draw thousands of people to the temporarily closed streets.

The City of Santa Monica restored civic funding to the Pico Youth and Family Center (PYFC) after receiving an emergency request from the organization. PYFC received $50,000 from the council's discretionary fund for use as a matching grant with the hope that PYFC could double the donation. The money followed a year without any city funding for the organization and PYFC leaders said it was a sign of a new relationship between the organization and City Hall.

The California Incline reopened after a significant rebuild. The new road is wider and more seismically sound. In addition, a new pedestrian bridge was built over the famous roadway connecting Palisades Park to the beach. Opening day was delayed several weeks to allow for final construction of the bridge.

Breeze bike share revised its prices after its first year of operation. Pay as you go increased to $7 an hour and the three passes increased ride time to 90 minutes per day. Businesses are now able to purchase reduced cost memberships for employees for as little as $19 per year.

Woodlawn Cemetery added an environmentally friendly burial option. The $125,000 project recently earned Woodlawn certification from the Green Burial Council, a nonprofit organization that sets standards for the practice, making the local cemetery the second in Southern California with sanctioned green burial.

Santa Monica's newly renovated Fairview Library received a formal welcome and opening. Civic leaders, neighbors and library patrons gathered for a brief welcome, tours of the building and a day celebratory activities that included Hawaiian dancing and "how-to" workshops. The library is located at 2101 Ocean Park Blvd.

The council approved new rules for installation and modification of telecommunications equipment that will preserve the city's ability to hide equipment while allowing for expansion to meet growing demands. Santa Monica's updates were prompted by action at the Federal and State level that clarified definitions for equipment.

Large crowds packed the Twilight Concert Series. The concert venue and the Pier itself reached capacity during some of the shows with attendees diverted to the beach. The pier deck has a maximum capacity of about 4,500.

Santa Monica delayed action on regulating local marijuana sales. The City's zoning code allows two marijuana dispensaries to operate in the city but officials delayed decisions on the process for filling those slots pending the results of the 2016 election and a proposal to legalize recreational marijuana.

City Council heard an appeal to reoccupy the former Post Office building at the corner of 5th Street and Arizona Avenue. Council ultimately approved reoccupation of the site with heavy debate on a proposed fence in front of the building.

The City of Santa Monica began a new effort to fight human trafficking including a mandatory education and outreach campaign to potential victims. The City Attorney's Office will oversee the program.

Santa Monica was awarded the 2016 RWJF Culture of Health Prize by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Prize honors communities for their efforts to ensure all residents have the opportunity to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives.

The slow crawl towards Santa Monica's participation in the 2024 Olympic games continued with Council approving a pair of letters formalizing the City's intent to participate as the venue for beach volleyball if Los Angeles is awarded the games. Olympic officials are proposing a temporary stadium near the Santa Monica Pier.

Council accepted the final report for the 15x15 Climate Action Plan that said Santa Monica reduced its emission of greenhouse gases to 80 percent of 1990 levels, exceeding its goal by 5 percent. City Hall plans to increase emission reduction efforts in the future.

Carousel Café announced its closure. The longtime eatery at the base of the Pier was part of a cluster of buildings that eventually earned landmark designation. An application had been filed to convert the space into a new Starbucks.

The Santa Monica Animal Shelter established a new non-profit organization supporting the shelter's work.

The City of Santa Monica expanded its much-publicized Wellbeing Index. Officials collected a second round of data to augment the grant-funded study to hopefully provide better insight into trends over time.

City Hall fell short of a full-fledged vacant building registry and instead chose to make minor revisions to code compliance rules with direction to revisit the issue down the road if necessary.

A divided Planning Commission approved plans for an expansion to City Hall a revision to the placement of the solar panels and the presence of a previously absent Commissioner was enough for the project to secure four votes.

Council approved a five percent water rate increase for 2017 resulting in an average increase of about $2 per month for the average residential user. The increase was less than the nine percent initially scheduled for the year

The Santa Monica Fire Department celebrated its 2016 Firefighter recruitment class with 15 newly sworn in probationary firefighters who began working shifts on Nov. 21.

Council asked for additional revisions to a local rent subsidy program. The program has an initial budget of $200,000 for rental assistance and $100,000 for administration. Staff will evaluate a new approach that focuses on providing enough post-rent income to ensure quality of life for rent burdened residents.

Local developer Neil Shekhter was found to have committed fraud and forgery. The court ruling resulted in a ongoing fight over control of several local apartment buildings and prompted the Council to request a full accounting of the city's dealings with Shekhter.

The number of taxi's in Santa Monica was slashed to help the remaining drivers make a living. The reduced the number of cabs by 32 percent, from 300 to 199.

Providence Saint John's Health Center continued work on a massive new 799,000 square foot development on both sides of Santa Monica Boulevard between 20th and 23rd streets. City Hall extended expiration dates for permits giving the hospital up to 20 years to finish the project.

City attorney Marsha Moutrie made her retirement official in December. Council said goodbye to the longstanding employee with standing ovations and praise from local, state and national leaders.

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CULTURE

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, the Super Bowl halftime show is allegedly headlined by Coldplay. But it's BEYONCE who rules with a commanding performance of her new song, "Formation," proving that Queen Bey is still very much among our royalty.

MARCH:

The ROLLING STONES perform in Cuba, a once-unthinkable event that happens a week after President Obama visits the island nation. Speaking of Obama, he hosts a White House concert performance of "HAMILTON," part of a remarkable 2016 for LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA and his rap-infused Broadway musical about founding father Alexander Hamilton. We say goodbye to GARRY SHANDLING.

APRIL:

HAMILTON wins the Pulitzer for drama (to add to a Grammy and, soon, 11 Tonys), and current Treasury Secretary Jack Lew reverses a plan to bump Hamilton from the $10 bill after fans kick up a fuss — undoubtedly the first time a Broadway show influences currency policy. And April showers bring Purple Rain: Rock legend PRINCE dies a shocking death at 57 of an accidental opioid overdose, launching countless poignant tributes.

MAY:

"It's not over 'til I say it's over," says BERNIE SANDERS to HILLARY CLINTON, of the fight for the Democratic nomination. Actually, that's LARRY DAVID talking to KATE MCKINNON on "Saturday Night Live." As MCKINNON hones her acclaimed, manically ambitious portrayal of Clinton — one of nine actresses to portray her in SNL history — DONALD TRUMP (in real life) clinches the Republican nomination. We'll have to wait a few months to see who plays him on SNL....

JUNE:

The greatest is gone: MUHAMMAD ALI dies at 74 after a three-decade battle with Parkinson's disease. It's CLINTON's turn to clinch her party's nomination, becoming the first woman in U.S. history to lead a major party ticket. At the Tony awards, host JAMES CORDEN opens with a tribute to the Orlando nightclub shooting victims, and MIRANDA does the same with a tearful sonnet, declaring that "love is love is love is love."

JULY:

Hollywood always turns out for Democrats, and the Democratic National Convention is no exception. Performers include KATY PERRY, ALICIA KEYS, CAROLE KING, DEMI LOVATO, BOYZ II MEN and PAUL SIMON, among many others. In media news, ROGER AILES is out at Fox News Channel, following allegations of sexual harassment. And the retired JON STEWART — missed by many fans in an election year — returns to late night, bearded and in a bathrobe, for an appearance with STEPHEN COLBERT.

AUGUST:

SCOTT BAIO is the biggest celebrity at the Republican National Convention. And some sports news: In Rio, MICHAEL PHELPS ends his historic Olympic career (or so he says) with a mind-boggling 23rd career gold. But the U.S. swim team's achievements are overshadowed by RYAN LOCHTE's drunken night and evolving explanation. Goodbye, Willy Wonka and Leo Bloom: Actor GENE WILDER — whose name could easily describe his famous eyes and untamed hair — dies at 83 of complications of Alzheimer's.

SEPTEMBER:

The first CLINTON-TRUMP debate draws 84 million viewers, the most ever for a U.S. presidential matchup, and yields at least one catchy meme: The "Hillary Shimmy." Clinton tries her hand at comedy with ZACH GALIFIANAKIS on "Between Two Ferns." JIMMY FALLON famously musses TRUMP's hair, and is criticized for the friendly encounter. Bye Bye, BRANGELINA: One of the most high-profile couplings in Hollywood is over.

OCTOBER:

Hello, NASTY WOMAN: Trump's frustrated comment about Clinton in their third, extremely contentious debate becomes one of the more famous exchanges of the season, launching "nasty woman" merchandise like the "Madam President If You're Nasty" T-shirt. We meet ALEC BALDWIN'S Trump on SNL. TRUMP — the real one — tweets: "Alec Baldwin portrayal stinks." And the candidate's "grab 'em" comments on "Access Hollywood" emerge, sending his campaign into damage control.

NOVEMBER:

Something happens in early November ... what was it again? Meantime, let's remember singer LEONARD COHEN, dead at 82. Many find themselves singing "Hallelujah," his much-covered ballad — including a somber MCKINNON on "SNL," a few days after the election. BALDWIN reprises Trump, the real TRUMP settles into meetings at Trump Tower, and his vice president-elect, MIKE PENCE, goes to HAMILTON, where the production appeals to him directly from the stage to work on behalf of all Americans. Pence says he doesn't mind, but Trump tweets: "Apologize!"

DECEMBER:

It's been quite a year for the musical, and not just on Broadway. "Hairspray Live!" continues the live TV musical fad. And movie audiences are enchanted by a candy-colored, old-fashioned musical ode to Tinseltown itself, "La La Land," by young director DAMIEN CHAZELLE. Finally, for those craving a little consistency in this turbulent year, it's perhaps nice to know that December arrives bearing the same Christmas gift as it did last year: A new "STAR WARS" movie.

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Globalization took hits in 2016; Will 2017 lead to more

BY PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

Globalization, the path that the world economy has largely followed for decades, took some hefty blows in 2016.

The election of Donald Trump as U.S. president and Britain's decision to leave the European Union have raised questions over the future of tariff-free trade and companies' freedom to move production to lower-cost countries.

Borders are back in vogue. Economic nationalism is paying political dividends.

"We want our country back" was the rallying cry of those backing Brexit, a sound bite that had echoes in Trump's "Make America great again."

The rise of Trump and the triumph of Brexit had their roots in the global financial crisis of 2008. Eight years later, the world economy has still not yet fully gotten past that shock to its confidence — people are nervous, some are angry, and many are seeking novel solutions to their problems. Next year, there's scope for more uncertainty with elections in France and Germany.

Here's a look at the year's top business stories for 2016:

BREXIT SHOCK

Britain voted to leave the EU in a referendum in June. The decision came as a surprise — certainly to bookmakers and many pollsters who had consistently given the "remain" side the edge — and means Britain has to redefine itself after 43 years of EU membership. David Cameron resigned as prime minister after the vote and the new Conservative government led by Theresa May is planning to trigger the formal process by which Britain exits the EU early next year. There are many shades of potential Brexit, from an outright divorce that could put up tariffs on goods and services, to a more amicable parting. The pound's fall to a 31-year low below $1.20 at one point is testament to that uncertainty.

TRUMP CARD

Pollsters and bookmakers got it wrong again a few months later when Trump defeated Hillary Clinton in the U.S. presidential election. Whether he translates his "America First" platform into action following his inauguration in January will help shape the global economy for the next four years at least. Trump has railed against long-standing trading agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, and vowed to punish China for the way it devalues its currency against the dollar and to tax U.S. firms that move jobs overseas. He has also laid out plans to bring America's creaking infrastructure up to 21st-century standards, a new spending pitch that has the potential to boost jobs — but which could also lay the seeds of higher inflation.

MARKETS MARCH ON

Trump's victory did not cause the bottom to fall out of the stock market rally that's been largely in place since 2009, when the world economy started to first claw out of its deepest recession since World War II. In fact, both the Dow and the S&P 500 rallied to hit a series of record highs. Stocks have also benefited from a raft of big corporate deals this year — executives are seeing takeovers as a fast way to generate growth in what is otherwise a low-growth global economy disrupted by non-stop technological innovations. Notable deals in 2016 included the announcement of an $85 billion merger of Time Warner and AT&T and the $57 billion takeover of Monsanto by Bayer. The $100 billion takeover of SABMiller by Budweiser maker Anheuser-Busch InBev was finished.

FED FINALLY DELIVERS

During his campaign, Trump criticized Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, saying she should be "ashamed" of the way she's run policy since taking the helm in 2014. A year ago, the Fed appeared set to follow up its first interest rate hike in nearly a decade with three or four more in 2016. But there was no move until Dec. 14, when the U.S. central bank raised its main interest rate to a range between 0.5 percent and 0.75 percent. Many factors explained its hesitation to raise rates, including unease over the global impact of China's economic slowdown and uncertainty surrounding the U.S. election. But with the U.S. economy continuing to do better than most developed countries — with unemployment below 5 percent and inflation on the way up — the Fed finally delivered another hike. The markets are predicting another three or four increases next year. Those expectations have helped the dollar rally, especially as other major central banks persevere with super-loose monetary policies to breathe life into their economies.

CHINA'S KEY ROLE

As the world's second-largest economy, China is playing a bigger role in the functioning of the global economy. Nowhere was that more evident than in the early months of 2016, when jitters over the scale of the slowdown in China caused wild swings in financial markets. Stocks took a pounding while commodities tanked, with oil skidding to 13-year lows, as traders factored in lower demand from

SEE **BUSINESS** PAGE 10

City of Santa Monica

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING TO BE HELD BY THE SANTA MONICA ZONING ADMINISTRATOR ON APPLICATIONS FOR VARIANCES

WHEN: **10:30 a.m., Tuesday, January 10, 2017**
WHERE: Council Chambers, Room 213, Santa Monica City Hall, 1685 Main Street, Santa Monica

SUBJECT: A Public Hearing will be held by the Zoning Administrator of the City of Santa Monica at the above noted time and place in regard to the following requests:

USE PERMIT, 16ENT-0166, 1750 14th Street. The applicant requests approval of an antenna Minor Use Permit for a new wireless telecommunications facility located at 1750 14th Street within the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district. The project consists of installing six new panel antennas within three different sectors behind a new fiber-reinforced plastic (FRP) screen wall designed to match the architectural style of the front corner of the building, installing one new microwave dish, installing new equipment cabinets on a new rooftop platform concealed behind FRP screening along the corner parapet wall and installing new hybriflex cables and associated power lines. All features of the wireless facility would be located on the rooftop of an existing three-story commercial building. As proposed, the project does not comply with the requirements for non-parabolic commercial antennas contained in Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Section 9.32.060(A). Pursuant to SMMC Section 9.32.060(B), the applicant may request modifications to the requirements for non-parabolic commercial antennas through the approval of an antenna Minor Use Permit application. [PLANNER: Michael Rocque] **APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER**: Sprint PCS Assets, LLC/14th Street Building, LLC.

MAJOR MODIFICATION, 16ENT-0191, 2701 4th Street. The applicant requests a Major Modification to allow a reduction of the minimum required 20-foot front yard and 4.3-foot side yard setbacks for a proposed 156 square foot addition to the front of an existing single-unit dwelling. The proposed front setback for the addition is 16 feet, and the proposed side yard setback is 3.71 feet. Pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Section 9.43.030(B)(1) the applicant may request a setback modification of up to 20% (4 feet for the front setback and 9.6 inches for the side setback). The subject property is located in the Ocean Park Neighborhood (OP2) zoning district. [PLANNER: Gina Szilak] **APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER**: Tellus Design+Build/Lorenzo Garbo and Michael Novak.

FENCE WALL HEDGE HEIGHT MODIFICATION, 16ENT-0184, 9 Vicente Terrace. The applicant requests approval of a fence, wall, hedge height modification to allow a fence and hedge ranging between 6'1" – 8'11" in height along the front property line and 8' high hedges along the side property lines in the front setback area adjacent to Vicente Terrace. The subject property is located in the Multi-Unit Residential (R3) zoning district. Pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Section 9.21.050, fences, walls, or hedges cannot exceed a maximum height of 42 inches within the required front yard setback area as measured from the lowest finished grade adjacent to either side of the fence, wall, or hedge. SMMC Section 9.43.080(B) allows an applicant to request a modification to this height limitation in the front yard setback area. [PLANNER: Gina Szilak] **APPLICANT/OWNER:** John Nugent/William Carter Brereton.

FENCE WALL HEDGE HEIGHT MODIFICATION, 16ENT-0188, 338 Euclid Street. The applicant requests approval of a hedge height modification to allow a 10-foot high hedge along the north side property line perpendicular to Euclid Street in the front setback. The subject property is located in the Single-Unit Residential Zoning District (R1). Pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Section 9.21.050, fences, walls, and hedges cannot exceed a maximum height of 42 inches within the required front yard setback as measured from the lowest finished grade adjacent to either side of the fence, wall, or hedge. SMMC Section 9.43.080(B) allows an applicant to request a modification to this height limitation in the front yard setback. . [PLANNER: Russell Bunim] **APPLICANT/OWNER**: Marlene and John Okulick/Marlene and John Okulick Family Trust.

FENCE WALL HEDGE HEIGHT MODIFICATION, 16ENT-0192, 1045 23rd Street. A hedge height modification to allow for a 6-foot high hedge within the front setback area of a property located in the R-1 (Single-Unit Residential) zoning district. Pursuant to the Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC) Section 9.21.050, fences, walls, or hedges cannot exceed a maximum height of 42 inches within the required front yard setback area as measured from the lowest finished grade adjacent to either side of the fence, wall, or hedge. SMMC Section 9.43.080(B) permits an applicant to request a modification to this height limitation in the front yard setback area. [PLANNER: Michael Rocque] **APPLICANT/OWNER**: Sheri Silverton.

HOW TO COMMENT

The City of Santa Monica encourages public comment. You may comment at the Zoning Administrator public hearing, or by writing a letter. Written information will be given to the Zoning Administrator at the meeting.

Any person may comment at the Public Hearing, or by writing a letter to the City Planning Division, Room 212, P.O. Box 2220, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2220. Plans are available for public review at the City Planning Division. For more information, please contact the City Planning Division at (310) 458-8341. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 64009(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. The meeting facility is wheelchair accessible. For disability-related accommodations, please contact (310) 458-8341 or (310) 458-8696 TTY at least 72 hours in advance. Every attempt will made to provide the requested accommodation. All written materials are available in alternate format upon request. Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Lines #1, #2, #3, Rapid 3, #7, #8, #9, Rapid #10, and #18 service City Hall and the Civic Center area. 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, on Olympic Drive, and in the Civic Center Parking Structure (validation free).

*Esto es un aviso sobre una audiencia publica para revisar applicaciones proponiendo desarrollo en Santa Monica. Esto puede ser de interes para usted. Si desea mas informacion, favor de llamar a Carmen Gutierrez en la Division de Planificacion al numero (310) 458-8341.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Los Angeles

Local U.S. Attorney's Office collects nearly $72 million in civil and criminal actions

United States Attorney Eileen M. Decker has announced that her office collected $71,732,281 in criminal and civil actions in Fiscal Year 2016. Of this amount, just over $27 million was collected in criminal actions, and $44.6 million was collected in civil actions.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California worked with other U.S. Attorney's Offices and components of the Department of Justice to collect an additional $7.8 million in joint cases, mostly civil matters.

Additionally, the U.S. Attorney's office, working with partner agencies and divisions, collected $29.9 million in asset forfeiture actions in the fiscal year that ended on September 30. Forfeited assets deposited into the Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund are used to restore funds to crime victims and for a variety of law enforcement purposes.

"Every year, my office helps collect millions of dollars that goes to help victims of crime and to the United States Treasury to fund government programs," said United States Attorney Eileen M. Decker. "We are committed to recovering every dollar from defendants involved in criminal activity, as well as working on behalf of the victims of crime."

The United States Attorney's Office for the Central District of California is based in Los Angeles and has branch offices in Santa Ana and Riverside. Currently, approximately 270 Assistant United States Attorneys serve nearly 20 million residents of the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch has announced that the Justice Department collected more than $15.3 billion in civil and criminal actions in fiscal year 2016 – a figure that represents more than five times the approximately $3 billion appropriated budget for the 94 U.S. Attorneys' offices and the main litigating divisions of the Justice Department.

The U.S. Attorneys' Offices, along with the Justice Department's litigating divisions, are responsible for enforcing and collecting civil and criminal debts owed to the U.S., as well as criminal debts owed to federal crime victims. Federal law requires defendants to pay restitution to victims of certain federal crimes who have suffered a physical injury or financial loss. While restitution is paid to the victim, criminal fines and felony assessments are paid to the department's Crime Victims' Fund, which distributes the funds to state victim compensation and victim assistance programs.

Assistant United States Attorney Indira Cameron-Banks is the Chief of the Financial Litigation Section in the Civil Division. In that position, she is responsible for coordinating efforts to collect criminal and civil debts owed to victims of federal crimes and the United States, including restitution, fines, civil settlements, penalties and defaulted federal loans. These efforts include locating debtors' assets and initiating enforcement actions to secure collection on the outstanding debts.

– SUBMITTED BY THOM MROZEK, SPOKESPERSON/PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA (LOS ANGELES)

SMC

January at the Drescher Planetarium

The Santa Monica College John Drescher Planetarium will present two special feature shows and two telescope-observing events in January. The feature shows – as well as our popular Night Sky Show – will be held on Friday evenings.

The January shows are:

"Special Observing Event: A 9-Day-Old Moon and Winter Clusters" on January 6. Start your 2017 observing calendar with a look at the Moon, the jewel box of M45 (the Pleiades star cluster), and other pretty winter star clusters through a variety of telescopes.

"A Failure of Imagination – The Tragedy of Apollo 1" on January 13. The world was rocked in 1967 by the loss of the Apollo 1 crew—Gus Grissom, Ed White, and Roger Chaffee—to a fire during a ground test of their spacecraft. Find out about the accident and some of the surprising fixes that resulted from its investigation.

"Starbirth in Orion's Sword" on January 20. Explore the Great Orion Nebula and learn about recent discoveries that reveal the hundreds of potential planetary systems forming within. Note that our January 27 telescope session will focus on Orion.

"Special Observing Event: Orion, the Seven Sisters, and the Winter Hexagon" on January 27. Come view the bounty of bright stars in the winter sky – including the constellations Orion the Hunter and the lovely Seven Sisters – through a variety of telescopes, with guidance from our planetarium director.

The feature shows are at 8 p.m. and are preceded by "The Night Sky Show" at 7 p.m., offering the latest news in astronomy and space exploration, a family-friendly "tour" of the constellations, and the chance to ask astronomy-related questions.

The John Drescher Planetarium, which features a Digistar projection system, is located near the elevators on the second floor of Drescher Hall (1900 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica). Tickets are available at the door and cost $11 ($9 seniors and children) for the evening's scheduled "double bill," or $6 ($5 seniors age 60+ and children age 12 and under) for a single show or telescope-viewing session.

Please call (310) 434-3005 or see www.smc.edu/eventsinfo or www.smc.edu/planetarium for information. All shows subject to change or cancellation without notice.

– SUBMITTED BY GRACE SMITH, SMC PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Citywide

Santa Monica Student wins Girl Scout scholarship

In partnership with Students Stand with Malala, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles (GSGLA) awarded $15,000 in scholarships to six Girl Scouts for leading service projects that address the global need to increase girls' access to education.

Awardees Jena Anastasi (Grand Prize, Chino Hills), Meera Varma (Second Prize, Burbank) and Honorable Mention recipients Sarah Andrews (Burbank), Sierra Brooks (Gardena), Natalie Gold (Santa Monica), and Jayleen Ramos (Glendale) were recognized in a ceremony with Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles CEO Lise L. Luttgens on Dec. 8.

The scholarship opportunity required girls in grades 11-12 to develop and implement a Girl Scout Global Action Award project, joining a movement of 10 million girls who together are sowing the seeds of global social change. The goal of this award program in Girl Scouts is to provide girls the opportunity to understand and address the challenges associated with and the specific root cause of barriers to girls' access to education.

Jena Anastasi, Chino Hills (Grand Prize, $6,000)

In order to provide girls with the confidence to explore careers in STEM, Jena taught four science lessons with experiments to students at the Chino Teen Center. She was also invited by Threshold Technologies to present experiments at the Love, Hope, & Charity Foundation for youth and families. Participants were so impressed with the program, she was invited back to present a program to 800 more youth.

Meera Varma, Burbank (Second Prize, $3,000)

Meera addressed the lack of female representation in the computer science field by

SEE BRIEFS PAGE 10

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CRIME WATCH
BY DAILY PRESS STAFF

Crime Watch is culled from reports provided by the Santa Monica Police Department.

These are arrests only. All parties are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

ON DECEMBER 13, 2016 AT ABOUT 10:28 P.M.

Officers responded to a radio call for service at Urban Outfitters- 1440 3rd Street Promenade regarding a subject acting suspiciously and recognized by employees as a previous theft suspect. The suspect was detained by officers as he exited the store. An investigation revealed the suspect possessed merchandise belonging to the store. The suspect also had merchandise from PacSun and H&M stores. The suspect was taken into custody without incident. Kristain Mikal Rogers, 28, from Moreno Valley, was arrested for shoplifting and receiving stolen property. Bail was set at $5,000.

WELL NEWS BY SCOTT LAFEE

Buzz About a New Vaccine

■ Malaria is one of the world's great, enduring scourges: Roughly half of the world's population lives in areas at risk for disease transmission. Last year, there were 214 million recorded clinical cases and 438,000 deaths.

■ The Nobel Prize has been awarded five times to people working on malaria, but until now, there has been no vaccine. The world's first malaria vaccine began pilot studies this month in sub-Saharan Africa, with funding from the World Health Organization.

■ The vaccine isn't expected to be a cure-all. Earlier studies found it only 39 percent effective at reducing malaria infections, but for such a widespread disease like malaria, even a moderately effective vaccine might save thousands of lives each year.

■ Full clinical trials will take three to five years to complete.

MYSTERY PHOTO

Matthew Hall *matt@smdp.com*



The first person who can correctly identify where this image was captured wins a prize from the Santa Monica Daily Press. Send answers to *editor@smdp.com*.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column, and 3x3 block. Use logic and process of elimination to solve the puzzle.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

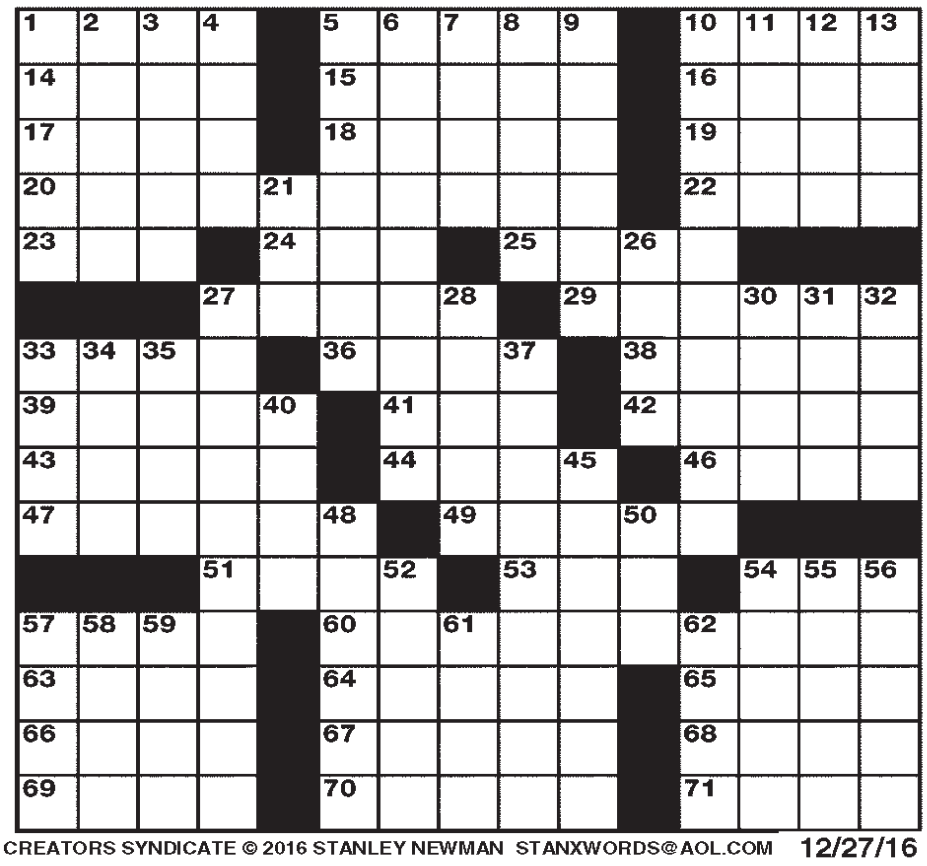
9	3		5		6			
	8			3		4		7
7			8				3	
					3	8	6	
1				6				4
	6	8	4					
	5				1			2
4		2		5			8	
			2		7		1	3

Newsday Crossword

LEADING QUARTET by Sandy Fein
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS
1 Begin to wake up
5 Places to pitch tents
10 Out of harm's way
14 Small inlet
15 Cognizant (of)
16 __ Grey tea
17 Apple's music player
18 Ben Affleck's pal Matt
19 Study hard
20 Earliest version of a speech
22 __ for (selects)
23 Frost-covered
24 Lend a hand
25 ONE WAY or STOP
27 Right from the garden
29 Gently prods
33 Earliest 007 film foe
36 Tightly closed
38 Stockholm native
39 Happen again
41 Bullfight cheer
42 Trace of color
43 Like a lot
44 Load of laundry
46 Have to have
47 Attend without an escort
49 Arise from one's seat
51 Medical insurance grps.
53 Genetic ID
54 Floor-cleaning tool
57 Uncertain
60 Bronze medalist's finish
63 Odometer measure
64 Submarine sandwiches
65 Chimps and gorillas
66 "Not guilty," for example
67 Higher than
68 Wooden strip
69 Crystal-ball user
70 Painter often confused with Monet
71 Barnyard cacklers

DOWN
1 Futuristic novel genre
2 Subject for discussion
3 Tusk material
4 Scarlet and crimson
5 Golf-bag toters
6 Oscars or Grammys telecast
7 Baby's first word, often
8 College teachers, for short
9 Mailed, as a contest entry
10 Late burst of energy
11 Group for people 50+
12 College club
13 Shade trees
21 Driveway goo
26 Sudden breeze
27 College seniors' period
28 Luau dances
30 Chromosome carrier
31 Slight advantage
32 Bit of bird food
33 Pull with difficulty
34 Change the decor of
35 Sgts. and cpls.
37 Tried out, at a car dealer
40 Package of paper
45 Part of a desk phone
48 __ City (Batman's home)
50 Short snooze
52 Queen of __ (Old Testament ruler)
54 Tree source of syrup
55 Atlantic or Pacific
56 Nuisances
57 Mischievous ones
58 Fingernail smoother
59 Make an escape
61 Metal that can rust
62 Place for mascara



CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2016 STANLEY NEWMAN STANXWORDS@AOL.COM 12/27/16

BUSINESS

FROM PAGE 6

resource-hungry China. The slump in commodities weighed heavily on economies like Australia. China's economy is ending the year in relatively good health as authorities try to pivot the economy's focus from manufacturing to more consumer spending. But Trump's promises to take a tough stance in trade will be of concern to Beijing.

OPEC TAKES A STAND

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries cut its production levels in 2016. November's cut, soon followed by more cuts by non-OPEC countries like Russia, helped push oil prices sharply higher. At over $50 a barrel, benchmark New York crude is markedly higher than the near 13-year lows around $30 recorded at the start of 2016, when investors focused on high supply and concerns over an economic slowdown. The oil slump helped put several crude-producing countries into severe recessions, including Brazil and Venezuela, and even saw wealthy Saudi Arabia cut back on spending. The question for 2017 is whether OPEC — and non-OPEC — countries can deliver on their production promises. If they do and higher oil prices stick, that will push up inflation in the global economy.

IT JUST GRATES

Perhaps nothing illustrated the distrust of elites more than the "Panama Papers," a leaked trove of data on thousands of offshore accounts that helped the wealthy, the powerful and celebrities shelter their cash from the taxman, often without breaking the law. Critics say these tax schemes are the core of a system that gives an unfair advantage to big corporations and the wealthy. Outrage grew in the U.S. when it was revealed that Wells Fargo employees opened up to 2 million bank and credit card accounts fraudulently to meet sales goals. Bank employees also allegedly moved money between those accounts and created fake email addresses to sign customers up for online banking.

It just grates.

BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 7

working with the Women in STEM club at Burbank High School to provide coding/Java workshops to fifth graders. The program will continue monthly.

Sarah Andrews, Burbank (Honorable Mention, $1,500)

Sarah spent more than 116 hours on her project which aimed to increase girls' exposure to STEM-related careers. She taught robotics to girls ages 11-14 and inspired them to form two FIRST Lego League robotics teams.

Sierra Brooks, Gardena (Honorable Mention, $1,500)

Sierra partnered with a local YMCA in support of a reading program. She replaced books, created a reading area with reading buddies and comfortable chairs, and coached girls to read above their grade levels. By the end of her project, 95 percent of the participants were reading above grade level, furthering their academic success.

Natalie Gold, Santa Monica (Honorable Mention, $1,500): Continuing her Girl Scout Gold Award project to inspire and encourage girls to explore careers in engineering, Natalie created and conducted a workshop, "Engineering, the E in STEM" at a Title I school, bringing in a STEM professional to assist. She also delivered a speech regarding the STEM gender gap to more than 180 Girl Scouts and their families. Her project website has more than 12,000 hits.

Jayleen Ramos, Glendale (Honorable Mention, $1,500)

With the goal of encouraging more girls to explore STEM-related career paths, Jayleen coached a FIRST Lego League all-girl robotics team. She focused her efforts on an all-girl team to encourage each girl to learn and lead in team-tasking, which is often done by boys on co-ed teams.

– SUBMITTED BY THE GIRL SCOUTS OF GREATER LOS ANGELES

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 27)

This year represents a clear "before-and-after" scenario. Your year will be the bass note of the chord of your life. In the future, you'll reverberate against it, resonate with the memories, speculate on the implied trajectories. Love is the focus of the first quarter. Business is the focus of the next. When in doubt, go with less. Leo and Taurus adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 3, 28, 44 and 6.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Like a pair of vintage shoes that perfectly completes an ensemble, your past makes the you-of-the-moment more interesting, authentic and comfortably worn-in.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

There are compromises to be made, and you won't be a lesser person for making them, much to the contrary: You'll be (SET ITAL) more (END ITAL) of a person. More empathetic, wise, experienced -- and wealthier, too.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

You're a unique individual. The more you realize your quirks, figure out your preferences and honor your dislikes, too, the happier you'll be. The thing to do is to stop seeking societal rewards and replace them with personal rewards.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Take pride in your progress. Maybe you still don't know what you want, but you know what you don't want, and that's even more important at this point. You'll use this information to make a new plan.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

The obvious route is too easy for you. Besides, people are starting to expect you to do something different. Also, you'll probably find that the main road is blocked. Everything is aligned to get you to take the road less traveled.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You're so relaxed today that you're practically unexcitable, which makes you a rock for your loved ones. That doesn't mean you lack enthusiasm. It just means that you administer it in measured doses.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

There's a thrill in being a beginner -- starting at the very bottom and working your way through each stage. Use the distinct advantages of the starting line. It is a place where everything is still possible.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

You don't have to be in an elite group to feel special. You purposely distance yourself from involvement in cliques who enjoy judging others from a "superior" position.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

You don't seek trouble. But if it culminates like storm clouds above your head, you won't run from it, either. Adversity, when faced head-on, is precisely what will make you strong.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Deconstruct a situation to understand it better. Cause problems on purpose to test your skill at fixing them. Like a child learning the world, you are naturally inclined to experiment.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

You're in charge of you. Others might be bossy today, because you've attracted people want to be a part of your next move. Get distance from the crowd. Let your next move be all you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Here's one thing certain about your future: You can and will rise to the occasion. Part of the reason is that you're practicing for it: You are practicing for it, aren't you? If not, this is a fine time to start.

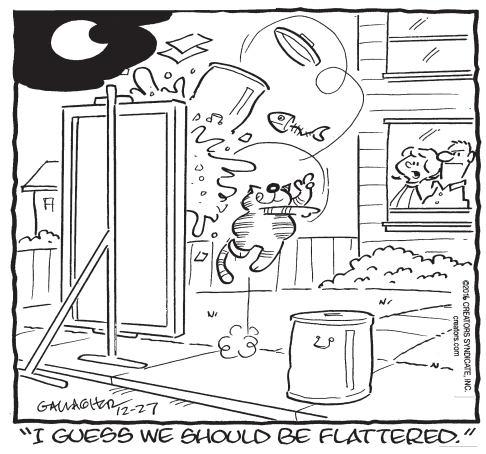
New-Moon Prep

The night before the new moon is an opportunity. The night before the Capricorn new moon is a (SET ITAL) powerful (END ITAL) opportunity. Much of life is handled through practicalities and structured systems. Light a candle; channel your belief in all that is practical. The patron saints of this new moon: Suze Orman, Tim Gunn, Jamie Oliver and Julie Morgenstern.

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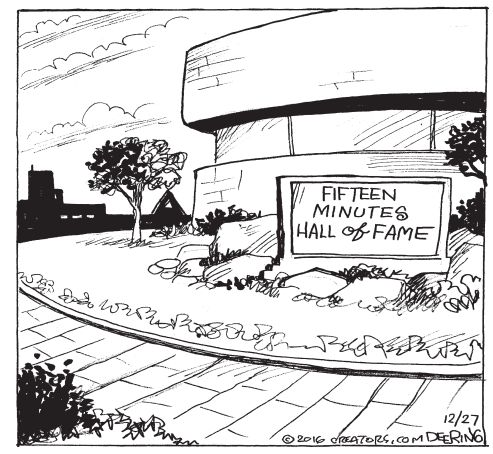
Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



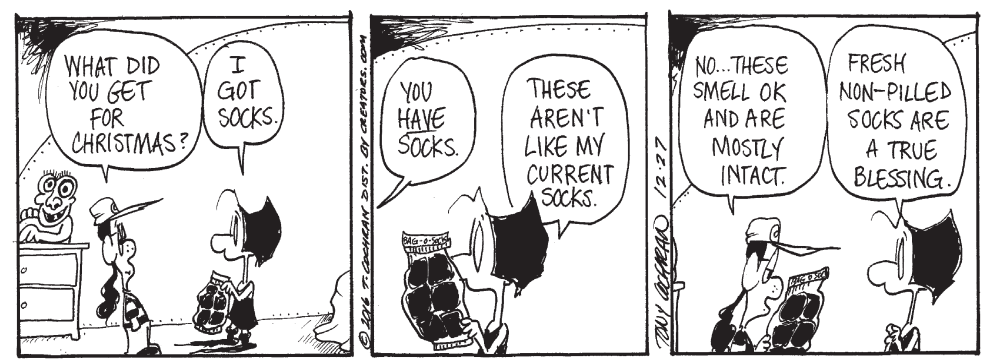
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By JOHN DEERING



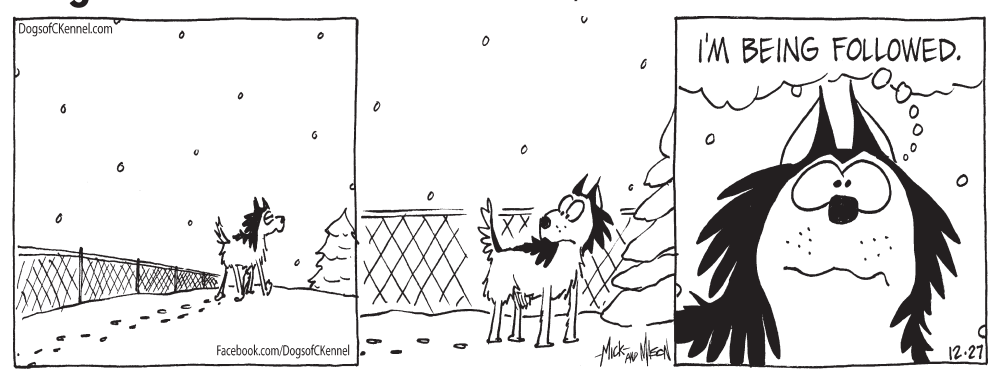
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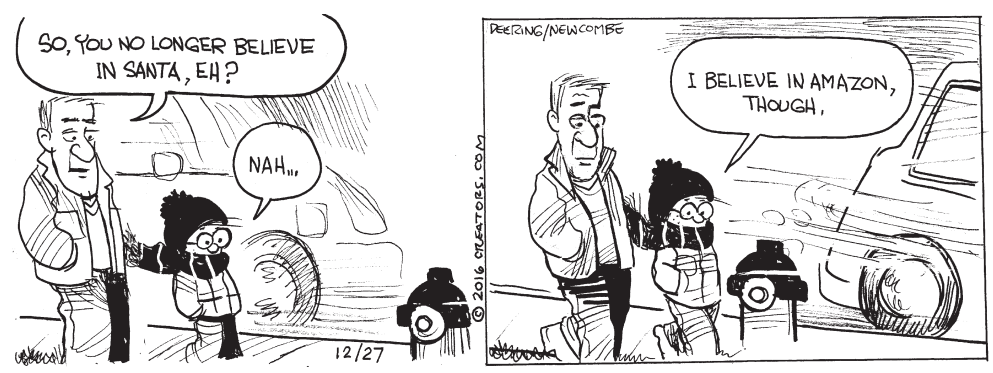
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