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Santa Monica Daily Press

Volume 25 Issue 31 | TUESDAY 12/30/25 | smdp.com

Year in Review: Resignations and celebrations as Summer turns to Fall



SMDP Photo

JULY 4: The City's annual Independence Day Parade was held along Main Street in July.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Today is the third part of our annual Year in Review coverage summarizing news from July, August and September.

JULY

Venice Homelessness Declined — Venice's unsheltered homeless population dropped 22% in 2024, falling by 165 people to around 585. Researchers found no clear policy explanation for the decline, unlike other LA neighborhoods. Despite the reduction, rough sleeping doubled to 48%.

Pet Shelters Prepared for July 4th — Animal shelters nationwide braced for lost pets during July 4th celebrations. Fireworks caused panic in animals, leading to escapes. Facilities advised owners to microchip pets and keep them indoors during the noisy holiday.

PFAS Contamination Found — A Waterkeeper Alliance report revealed high levels of PFAS "forever chemicals" in household items and local waterways. The study indicated these dangerous substances exceeded federal safety limits, posing risks to public health and environment.

Homeless Student Count Rose — California saw an increase in homeless students, partly due to better identification methods. However, funding for support programs expired, and anticipated federal budget cuts threatened resources for these vulnerable families.

Wildfire Rebuilding Authority Created — LA County Supervisors approved creating a dedicated authority to streamline rebuilding efforts after the Palisades and Altadena wildfires. The initiative aimed to cut red tape and coordinate recovery based on community feedback.

Alcohol Sales Approved Near

SEE **JULY** PAGE 4

FAA rules Santa Monica violated federal law over fees

MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

The Federal Aviation Administration has determined Santa Monica Municipal Airport violated federal law by accumulating surplus revenues it intends to spend on general city services when the airport closes, rather than using those funds for aviation purposes.

In a Director's Determination issued Dec. 22, FAA Director Michael Helvey found the city's actions do not conform with federal grant assurances and revenue use restrictions. The ruling requires Santa Monica to revise its fee structure within 30 days and implement new aeronautical rates within 60 days.

"The Director finds that the City's actions are not in conformance with

SEE **AIRPORT** PAGE 11

Cities can't punish outreach workers for helping homeless Californians under new law

BY MARISA KENDALL
CalMatters

Senate Bill 634 would have made a big splash if it survived in the form Pasadena Democrat Sasha Renée Pérez originally intended. She wanted to make it illegal for cities to cite or arrest homeless Californians for sleeping outside. But, faced with intense backlash from cities and law enforcement agencies, the legislator watered down her bill.

SEE **HOMELESS** PAGE 4



Record holiday rainfall drenches Los Angeles County, triggers widespread flooding

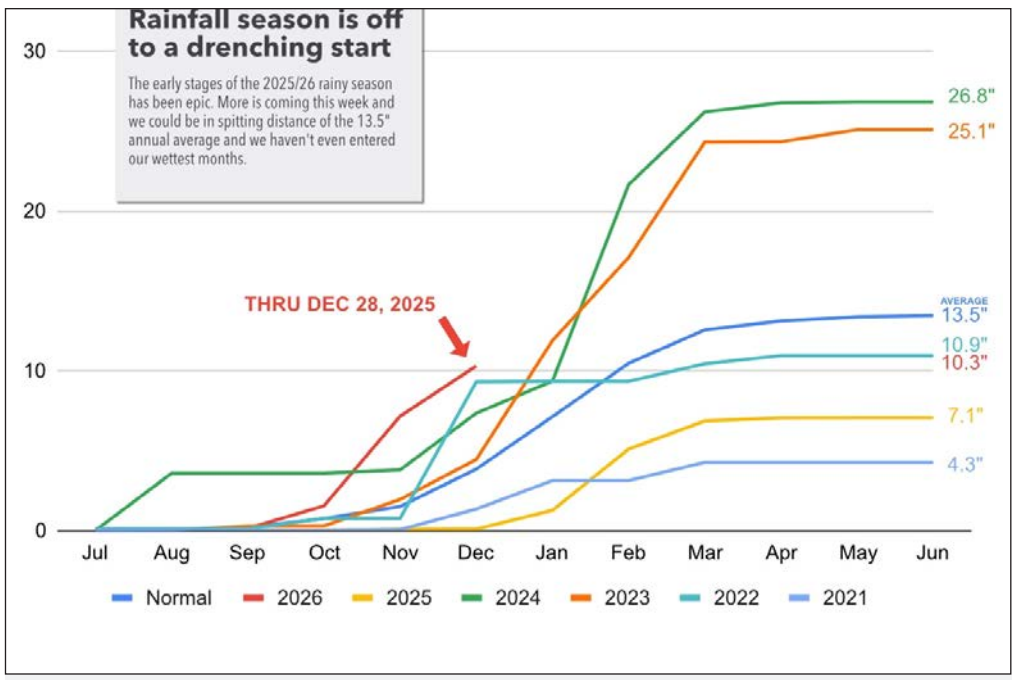
MATTHEW HALL
Daily Press Editor

Los Angeles County experienced its wettest Christmas in modern history last week as a powerful "Pineapple Express" atmospheric river dumped extreme rainfall across the region from Dec. 22-29, shattering decades-old records and prompting emergency declarations.

Downtown Los Angeles recorded roughly 4 inches of rain from Christmas Eve through Dec. 26 — the city's second-wettest Dec. 24-26 period on record, surpassed only by 1889. Santa Monica received about 3.1 inches over three days at SMO, while our SMDP rain gauge in NOMA measured 4.8". Mountain locations saw far higher totals. Mount Wilson in the San Gabriel Mountains recorded over 8 inches during the five-day storm window, and some mountain areas received nearly 18 inches for the week.

Los Angeles International Airport logged 1.88 inches on Christmas Eve, breaking a 1971 record, while Burbank Airport saw 3.42 inches, also a new daily high. Santa Barbara Airport measured 5.91 inches on Christmas Day — its wettest Christmas on record. Meteorologists ranked the event among the top five to 10 wettest starts to Southern California's winter rainy season.

The torrential rains caused widespread flooding and mudslides across the county. Major freeways, including Interstate 5 in



SMDP Image

RAIN: The single storm brought an immense amount of water to the area.

Sun Valley, were shut down as lanes flooded. Street intersections from Eagle Rock to South Los Angeles saw deep standing water that stalled vehicles.

The Los Angeles Fire Department conducted at least three swift-water rescues by Christmas Eve, including one dramatic incident in which firefighters rescued a woman carried nine miles down San Jose Creek by raging storm runoff. Officials urged residents to stay off roads as crews responded to flooded streets, downed power lines and debris flows.

Hillside communities faced severe mudslide threats. The mountain town of Wrightwood experienced torrents of mud surging through homes, trapping cars and residents. San Bernardino County fire officials ordered residents to shelter in place due to impassable, mud-covered roads. Mandatory evacuation orders were issued for burn scar areas in the Santa Monica Mountains, including Pacific Palisades and Malibu.

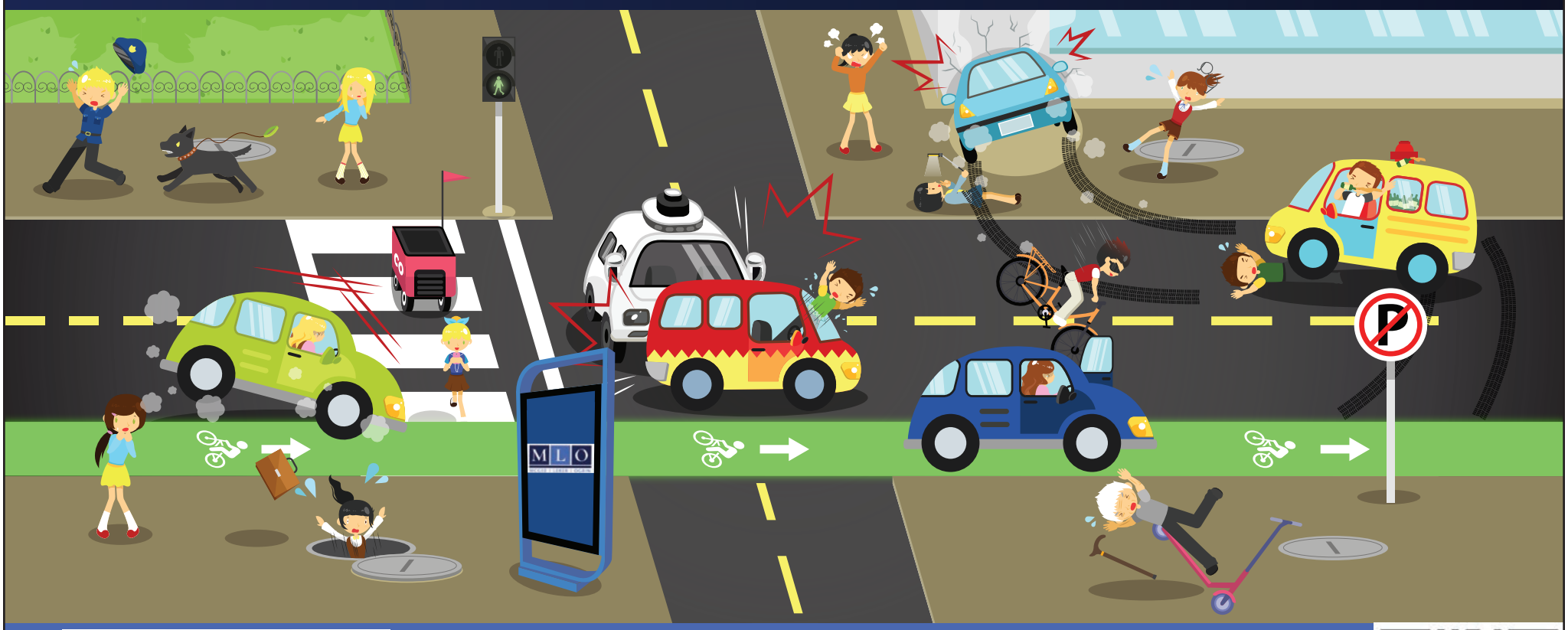
Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass declared a local state of emergency, while Gov. Gavin Newsom issued an emergency proclamation to mobilize resources. As of Christmas Day, city agencies had responded to over 350 traffic collisions and 600-plus calls about downed trees. Approximately 4,000 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power customers lost power at the storm's peak, though crews restored service to all but two traffic signals by Christmas night.

In a rare occurrence, a small EF-0 tornado with 80 mph winds touched down in Boyle Heights on Christmas morning, damaging roofs and a strip mall. The multi-day storm system was blamed for at least four deaths statewide, though Los Angeles County reported no direct fatalities.

Caltrans reopened a 3.6-mile stretch of Topanga Canyon Boulevard between Pacific Coast Highway and Grand View Drive at noon Saturday after crews removed rockfall and debris. The highway had been closed preemptively on Dec. 23. The corridor remains an active work zone for Palisades Fire

SEE **RAIN** PAGE 11

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How to build an emergency fund, pay off debt and make a plan for your money in 2026

The start of a new year usually brings new motivation to achieve goals like eating healthier or finally cleaning your basement. Many resolutions also focus on financial goals, such as paying off credit card debt, saving for a new house, or simply getting more educated about money.

"New Year's is a really good time to review and realign your financial goals overall," said Erica Grundza, certified financial planner at Betterment, an investing and savings app.

When building your goals for 2026, Grundza recommends focusing less on the past and more on an optimistic, yet realistic, vision for the future. She recommends that you focus on reestablishing the "why" behind your approach to money and how you want to make it work for your life. This can be as simple as saving $10 each week in a savings account, or a bigger goal like saving to buy a house in the coming years. It's all about your own journey.

The Associated Press spoke with people who are making financial resolutions for 2026. Here's a look at what they're planning and how you can draw inspiration for your own resolutions:

MAKING ACHIEVABLE PLANS

Resolutions can easily turn into unattainable goals that feel more like a dream, said MarieYolaine Toms, a coach and founder of Focused Fire, a financial coaching company. To avoid setting unrealistic expectations, Toms follows a "no resolutions" mindset and instead focuses on making an actionable plan.

"What I say every year is that I am not making resolutions, I'm making plans that can be tracked forward, traced back, and tweaked until completion," Toms said.

Recently, Toms encouraged her clients to check their credit report with the three credit bureaus and, based on their credit reports, make an attainable plan to start a savings account. For example, adding $25 to their savings account every week.

Whether you're trying to pay off debt or save for a vacation abroad, the first step towards making a plan can be creating a budget. When making a budget, it's best to find a technique that works for you, whether it's the classic 50/30/20 plan or another budgeting style.

If you're building a budget for the first time, you can find some expert recommendations here.

PAYING OFF DEBT

After losing her job as a magazine editor in September, Rachel Pelovitz, 33, had to take a closer look at her finances. Having acquired a significant amount of debt over the last few years due to her husband's year-and-a-half-long unemployment, Pelovitz explored several options to pay it off. Ultimately, Pelovitz and her husband chose to sell their house and work with a debt consolidation organization.

"Rather than rely on getting more debt, we are currently selling our house," Pelovitz said.

Pelovitz's main goal for 2026 is to pay off half of her credit card debt. And, with some of the money from selling the house, start investing moderately.

If you've also experienced a layoff, you can read expert recommendations to help you take care of your finances and your mental health here.

BUILDING A SAVINGS ACCOUNT

For Jenni Lee, 27, this is going to be the year when she gets strict about building her savings account. While Lee considers herself generally good with money, over the last six months she has overspent and wants to rein it in. The long-term goal for her savings journey is for Lee to buy a house.

"I'm now in my late 20s, I'm starting to really think about where I pinch now so it won't hurt later when I finally decide to purchase and own a place," said Lee, a tech worker and lifestyle TikTok creator based in Chicago.

As she saves for her future home and possibly a trip to South Korea, Lee wants to cut unnecessary spending on clothing items and eating out.

Social media microtrends are a common influence on people's shopping decisions, and this can lead to overspending. If you're looking to avoid spending money on microtrends, you can find experts' recommendations here.

BUILDING AN EMERGENCY FUND

If you are in a position to do so, having multiple financial goals you're working towards at the same time can be a great way to speed up your progress. For Worcester resident Melanie Duarte, 23, her New Year's money goals include paying off her student loans and credit card debt while building an emergency fund.

"I made sure to include it in my budget, even if it's something as small as like $50. I just want to make sure I still put something in (my emergency fund) so that it eventually multiplies," said Duarte, who owns a marketing agency.

Duarte's family didn't speak openly about finances when she was growing up. But, since she opened her own business, Duarte has been slowly working on rewriting her relationship with money.

If you're looking to start an emergency fund or create better habits while you save, you can read some experts' recommendations here.

FINDING BALANCE

Finding a balance between saving for your long-term goals while also making sure you enjoy your money is important, but it can also be challenging. After the death of her grandfather just a few years after retirement, Tiana Stewart, 26, felt that he didn't get to enjoy the fruits of his labor. So, this past year, Stewart decided to enjoy her life and travel.

"I do understand saving for retirement is important, but I also want to enjoy my life and the money that I work for at this time, especially being in my 20s," said Stewart, who lives in Maryland.

But now, as she reflects on her financial future, Stewart wants to focus on paying off debt, saving, and investing. Having a healthy balance between enjoying life and saving for

SEE **MONEY** PAGE 11



Surf report

WATER TEMP: **61.3**

TUESDAY — ***POOR*** | **SURF:** 0-1ft Shin to knee

Minor/flat surf at sunrise on the deep high tide. Strong offshore wind. Bit more rideable low tide. Lingering little WNW swell mix with small surf staying knee high and below, most rideable on the mid to later AM dropping tide. Winds are looking strong NE for mainly offshore conditions all day.

WEDNESDAY — ***POOR*** | **SURF:** 0-1ft Shin to knee

Still tiny but a little bump up from Mon/Tue. Lighter wind and clean - most rideable later AM. Slight increase in WNW and SSW swell. Mostly knee high with the odd thigh high set on the better tides (mainly the lower in the later morning and afternoon). Winds look light all day, offshore early morning, weak sea breeze for the afternoon, so pretty clean all day.

Weather

Tuesday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 67. North wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
Tuesday Night: A 30 percent chance of rain, mainly after 4am. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 58. North northeast wind 10 to 15 mph. New precipitation amounts of less than a tenth of an inch possible.
Wednesday: Rain likely, mainly after 10am. Cloudy, with a high near 63. Northeast wind 10 to 15 mph.
Wednesday Night: Rain likely before 10pm. Patchy fog after 10pm. Otherwise, cloudy, with a low around 56. Chance of precipitation is 70%.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2025/12/30	Tue	05:09 AM	5.98	H
2025/12/30	Tue	12:41 PM	-0.41	L
2025/12/30	Tue	7:07 PM	3.23	H
2025/12/30	Tue	11:19 PM	2.11	L
2025/12/31	Wed	05:57 AM	6.47	H
2025/12/31	Wed	1:30 PM	-1.13	L
2025/12/31	Wed	8:05 PM	3.51	H
2026/01/01	Thu	12:16 AM	2.21	L
2026/01/01	Thu	06:46 AM	6.83	H
2026/01/01	Thu	2:15 PM	-1.64	L
2026/01/01	Thu	8:50 PM	3.72	H
2026/01/02	Fri	01:11 AM	2.15	L

Daily Lottery

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

POWERBALL — Draw Date: 12/27
5 20 34 39 62
Power#: 1
Jackpot: 33 M

MEGA MILLIONS — Draw Date: 12/26
9 19 31 63 64
Mega#: 7
Jackpot: 138 M

SuperLotto Plus — Draw Date: 12/27
6 9 33 37 40
Mega#: 22
Jackpot: 15 M

Fantasy 5 — Draw Date: 12/28
1 21 22 33 35

Daily 3 — Draw Date: 12/28
EVENING: 1 3 6
Draw Date: 12/28
MIDDAY: 4 1 8

Daily Derby — Draw Date: 12/28
1st: 12 - Lucky Charms
2nd: 06 - Whirl Win
3rd: 05 - California Classic
Race Time: 1:45.49

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Santa Monica Daily Press

HOMELESS

FROM PAGE 1

Now signed into law and taking effect Jan. 1, it takes aim at an issue that is much less prevalent on the streets of California. It says cities cannot punish outreach workers for helping homeless clients, even if those clients are sleeping in an illegal encampment.

More precisely, the law says cities cannot bar people or organizations from providing homeless residents with legal services, medical care or things needed for survival, such as food, water, blankets, pillows and materials to protect themselves from the elements.

"The legislation provides commonsense protections for service providers, especially non-profits and faith-based ones, who are doing the work every day to assist unhoused Californians," Pérez said in an October statement.

San Bernardino County, on the other hand, said the law will "override local authority and restrict enforcement tools that cities and counties use to promote public safety."

It's not unheard of for aid workers to find themselves caught in the crosshairs of a city's crackdown on homeless encampments. The Bay Area city of Fremont earlier this year briefly made "aiding, abetting or concealing" an illegal homeless encampment a misdemeanor. Its city council later walked back that language — after CalMatters first reported it — but it made a lasting impression on state legislators.

The legislation follows a statewide push toward the increased policing of homeless Californians. In 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court gave cities more power to cite and arrest people for sleeping outside, even if they have no shelter available. Since then, arrests and citations for homelessness-related offenses have soared in cities across the state..

Santa Monica Daily Press

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DBA

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. 25LBCP00483. Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, 275 Magnolia, Long Beach, CA 90802. Petition of Allison Danielle Lefebvre for Change of Name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Allison Danielle Lefebvre filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Allison Danielle Lefebvre to Allison Danielle Ferreri. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING: Date: 1/26/2026, Time: 8:30am, Dept: 525. The address of the court is same as noted above. A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS. Date: Dec 12.Nicole Heeseman, Judge of the Superior Court. SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/16/2025, 12/23/2025, 12/30/2026, 01/06/2026

DBA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2025282547. The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: JKGI, 2800 NEILSON WAY #703, SANTA MONICA, CA 90405, County of Los Angeles. Registered Owner(s): DANIEL LEE COOK, 2800 NEILSON WAY #703, SANTA MONICA, CA 90405. This business is conducted by: an Individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars ($1,000)). /s/ DANIEL LEE COOK, OWNER. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 12/22/2025. NOTICE: This Fictitious Name Statement expires five years from the date it was filed in the office of the County Clerk. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before that time. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State, or Common Law (See Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code). SANTA MONICA DAILY PRESS Publish: 12/30/2025, 01/06/2026, 01/13/2026, 01/20/2026

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JULY

FROM PAGE 1

College — The Planning Commission approved beer and wine sales for a Chevron station near Santa Monica College despite public opposition. Conditions included bans on single-serve containers and requirements for staff to clean nearby trash.

School District Adopted Budget — The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District board adopted a $282 million budget for 2025-26. The financial plan addressed declining enrollment and projected deficits while anticipating a student body of 8,333.

Council Pursued Airport Park — The City Council directed staff to study a park-only future for the Santa Monica Airport land. This decision effectively rejected housing development on the site and avoided a Measure LC voter requirement.

Endangered Fish Returned — In a conservation victory, 160 endangered northern tidewater gobies were returned to Topanga Canyon. The fish had been rescued and rehabilitated after the Palisades Fire contaminated their habitat.

Trump Ordered Homeless Crackdown — President Trump signed an executive order prioritizing law enforcement over housing-first approaches to homelessness. The policy encouraged aggressive anti-camping enforcement and involuntary treatment, clashing with California's established strategies.

Worker Retention Ordinance Considered — The City Council considered "right to recall" ordinances. These would require employers on city-owned land to prioritize rehiring laid-off workers based on seniority when positions became available. The idea never came to fruition before the council after threats of lawsuits tabled discussions.

Citywide Equity Plan Reviewed — City officials reviewed a comprehensive five-year Equity Plan and a $5.5 million contract with the RAND Corporation. The initiative established goals to address systemic inequalities in Santa Monica between 2025 and 2030.

Remote Courts Made Permanent — The LA Superior Court launched a pilot program to permanently integrate remote appearance technology in juvenile courts. The move aimed to modernize the system and improve access to justice post-pandemic.

Rental Market Tightened — Santa Monica's rental market became the second most expensive in the region, with low vacancy rates and rising prices. This strength in rentals contrasted with a cooling residential sales market.

Olympics Budget Concerns Raised — State legislators warned that budget constraints might hinder preparations for the 2028 LA Olympics. Officials were concerned about balancing the Games' massive logistical needs with fiscal obligations to vulnerable residents.

HHS Restricted Immigrant Access — The Department of Health and Human Services rescinded a policy allowing undocumented immigrants access to programs like Head Start. Officials claimed this restored legal compliance, while health officials warned of risks.

Malibu School Resource Officer — The Malibu City Council approved a contract to place a Sheriff's deputy as a School Resource Officer for the upcoming school year, satisfying a long-standing community demand for increased security.

AI Commission Drafted White Paper — Santa Monica's AI commission drafted a white paper to guide city policy. The report focused on resources and concerns regarding disability bias in algorithms and image generation technology.

Police Contract Approved — The City Council approved a new police contract in a split vote. Dissenting members opposed a clause tying officer salaries to neighboring cities, arguing it negatively impacted the budget for other roles.

LAHSA CEO Resigned — Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum stepped down as CEO of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. Her departure came amid federal investigations into the agency, though she was cleared of specific allegations.

CicLAvia Route Announced — A new CicLAvia route connected Culver City to Venice Beach. The event opened 6.75 miles of streets to pedestrians and cyclists for a car-free community celebration.

DTSM Board Overhauled — In an unprecedented move, the City Council voted to remove all six of its appointees to the Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. board. They were replaced with new members to reshape leadership more akin with the Council's priorities.

Dune Project Postponed — The Coastal Commission postponed a vote on a dune restoration project for Santa Monica beach. Residents raised concerns that the project could increase fire hazards and attract encampments.

Algorithmic Pricing Banned — Santa Monica became one of the first cities to ban algorithmic rental pricing software. Critics argued the technology helped landlords fix rents at artificially high levels, driving up housing costs.

July 4th Parade Celebrated — Santa Monica celebrated Independence Day with its annual Main Street parade. The event featured diverse community participants and marked the holiday without legal fireworks.

Protest Items Banned — The City Council passed an emergency ordinance banning specific items at public assemblies. Leaf blowers, hammers, and frozen water bottles were prohibited at protests to enhance public safety.

Homelessness Increased Locally — Contrasting with countywide decreases, Santa Monica reported a 5% rise in homelessness. The increase was driven largely by a rise in the number of people living in vehicles.

Impersonator Arrested — Steve Farzam, a longtime police impersonator, was arrested for impersonating a firefighter and committing other felonies during the Palisades Fire emergency.

State of the City Held — The annual State of the City event moved to Reed Park, ditching formal speeches for a festival format. The community celebration featured live performances and local government booths.

Pier Pursuit Ended in Arrest — A police pursuit of an armed assault suspect ended at the Santa Monica Pier. Officers arrested the driver and took custody of a dog found in the vehicle.

Neighborhood Funding Studied — The City Council ordered a study of how neighborhood groups were funded. Councilmember Dan Hall raised concerns about taxpayer money supporting organizations that engaged in political lobbying.

Tacos Por Favor Expanded — The popular fast-casual eatery opened its first full-service restaurant and bar. Located in the former Cock n' Bull pub spot, the expansion increased their footprint in Santa Monica.

Big Blue Bus Implemented Bans — Big Blue Bus launched a program allowing officials to ban riders who repeatedly violated rules or committed crimes. The policy utilized authority granted by new state legislation to

SEE **YEAR** PAGE 5

YEAR

FROM PAGE 4

improve safety.

Diner Antonette Opened — A new restaurant, Diner Antonette, opened in Santa Monica. It combined a French bistro menu with a vintage art deco aesthetic and a retail shop, replacing a former bakery.

Four Wood Golf Opened — A new golf lifestyle club opened on Pico, offering coaching and a curated bar. The space was designed to bring the community together through a shared love of the sport.

Hate Crime Diversion Challenged — The LA District Attorney challenged a judge's ruling that granted mental health diversion to a man accused of a violent hate crime, seeking to reinstate criminal proceedings.

Pasjoli Changed Concept — Chef Dave Beran reopened Pasjoli after a brief closure. The restaurant shifted from high-end French cuisine to a more accessible neighborhood bistro concept to adapt to the current dining landscape.

Bagel Shop Refreshed — New owners Lenny Rosenberg and Adaeze Nwanonyiri purchased the long-standing New York Bagel & Deli. They refreshed the interior and menu while keeping the original recipes intact.

DTSM CEO Departed — Andrew Thomas stepped down as CEO of Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. His tenure focused on post-pandemic recovery, public safety, and managing the district's economic challenges.

Psychedelic Summit Hosted — MUD\WTR Café hosted a "Psychedelic Summit" featuring panels and workshops. The event focused on the science and spirituality of mushrooms, blending wellness education with community gathering.

Beach Ranked for Theft — A gambling website study ranked Santa Monica State Beach as the second-most dangerous in the U.S. for theft, citing high rates of vehicle break-ins and property crimes.

Wildfire Storytelling Session Held — USC's Annenberg School hosted a listening session for wildfire survivors. The event allowed community members to record their stories and preserve memories following the devastating Palisades fires.

Olive Oil Boutique Opened — A new gourmet boutique on Montana Avenue specialized in fresh olive oils and vinegars. The shop emphasized health benefits and freshness by sourcing products seasonally from both hemispheres.

Bus Fares Increased — Big Blue Bus raised fares for the first time since 2016. Cash rides increased to $1.50, and pass prices rose to address increased operational costs.

Surplus Land Lease Initiated — Santa Monica initiated a search for developers to lease three city-owned sites. Projects had to include at least 25% affordable housing to meet state mandates.

Malibu Waived Fees — The Malibu City Council approved waiving up to $32 million in planning and building fees. The program aimed to help residents rebuild homes destroyed by recent wildfires.

Downtown Business Restrictions Eased — The Planning Commission unanimously recommended eliminating downtown business restrictions, including bans on dancing and expanded alcohol service. Changes would make permanent 2023 interim measures designed for economic recovery.

California Crime Dropped — California's 2024 homicide rate fell 10.4% to 4.3 per 100,000—second-lowest since 1966. Violent crime dropped 6%, property crime 8.4%. Santa Monica saw overall crimes decline 2%, but murders rose from one to six.

Wildfire Rebuilding Plan Released — LA County released a blueprint to accelerate reconstruction after January's fires destroyed

SEE **REVIEW** PAGE 6



SMDP Photo

CHARIOTS: The Festival of the Chariots brings a colorful celebration to town.

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REVIEW

FROM PAGE 5

10,000 structures. The plan waived non-safety codes, deferred fees, and expedited tax relief, potentially saving homeowners $30,000.

Sign Code Relaxation Explored — The Planning Commission considered allowing businesses larger, higher signs to boost economic development. The city also planned a special district for Third Street Promenade potentially allowing digital billboards.

Music Festival Debuted — The Santa Monica Music Festival launched July 17-20 at First Presbyterian Church, featuring 16 performers and music by 20 composers. Tickets ranged from $15-$250.

Beaches Tested Safe Post-Wildfire — Six months post-wildfire, testing showed Santa Monica Bay beaches were largely safe, with contaminants below risk thresholds. However, gaps remained in safety monitoring protocols for disaster-related sand contamination.

Building Code Order Issued — Governor Newsom's executive order allowed wildfire victims to rebuild under 2022 building codes instead of stricter 2025 standards requiring all-electric homes. Environmental advocates criticized the decision.

Construction Measures Announced — Governor Newsom announced measures accelerating post-wildfire construction six months after fires. His executive order eased building codes amid frustration over costs, permitting delays, and insurance gaps.

Olympic Schedule Released — LA28 organizers released the first Olympic competition schedule, exactly three years before the Games. Venice Beach would award the first medal in triathlon. The schedule featured 844 ticketed events.

Event Permits Extended — Malibu City Council extended temporary event permits from January 31 to May 31, 2026, to help businesses recover from the Palisades Fire. The three-tier system allowed events based on attendance.

Wildfire Stories Collected — USC's Wildfire Youth Media Initiative hosted a free public storytelling event July 19 at KCRW studios for Pacific Palisades fire survivors. Stories would be archived digitally and potentially published.

Economic Boost Projected — California officials projected an $18 billion economic impact from the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, with approximately 90,000 full-time equivalent jobs and $700 million in state and local tax revenue.

AI Impact Explored — The Santa Monica Disabilities Commission examined how artificial intelligence could both help and harm people with disabilities. Commissioners highlighted concerns about algorithmic bias and AI's failure to generate representative images.

Dine LA Week Returned — Nearly 450 restaurants across Los Angeles participated in Summer 2025 Dine LA Restaurant Week, running July 25 through August 8. More than 50 Santa Monica restaurants showcased the city's diverse culinary landscape.

Frog Tadpoles Released — Nearly 600 California red-legged frog tadpoles were released into Santa Monica Mountains streams, marking an emergency conservation success for a species that vanished from the area over 50 years ago.

Tree Heritage Program Presented — A free online program explored the cultural significance of trees in Pacific Palisades and examined how the community's horticultural heritage inspired recovery efforts following the devastating January wildfire.

Office Building Replacement Proposed — Developers submitted plans to replace a 1970s office building at 3205 Ocean Park Ave with a seven-story mixed-use project containing 102 apartments and 4,251 square feet of commercial space.

Festival of Chariots Held — Three towering hand-pulled chariots rolled through Santa Monica and Venice on Sunday, August 3, for the 49th annual Festival of the Chariots. The parade drew 30,000-50,000 participants.

Traffic Disruptions Planned — Caltrans announced extended lane closures on Pacific Coast Highway through late September for Palisades Fire recovery work. Additionally, I-405 weekend lane reductions through Sepulveda Pass began August 22.

Price Gouging Protections Extended — The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors extended housing price gouging protections for wildfire survivors through August 30. The county received over 3,800 consumer complaints alleging price gouging since January's wildfires.



Courtesy image

DEVELOPMENT: More housing projects were proposed for the city.

AUGUST

Beach Club Mediation — The City Council voted to mediate with Silas White's family regarding Ebony Beach Club. The city seized the property via eminent domain in the 1950s, preventing what would have been the first Black-led beach club. Officials acknowledged the need for restorative justice.

Retail Theft Crackdown — California law enforcement arrested over 22,000 suspects and recovered $150 million in stolen goods during a retail theft crackdown. Despite statewide progress, Santa Monica continued struggling with theft, which constituted nearly 60% of its reported major crimes.

Firefighting Fleet Expansion — California assembled the world's largest civilian firefighting helicopter fleet by adding two Fire Hawks. Governor Newsom highlighted the fleet's expanded capacity for night missions and rescues, noting these resources were critical amid federal funding cuts.

Tourism Career Day — The Marina del Rey Tourism Board hosted a Career Day for nearly 50 high school students. The event exposed students to hospitality careers through tours and networking, supporting the local tourism economy which hosts over a million visitors annually.

Health Center Week — Venice Family Clinic celebrated National Health Center Week by offering free services, including food, medical check-ups, and haircuts. Homeless Connect Day provided essentials like hygiene kits and DMV services to unhoused individuals.

Interfaith Children's Book — Two SMMUSD students wrote "Brighter Together," a children's book featuring a Jewish star and Muslim crescent as friends. The project, born from the October 7 conflict, aimed to foster empathy and understanding between communities.

'Carmen' Ballet Production — Pacific Ballet Dance Theatre performed "Carmen" in Santa Monica. Artistic Director Natasha Middleton reimagined the classic tale with bold choreography. The production featured principal dancers and an ensemble blending local and international talent.

Bus Stop Relocation — The City Council approved relocating a bus stop on Pico Blvd. despite opposition from businesses concerned about losing parking. Council members argued for better public engagement, as business owners felt excluded from planning.

Housing Ordinance Passed — A new emergency zoning ordinance passed 5-2, allowing up to 20 units on single-family lots. Proponents cited the housing crisis, while critics including Mayor Negrete argued it benefited developers without ensuring genuine affordability.

School Power Plan — SMMUSD approved an emergency plan to install backup power systems after outages caused 22 lost school days in Malibu. The district also sought grants to reinforce hillsides against rockslides disrupting school access.

Parking Rates Rise — The City Council unanimously approved increasing parking rates to generate over $8 million annually. A compromise retained a 30-minute free period in downtown structures, addressing economic challenges and sluggish revenue.

City Attorney Resignation — City Attorney Doug Sloan resigned after three years to return to Fresno. During his final meeting, he reflected on the joy of living and working in Santa Monica. His departure marked the second high-level exit.

Businesses Rebuild After Fire — Two businesses, Palisades Dentists and Forge Makerspace, reopened following the Palisades Fire. They utilized LA County grants to cover equipment and payroll costs, aiding their rapid recovery.

Sand Reuse Program — LA County approved a "living shoreline" program to combat erosion at beaches including Zuma and Dockweiler. The initiative used native vegetation and natural habitats rather than concrete walls to protect against rising sea levels.

Emergency Alert Systems — Malibu explored new emergency alert systems, such as FM radio alerts, because current cellular and web-based systems often failed during power outages. Officials tested radio receivers to ensure residents received warnings during high-fire danger.

Firefighters Honored — The Santa Monica Fire Department honored personnel for heroic acts, including a paramedic who saved a lifeguard and swimmer in treacherous conditions. An 8-year-old girl was also recognized for calm assistance during a medical emergency.

DTSM Board Reorganization — The new Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. board met following the Council's removal of previous appointees. The shakeup followed the CEO's departure and transparency concerns. New members included residents with diverse backgrounds.

Shoreline Protection Grants — LA County awarded $5.1 million for nature-based protection projects at Dockweiler, Zuma, and Redondo beaches. The "living shoreline" initiatives aimed to defend against climate change while maintaining public access using Measure A funding.

Swim Team Victories — The Santa Monica Sharks swim team won two consecutive meets, showcasing strong talent. Victories included the BASE qualifying meet, demonstrating the team's rising competitive level.

Indoor Heat Protections — LA County passed an ordinance setting a maximum indoor rental temperature of 82 degrees. The measure protected tenants from extreme heat and prohibited landlords from retaliating against those installing cooling devices.

Theater Workshop Enrollmen — The Santa Monica Playhouse opened enrollment for its 56th annual Fall Theatre Workshop. The program offered play production and musical theatre classes for youth, boasting alumni like Kate Hudson and Zooey Deschanel.

New School Campus Opens — MUSE Global School opened a new campus in Santa Monica. The school emphasized interdisciplinary learning and sustainability, offering programs allowing students to explore subjects like robotics and environmental science.

Student Health Policy Overhaul — SMMUSD overhauled student health policies, including fentanyl prevention and cell phone restrictions. New rules allowed students to carry overdose reversal drugs and required high schoolers to silence and store phones during class.

Immigrant Population Decline — The U.S. immigrant population declined for the first time in 50 years, dropping by 1.4 million. Pew Research attributed this to stricter enforcement and policy changes making border crossings harder.

Affordable Housing Pilot — The Council approved a pilot program allowing developers to build affordable housing off-site. The measure passed 6-1, with the Mayor dissenting over concerns about economic segregation.

Clean Financial Audit — Santa Monica received a clean financial audit. The Audit Subcommittee discussed the city's financial health and upcoming permitting system overhauls, alongside a performance audit of the 311 customer service system.

Resilience Scholarships — LA County honored 15 women with Resilience Scholarships for overcoming adversity. Recipients, including students from various districts, were recognized for their determination and academic success despite significant life challenges.

School Policing Film — The LA County Commission on Human Relations released an animated film titled "Echoes of a System." The film documented the negative impact of school policing on a Black student to spark

SEE **AUGUST** PAGE 7

AUGUST

FROM PAGE 6

conversations about racial disparities.

RAND Corporation Expansion — The City Council approved an amendment allowing the RAND Corporation to expand commercial uses at its headquarters. The changes permitted leasing space for technology, media, and other offices.

Waymo Noise Complaints — Waymo claimed to have reduced its vehicles' reversing alarm volume at a Santa Monica depot following resident complaints. However, neighbors reported the noise and alley blockages persisted, creating safety concerns.

Great White Shark Sighting — A 14-15 foot great white shark was spotted near the Santa Monica Pier. The large adult shark was swimming near a paddleboarder, a notable event as the area typically hosted juvenile sharks.

Chez Jay Anniversary — Chez Jay, a Santa Monica landmark, celebrated 66 years. Known for its celebrity clientele and dive bar atmosphere, the restaurant hosted history, including an astronaut's peanut that went to the moon.

Film Permit Localization — Santa Monica localized film permit approvals as the industry shifted. A new non-profit, Film Santa Monica, handled permitting to market the city as a filming destination, distinct from regional bodies.

Pizza Fling Opens — A new restaurant, Pizza Fling, opened on Wilshire Blvd. It emphasized authentic Italian ingredients and offered a casual dining experience, joining other concepts in the same space.

Mountain Lion Attack — An 11-year-old girl survived a mountain lion attack in Malibu. The animal was euthanized. The incident added to growing concerns about human-wildlife conflict in the region following a previous attack in 2024.

Students Return to School — Students returned to Santa Monica schools, starting with Palisades Charter High School at its temporary campus. The city warned drivers to expect increased traffic as thousands of students headed back to class.

Charity Boxing Match — The Santa Monica Pier hosted a charity boxing match created by Mario Lopez. The event, "Rumble on the Pier," raised funds for the City of Hope and featured law enforcement and fire department contenders.

MOVE Fitness Event — A fitness event called MOVE took over the Santa Monica Pier. Organized by CITY SHRED, the session combined yoga, dance, and HIIT workouts to promote community health and connection.

Malibu Sewer Project — The Malibu City Council advanced exploration of a $124 million wastewater project. The system would serve fire-damaged properties, though concerns remained about the high cost to residents.

Federal Funding Cuts Warning — LA County officials warned of devastating service cuts due to a $1.5 billion reduction in federal funding. The cuts, stemming from new federal legislation, threatened Medicaid and food assistance for thousands.

Pedestrian Fatality — A pedestrian was killed in a car crash near Palisades High's temporary Santa Monica campus. The driver cooperated with police, and drugs were not suspected. The victim was not a student.

Olympic Naming Rights — For the first time, LA28 organizers sold venue naming rights for the Olympics. The "Comcast Squash Center" and "Honda Center" retained corporate names during the games to generate revenue.

Summer Heat Wave — A significant heat wave hit the region as summer ended. Forecasters warned of high temperatures and potential thunderstorms, urging residents to stay hydrated and avoid direct sun exposure.

Malibu Murder Plea — Fraser Bohm pleaded not guilty to murdering four Pepperdine students in a PCH crash. Prosecutors alleged he was driving over 100 mph. He appeared in court with a new high-profile defense attorney.

Samohi School Start — Santa Monica High School students returned to class. The district reminded the community to drive safely as traffic increased with the start of the new school year.

Downtown Zoning Changes — The City Council approved zoning changes to revitalize Downtown Santa Monica. Updates streamlined permitting for alcohol and entertainment and removed bans on chain restaurants on the Promenade to boost economic activity.

Housing Rehabilitation Loan — The Council approved a $35.7 million loan to rehabilitate 40 rent-controlled units on Virginia Ave. The funding helped the Community Corporation of Santa Monica preserve affordable housing in a complex requiring significant repairs.

Police Chief Resignation — Police Chief Ramon Batista resigned, citing differences with the new administration. His departure made him the third senior official to leave recently. Deputy Chief Darrick Jacob was named acting chief.

SB 79 Protests — Residents in Pacific Palisades protested Senate Bill 79, which mandated high-density housing near transit. Opponents argued the bill overrode local zoning and risked safety, while supporters believed it necessary for housing.

Nordstrom Closure — Nordstrom officially closed its store at Santa Monica Place. Despite reporting strong company-wide earnings, the closure reflected local retail challenges and left a significant vacancy in the mall.

Raising Cane's Opening — Chicken chain Raising Cane's announced it would open a location on the Third Street Promenade. This followed the city's relaxation of restrictions on chain restaurants to combat high vacancy rates.

Police Union Statement — The Santa Monica Police Officers Association thanked the departing Chief Batista while expressing support for the City Manager and Interim Chief. The union emphasized the need for leadership stability during transition.

Citywide Equity Plan — Santa Monica City Council unanimously approved the city's first comprehensive equity plan following a year-long community engagement process with 60+ listening sessions. The five-year roadmap through 2030 established goals including confronting historical harms.

Homelessness Credit Dispute — California state and local leaders disputed credit for homelessness declines, with Governor Newsom claiming his administration was "reversing decades of inaction." Counties countered that state budget cuts jeopardized progress. Santa Monica's count increased 5% to 812 people.

SEPTEMBER

Automated Bus Lane Enforcement Launched — Santa Monica launched automated enforcement for bus lanes and

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City of Santa Monica

Holiday Tree Collection

December 26th – January 31st

Here's how you can prepare your natural tree for a second life as mulch and compost:

- Remove all decorations such as tinsel, lights, and stands.
- Place your tree curbside or in the alley next to your waste containers for automatic pick-up between Dec. 26th and Jan. 31st. Do not leave trees in parking lots or parks. No 311 request required.

Please note that flocked trees (trees with synthetic snow) cannot be turned into compost and mulch due to the synthetic materials used in the artificial snow and will be collected as trash. If you purchase a natural tree, we encourage you to not apply flocking.

Questions? Email zerowaste@santamonica.gov

SEPTEMBER

FROM PAGE 7

stops. Following a 60-day warning period, cameras on Big Blue Buses captured vehicles blocking transit zones, issuing fines starting at $293 to improve safety and accessibility.

Men's Grooming Franchise Opened — Hammer & Nails opened its 51st location in Santa Monica, offering haircuts, shaves, and hand and foot care. The California franchise planned to expand to 100 locations by 2026.

Typhus Outbreak Reported — Santa Monica experienced a typhus outbreak following a countywide surge. Health officials urged residents to protect themselves and pets from fleas, which spread the disease, as clusters were expected to emerge.

First Palisades Fire Rebuild Permit Issued — Malibu issued its first building permit for a home destroyed in the Palisades Fire, marking a recovery milestone seven months after the blaze. The city had processed 100 planning rebuild submittals.

Autism Tennis Program Founded — A Santa Monica High School senior founded a local ACEing Autism chapter, providing specialized tennis programs for children with autism. The initiative engaged over 30 participants and 45 volunteers for physical activity and social development.

SMC Film School Ranked Nationally — MovieMaker magazine named Santa Monica College one of the top 30 film schools in North America, highlighting its affordability and location near the entertainment industry.

Malibu Event Rules Eased — The Malibu City Council voted 4-1 to ease restrictions on temporary events for businesses affected by the Palisades Fire, aiming to aid economic recovery despite some concerns about loopholes.

I-405 Lane Closures Announced — Caltrans announced closure of three northbound lanes on the I-405 Sepulveda Pass for pavement rehabilitation. Motorists were urged to use alternate routes during the extended weekend construction to avoid delays.

Italian Restaurant Opened Downtown — Restaurateur Francesco Zimone opened Florence Osteria Pizza e Vino in downtown Santa Monica. The 35-seat venue focused on an intimate Tuscan atmosphere and extensive wine program.

Malibu Meeting Times Changed — The Malibu City Council moved to change regular meeting start times to 4:30 p.m. to improve efficiency, though some members argued the earlier time excluded working residents from participating.

Historic Seafood Restaurant Closed — The Reel Inn, a historic Malibu seafood shack with rock music ties, permanently closed following damage from the Palisades Fire. Owners cited rebuilding restrictions as making reopening unfeasible.

Downtown Board Members Filed Lawsuit — Two former Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. board members filed a lawsuit challenging their removal. They argued the City Council violated bylaws and state law by firing six directors.

Santa Monica Classic Race Held — The 20th Santa Monica Classic drew 7,500 runners, with Mexico's Arely Reyes winning the women's 10K. Participants from 14 countries competed in the sold-out race benefiting neurological research.

Malibu Evacuation Plan Updated — Malibu approved a $159,729 contract to update its evacuation plan, prioritizing community engagement and medical facility integration. The update responded to lessons learned from past destructive wildfires.

Fiscal Distress Declared — Santa Monica City Council declared "fiscal distress" due to $229 million in sexual abuse settlements and declining revenues. The resolution served as a strategic communication tool addressing long-term financial liabilities.

School Maintenance Completed — SMMUSD achieved "good" ratings for all school facilities after completing 477 maintenance work orders over the summer, marking a significant turnaround from previous poor ratings at campuses.

Housing Pilot Reached Capacity — Santa Monica's off-site affordable housing pilot program reached its 1,000-unit capacity within two days. City planners sought to extend the program due to high demand from developers.

High Schools Ranked Nationally — Santa Monica and Malibu high schools ranked in the top 5% and 11% nationally in U.S. News & World Report's 2025 rankings, showing significant improvement over the previous year.



SMDP Photo

POKER: The annual PAL poker fundraiser brought the community together.

Wilshire Boulevard Project Approved — The Architectural Review Board approved a 260-unit mixed-use project on Wilshire Boulevard after the developer abandoned a controversial "Jenga" design. The new 8-story plan included 26 affordable units.

Wildfire Response Report Released — An independent report found that lack of resources and outdated alert policies delayed warnings during the deadly January wildfires. The review highlighted staffing issues and insufficient training with emergency software.

Federal Order Threatened Homeless Funding — LA County officials warned that a federal executive order ending "housing first" support threatened $150 million in homeless funding. The policy shift conflicted with the county's stable housing strategy.

Cannabis Zones Expanded — The City Council approved an ordinance expanding zones for cannabis dispensaries and removing the cap on retailers. The changes aimed to revitalize the struggling legal market by easing requirements.

Dune Restoration Project Approved — The Coastal Commission unanimously approved expanding Santa Monica's dune restoration project to 38.5 acres. The project aimed to combat sea-level rise using nature-based solutions covering 19% of beach.

Urban Farm Inaugurated — Mayor Lana Negrete inaugurated the Upward Bound House Urban Farm, integrating food security with housing services for homeless families. The farm provided fresh produce and therapeutic gardening opportunities.

Transit Weapon Detection Program Launched — Metro's pilot weapon detection program found multiple bladed objects and one firearm at rail stations. Security measures, including new barriers and ambassadors, were implemented to address rising crime.

Wildfire Relief Aid Distributed — A partnership between USC Credit Union Community Foundation and LA County provided $80,000 in cash aid to wildfire-impacted workers. Eighty individuals received $1,000 grants for urgent needs.

Charter Carrier Applied for Airport Operations — Charter carrier JSX applied to operate daily flights from Santa Monica Airport starting in 2025 using quiet turboprop aircraft. The city reaffirmed the airport would still close in 2028.

Aging Action Plan Adopted — Santa Monica adopted its first Aging and Disability Action Plan to support its growing senior population. The plan focused on housing stability, mobility, and accessible information.

Freeway Standoff Ended — Santa Monica police arrested a suspect brandishing a BB gun on the I-10 freeway, causing a complete closure. The standoff ended without injury after officers negotiated with the man.

Building Code Updated — The City Council approved raising the high-rise threshold to 75 feet and allowing single-stairway buildings up to six stories. The changes aimed to lower construction costs and enable family-sized units.

Immigration Protections Implemented — California schools implemented new protections and a toolkit to support immigrant families following incidents involving federal agents. New laws prohibited agents from entering non-public school areas without warrants.

Drug Paraphernalia Arrest Made — Police arrested a man after observing him handling drug paraphernalia in a vehicle. A search revealed a loaded handgun and multiple narcotics during the routine investigation.

Downtown Board Meetings Shortened — Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. board meetings became brief and light on agenda items following the City Council's removal of six members. Recent meetings lasted less than 30 minutes.

Filmmaker's Home Destroyed by Squatters — A Santa Monica filmmaker's home was destroyed by squatters who stole $25,000 in equipment and cut utility pipes. A GoFundMe was launched to help him recover his livelihood.

Councilmember Took Housing Advocacy Job — Councilmember Jesse Zwick accepted a director position with the Housing Action Coalition, a pro-development nonprofit. The move sparked conflict of interest concerns given his role voting on housing policies.

Acclaimed Restaurant Announced Closure — Birdie G's announced it would close on December 31, citing economic headwinds and civic neglect. Chef Jeremy Fox's restaurant was known for its comfort food and Jewish-influenced dishes.

Bathroom Vandal Detained Again — A homeless man accused of causing $10,000 in damage to beach bathrooms was detained again for vandalism after previously avoiding prosecution. He remained out of custody despite repeated incidents.

County Received Life Sciences Funding — Los Angeles County received $23.92 million from California's Jobs First Regional Investment Initiative to accelerate life sciences growth and create 10,000 high-quality jobs by 2030.

Wildfire Prevention Project Launched — Los Angeles and Ventura County fire departments launched a $3.2 million wildfire prevention initiative in the Santa Monica Mountains, deploying hand crews and 500 goats to clear 674.6 acres.

Major Latinx Photography Exhibition Opened — "Concrete Hope (Esperanza Concreta)" opened at Santa Monica College's Barrett Art Gallery, featuring 38 emerging Latinx artists from Southern California as centerpiece of FotoSoCal.

Emergency Rent Relief Approved — LA County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved nearly $30 million in emergency rent relief for wildfire survivors and immigrant families. The program provided up to $15,000 covering six months.

Santa Monica Man Arrested for Doxxing — A 68-year-old Santa Monica man faced federal charges for allegedly posting an ICE attorney's home address online and directing others to "swat" her residence. He faced up to five years.

Parks Expansion Vision Proposed — Santa Monica proposed adding 134-165 acres of parkland to its current 144-acre system, potentially more than doubling available space to address shortfalls below county and national standards.

Clean Air Vehicle Parking Program Ended — Santa Monica's 23-year-old free parking program for clean air vehicles expired September 30, aligning with federal program termination. Zero-emission vehicles increased from 1,003 to 6,495 since 2015.

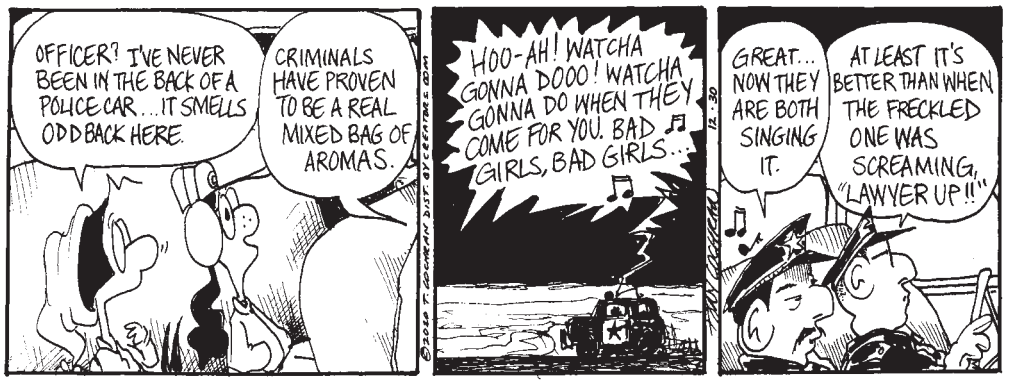
Wilshire Boulevard Development Displaced Businesses — Multiple businesses on the 2500 block of Wilshire Boulevard closed by October's end to make way for Cypress Equity Investments' eight-story, 170-unit apartment complex with ground-floor retail.

Airport Closure Timeline Reaffirmed — Santa Monica reaffirmed its commitment to close the airport by December 31, 2028, while evaluating JSX's commercial permit application. The Airport Commission recommended delaying approval pending additional study.

Malibu Challenged Power Shutoff Disparities — Malibu officials demanded changes to Southern California Edison's public safety power shutoffs after experiencing outages three times more frequently than other SCE cities in 2024, lasting 30 times longer.

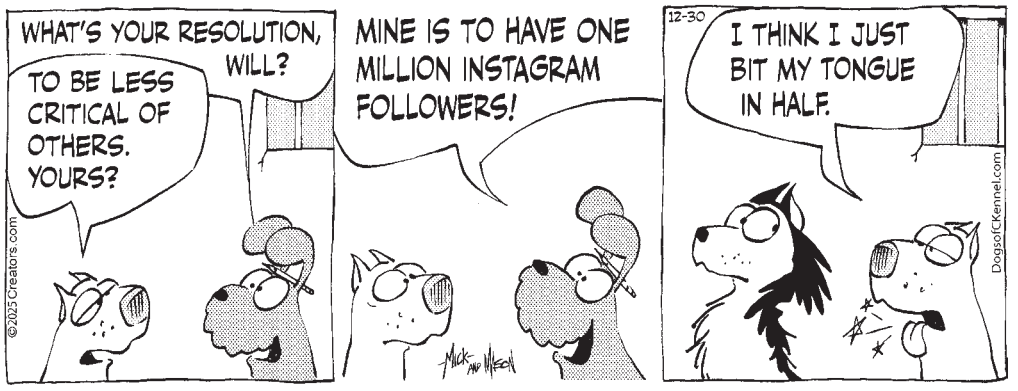
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART



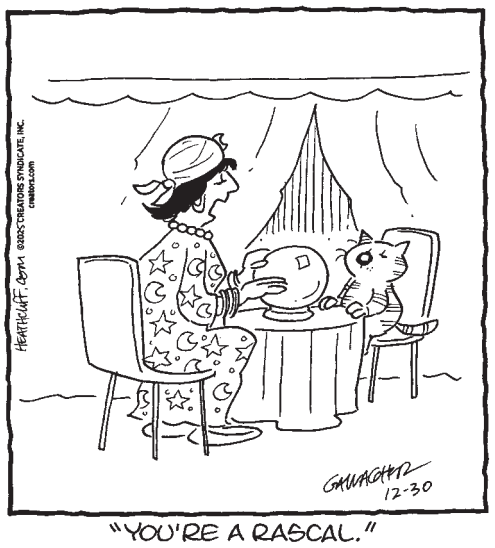
Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE



Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"YOU'RE A RASCAL."

Strange Brew

By JOHN DEERING



FIND THE WORDS

This is a theme puzzle with the subject stated below. Find the listed words in the grid. (They may run in any direction but always in a straight line. Some letters are used more than once.) Ring each word as you find it and when you have completed the puzzle, there will be 16 letters left over. They spell out the alternative theme of the puzzle.

© australianwordgames.com.au 6805

Bali wellness retreat

L	E	V	O	N	O	I	S	I	V	E	L	E	T	H
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Book	Intensive	Rice	Television
Breather	Knead	paddies	Time out
Calm	Magazine	Sanur	Touch
Dance	Neck	Seminyak	Uluwatu
Drink	Nerves	Skin	Temple
Exercise	Newspaper	Smile	Warmth
Face	Novel	Snooze	Western
Friendly	Pedicure	Soap	
Glow	Quiet	Stress	

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S WORDS PUZZLE.
Tourist hot spots

Covering the city by the bay since 2001.
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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 30)

Welcome to your Year of the Genius Pivot that even you didn't see coming. A small decision changes your entire trajectory - in work, in love, in how you introduce yourself. More highlights: a surge in confidence around money, social invitations that nudge you outside your comfort zone (in the best way) and tremendous wells of self-discipline leading to health, fitness and aesthetic improvements you've long wanted. Gemini and Libra adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 25, 12, 38 and 47.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You'll find yourself saying yes automatically, if not accidentally, and it's OK. Think of this as an experiment. And if the process makes your pulse quicken, all the better. Courage kicks in the moment you need it.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Today gives you options. Choose what future-you will thank you for. Also, it's OK to let yourself want more. When you honor your longings, life responds. Each clear decision snaps a new timeline into place.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). There is much to take in today, but the closer you look, the less you see. And though a wide angle will show you more, it also removes you from the action. Stay open to intuition, and it will guide you to your ideal lens.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Discipline can be self-love instead of punishment. Think of it as the structure that supports your dreams. Your routines are scaffolding. It's a good time to involve others. Work in groups. It will energize you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Share your ideas to the audience you have, even if it's the wrong crowd. The bad match will still inform you. Someday soon you will have an ideal audience: attentive, smart, engaged, curious and ready for a lively exchange.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Make others feel comfortable and good about themselves, and suddenly you have more clout than the most confident person in the room. Today, you have the charm that makes impenetrable doors swing open for you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Good things to borrow: library book, pen, tools. Bad things to borrow: money, time, trouble. Today, you'll field a few requests and offers, and by picking the right ones, you set yourself up for victory.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Skepticism is an increasingly valuable life skill in the age of fakery. You'll be presented with convincing information, but is it true? Today, it's worth pondering the question: "Who benefits if I believe this?"

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Today represents a climb of sorts, and you'll need all your faculties to balance. After all, it's difficult to carry items up a ladder. How can you unburden yourself? Can you temporarily lock up your "valuables" and keep only the key?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). No more talking about the dream, mulling ideas or refining the plan. You simply have too much energy buzzing through you for all that. Time to act. Dive in. This story is about to write itself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your momentum is like a train leaving the station - slow to get going, then unstoppable. Bring what you need for the whole day, because once you're moving, you'll be inclined to keep going until you get to the destination.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're on an adventure. How do you know? You feel ill-equipped. The very essence of an adventure is that you don't know what's going to happen, so how could you gear up for that? Accept that improvisation is part of the deal.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

Sudoku

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

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU

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

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

Newsday Crossword

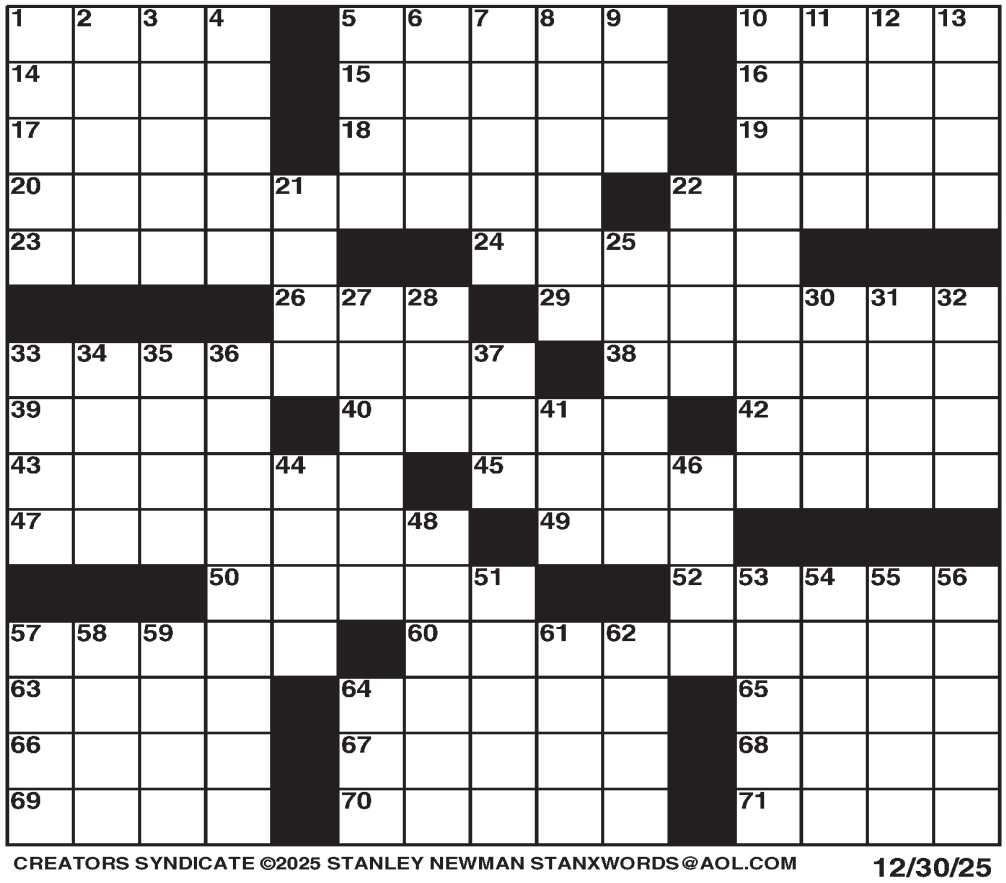
COMPLETES by Billie Truitt
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Rugged cliff
5 Blueprint details, for short
10 Rival of Hertz
14 Toy bricks brand
15 Woman's small crown
16 __ story (autobiography)
17 Wicked
18 __ for (chose)
19 Shakespearean king
20 Ship's maximum velocity
22 Workweek calendar headings
23 Informal farewell
24 "That's obvious!"
26 Chemist's workroom
29 Arrange something atop
33 Evaluation standards
38 Get rid of, as stains
39 Angelic light
40 Taj Mahal's country
42 Played a trumpet
43 "The way things stand..."
45 Paper-cutting tool
47 Place to watch a play
49 Yale student
50 High-tech beam
52 Minor spats
57 DVD player button
60 Unskimmed dairy beverage
63 White sandwich spread
64 Self-esteem
65 Soprano solo
66 "Beware the __ of March"
67 Lake boat
68 Mannerly fellow
69 School exam
70 Soup utensil with tines
71 Outer margin

DOWN

1 Music score headers
2 Variety show
3 Physically nimble
4 "Wow!"
5 Street-corner sign
6 Piece of plumbing
7 All gone, as a meal
8 Personal mottos
9 Feeling glum
10 Clumsy
11 Scenic sight
12 "__ first you don't succeed..."
13 Feudal laborer
21 Reduced-price event
22 "Sound off" remote button
25 Go off the tracks
27 Stands up
28 Storage container
30 Sport on horseback
31 Above
32 Current events
33 Informal talk
34 Recklessly hasty
35 "Would __to you?"
36 Final expense amount
37 Billboards and commercials
41 Cubes from a freezer
44 "Let's just leave __ that"
46 Location
48 Prepare a gift again
51 African beast bigger than a hippo
53 Mirror reflection
54 Shot off, as a cannon
55 Throw forcefully
56 Glide around a rink
57 Give off, as light
58 Green gemstone
59 Watches closely
61 Strong smell
62 Onion relative
64 Some laptops, for short



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12/30/25

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

AIRPORT

FROM PAGE 1

Grant Assurance 25, which requires a sponsor to commit to expending airport revenue generated while the airport is obligated, on the capital and operating expenses of the airport," the determination states.

The case stems from a complaint filed in July 2024 by pilot Mark Smith, Kim Davidson Aviation Inc. and the National Business Aviation Association. The complainants alleged the city violated federal obligations by distinguishing between aeronautical and nonaeronautical revenue surpluses and failing to use the entire airport revenue surplus to reduce rates charged to aviation users.

The city projects a nonaeronautical surplus of approximately $19 million by Dec. 31, 2028 — when a 2017 settlement agreement allows the airport to close. City officials admitted they believe those funds would become available for general municipal purposes upon closure.

Federal law requires all airport revenues — both from aviation activities and nonaeronautical uses like leases — be spent on airport capital costs, operations or facilities directly related to air transportation. The FAA found Santa Monica's plan to accumulate and reserve nonaeronautical surplus for non-aviation purposes violates these requirements.

"The City has clearly shown that its current forecasts project a nonaeronautical surplus of approximately $19 million on December 31, 2028," Helvey wrote. "This does not conform to Grant Assurance 25 or 49 U.S.C. § 47133."

The determination noted the city reduced aeronautical rates by 53% in June 2024, explicitly designed to eliminate aeronautical surplus before the potential closure while maintaining the nonaeronautical surplus. The FAA found this demonstrated intent to create a surplus the city knows it cannot spend in accordance with federal law.

However, the FAA ruled in the city's favor on other allegations. The determination found Santa Monica's actions to separate aeronautical and nonaeronautical revenues and not cross-credit nonaeronautical surplus to aeronautical rates are acceptable under federal policy. The ruling also found the city conducted adequate consultation with airport users before implementing fee changes.

The city had argued the complaint was outside FAA jurisdiction and that revenue restrictions only apply while an airport operates. The FAA rejected those arguments, finding Grant Assurance 25 requires sponsors to promise they will expend all revenue generated while obligated under federal agreements.

"Under usual circumstances, a federally obligated airport that desires to close must have FAA approval to do so," the determination



SMDP Photo

AIRPORT: The FAA said the fees were inappropriate.

states. "As part of that approval process, the FAA directs where any surplus revenue will be expended upon closure."

The 2017 settlement agreement resolved years of litigation between the FAA and Santa Monica over airport operations. Under that agreement, the city must operate the airport consistent with specific grant assurances until Dec. 31, 2028, when it is allowed to close.

The FAA ordered Santa Monica to review its planned nonaeronautical expenditures, compare actual spending to forecasts used in rate-setting and present a plan demonstrating conformance with federal obligations. The city must also update aeronautical rates annually and report to the FAA.

The city has 30 days to appeal the determination to the FAA Associate Administrator for Airports. If no appeal is filed, the determination becomes final agency action.

"We will be extremely disappointed if the City chooses to fight this FAA Director's Determination by continuing to waste additional City funds on high-priced outside attorneys," said Smith. "For more than twenty-five years, the City has misappropriated tens of millions of dollars from the Airport Fund. This ongoing reliance on outside counsel, to justify or conceal fiscal improprieties, has become an embarrassing legacy, and it needs to stop now."

The determination noted the airport received $9.9 million in federal Airport Improvement Program funds since the 1980s and operates on land conveyed under the Surplus Property Act in 1948.

Santa Monica Municipal Airport is a general aviation reliever airport with approximately 74 based aircraft and 67,000 annual operations.

editor@smdp.com

RAIN

FROM PAGE 2

recovery efforts and is closed to the public from midnight to 5 a.m. daily.

Health officials issued ocean water quality warnings for all county beaches. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health advised beachgoers to avoid all water contact, especially near storm drains, creeks and rivers, due to potentially elevated bacteria levels from storm runoff carrying contaminants, debris and trash.

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MONEY

FROM PAGE 3

the future is what she wants to work toward.

For some, participating in budgeting challenges such as the no-buy year can be a great way to set boundaries on your spending and set aside money towards your financial goals. Many people start such challenges at the beginning of the year and commit to keep going until the end, but others start with a no-buy month.

By ADRIANA MORGA Associated Press



TUESDAY | DECEMBER 30

MEMORIES & MOVEMENT SENIOR CLUB

10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Come, learn, and have fun every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM in The Patio room at Virginia Avenue Park. Each week there will be something new: Exercise, Talking with Friends, Learning, Guest Presenters, Health & Wellness! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/memories-movement-senior-club/14853634/2025-12-02T10

TECH & TASKS

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Pico Branch Library 2201 Pico Blvd. Santa Monica. Volunteer tutors provide help with reading documents or written tasks, using mobile devices, navigating government websites, filling out forms, using email, writing resumes and more. Assistance provided on a drop-in. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/tech-tasks/16225799/2025-12-02T16

GELSON'S WEST LA TO HOST TACO TUESDAYS WITH TACOS, MARGARITAS, AND MEZCALS

4:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Gelson's 12121 W Olympic Blvd, Los Angeles. Every Tuesday from 4 PM to 10 PM, Gelson's West LA Wine Bar will be hosting Taco Tuesdays, bringing together a festive blend of flavors and fun. Enjoy a variety of mouthwatering tacos, refreshing margaritas, and smooth mezcals, all served in a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere. The perfect way to spice up the week—gather friends and enjoy a night of great food, drinks, and good times. Prices vary. For more information, visit https://www.gelsons.com/events/view/taco-tuesdays-at-gelsons-west-la-wine-bar. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/gelson-s-west-la-to-host-taco-tuesdays-with-tacos-margaritas-and-mezcals/15309564/2025-12-02T16

8PM FREE "ROXY'S GOT BALLS" BINGO TUESDAYS @ TINY'S HI-DIVE IN LOS ANGELES!

8:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Tiny's Hi-Dive 12012 West Pico Boulevard Los Angeles. 8pm TUESDAYS "Roxy's Got Balls!" Drag Queen BINGO is LIVE & FREE at Tiny's Hi-Dive in Los Angeles w/ Roxy Wood! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/8pm-free-roxy-s-got-balls-bingo-tuesdays-tiny-s-hi-dive-in-los-angeles-/14857154/2025-12-23T20

TUESDAY OPEN MIC

10:00 p.m. Westside Comedy Theater 1323-A 3rd St Santa Monica. The best open mic in Los Angeles! The Tuesday Open Mic is a weekly open mic. Hop onstage and perform your best 3 minutes! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/tuesday-open-mic/16004734/2025-12-16T22

WEDNESDAY | DECEMBER 31

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET - WEDNESDAY MARKET

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Downtown Santa Monica Arizona Avenue (Between 4th & Ocean) Santa Monica. One of the largest grower-only Certified Farmers Market in Southern California and a favorite for local chefs! Enjoy one of Santa Monica's farmers markets, widely considered to be among the best on the west coast and featuring field-fresh produce, hundreds of kinds of vegetables, brilliant cut flowers, breads, cheeses, and more. Downtown Farmers Market Locations: Wednesdays at Arizona Ave & 2nd St and Saturdays at Arizona & 3rd St. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/downtown-farmers-market-wednesday-market/12382446/2025-12-17T08

STAR STORIES WITH PAM

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. West Los Angeles Regional Library 11360 Santa Monica Boulevard Los Angeles. STAR Stories With Pam Children are invited to share the joy of storytelling and reading with our special STAR volunteer, Pam. Come three times and take home a free book. Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/star-stories-with-pam/15607289/2025-12-17T12

NEW YEAR'S EVE PULL MY FINGER: FAMILY FRIENDLY COMEDY SHOW

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. The Crow 2525 Michigan Avenue #Unit F4 Santa Monica. Celebrate ringing in the New Year by laughing with your family and then get the kids to bed early so the real celebrations can begin! Is there a better sound than your kiddo laughing? It's our mission over here at The Crow to make your kids laugh! Join us for an interactive improv show with professional comedians. Stroller parking available :) All ages welcome, best for families with children between the ages of 4 - 11 years old. $18.84. Visit: https://www.smdp.com/calendar/#/details/new-year-s-eve-pull-my-finger-family-friendly-comedy-show/17555584/2025-12-31T17

VINO & VINYL - WEDNESDAY HAPPY HOUR

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. The Venice West 1717 Lincoln Blvd, Venice. Unwind and set the vibe with Vino & Vinyl, our laid-back happy hour at The Venice West. Enjoy half-off bottles of wine, food and bar specials, and a rotating selection of classic vinyl spinning from 6–7:30 PM. Perfect for music lovers, wine drinkers, and anyone looking to ease into the evening, Venice style. Happy Hour Join us weeknights from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM for our restaurant's Happy Hour, featuring great deals including $5 beers & snacks, $10 craft cocktails, and more! Age Requirement All shows at The Venice West are 21+ only, unless otherwise stated. Valid government-issued photo ID is required for entry. Guests who cannot provide proof of age will not be admitted and no refunds will be issued. Parking Please note that residential/street parking is the only parking available near the venue. We strongly encourage rideshare services (Uber, Lyft, etc.) for a safe and convenient experience. Accessibility (ADA) We strive to make The Venice West welcoming and accessible to all guests. If you or someone in your party requires ADA seating or other special accommodations, please reach out to us in advance at info@venicemusicgroup.com so we can best prepare for your needs. Recording Policy To maintain the integrity of the live performance experience, audio and video recording is strictly prohibited during all comedy events unless otherwise specified. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation. Ticket Policy All ticket sales are final and non-refundable. In the event of a cancellation without a rescheduled date, a full refund will be automatically issued to the original form of payment. By purchasing a ticket, you agree to this policy. Please double-check the event title, time, and location before completing your purchase. For questions, contact us at info@venicemusicgroup.com. We look forward to hosting you at The Venice West—thank you for supporting live entertainment and our artists! Visit: https://smdp.com/events/#/details/vino-vinyl-wednesday-happy-hour/17651745/2025-12-24T18

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