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Volume 23 Issue 31 THURSDAY 12/28/23 smdp.com

Year in Review: Fraud, crime and security hit the headlines

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Today is the second of our annual Year in Review features summarizing the news from 2023. You can find the regular features such as columns, breaking news and calendar listings on our website at smdp.com.

SMDP Photo

SHELTER: The Santa Monica Animal Shelter held fundraisers to help address an influx of animals looking for their forever homes.

APRIL

Wave of new Spanish and Italian-influenced restaurants continue with Bar Monette in Downtown Santa Monica: Celebrated Canadian chef Sean MacDonald opened his restaurant Bar Monette in Santa Monica. The location filled the space formerly occupied by Little Ruby, the prime location of 109 Santa Monica Blvd.

Two Angel Flight West pilots will be honored at the Endeavor Awards: Longtime volunteer pilots Stephen and Joanna Bobko-Hillenaar were honored at the 2023 Endeavor Awards in a ceremony held at the California Science Center.

Residents and their dog use pool to escape apartment fire: Three residents and one dog were forced to jump into the swimming pool to escape a fire on 4th street. Firefighters brought the fire under control within 20 minutes and were able to put it out before it spread to any additional units. There were no injuries to residents or first responders, and no residents were displaced.

Supervisors pull proposal to depopulate main jail: A proposal to depopulate the County's main jail facility was pulled from the County Supervisors agenda following significant pushback.

Women Empowerment Event at Samohi: Samohi students held a Women Empowerment Event at the school. The presentation, organized by Brown Minds Matter (a sub-club of "Legado Latino") focused on the concerns of Latino women, including gender discrimination and the potential of education to help elevate women. The event included a tribute for Dr. Mireles-Toumanyan to recognize her work on and off the Samohi campus.

COVID 19 emergency declaration comes to an end in Los Angeles county: The emergency declaration over COVID-19 officially came to an end in Los Angeles County, just over three years after it first went into effect in March 2020. The announcement came nearly a month after the City of Santa Monica's local COVID-19 emergency order and California's statewide emergency declaration expired on Feb. 28.

Proposal would expand rent control to new construction and single-family-homes: Sacramento lawmakers made another failed effort to revisit rent control rules. The proposal would have expanded rent control to single family homes and new construction but failed to advance paving the way for a ballot measure that will appear on the Nov. 2024 ballot expanding rent control in a similar way.

11 out of a possible 100 families offered affordable housing after waitlist changes: A city program to provide priority affordable housing to descendants of those displaced when several minority neighborhoods were demolished resulted in nine successful applicants. City Hall set aside 100 spots on the Below Market Housing waitlist and while 134 applications were received, only 11 qualified with nine choosing to move forward with a housing placement.

Why do you live here?: The Santa Monica Daily Press asked subscribers why they live in Santa Monica and what make them leave. A total of 27.3% of responding residents lived in Santa Monica for over 40 years, and among the favorite reasons residents choose to stay are weather, closeness to the beach and ocean, lifestyle, community feeling and walkable nature of the city.

Carjacking and a robbery keep SMPD busy: A pair of possible connected carjacking crimes on the Santa Monica/Venice border sent local police departments into high gear. In the first case a man refused to give up his car after being shot at in a beach parking lot and in the second, suspects crashed a stolen vehicle near the Venice border. Later that night in an unrelated case, a man and a woman were robbed at knifepoint while they were on the Pier at.

New outlet from Tijuana-style Tacos 1986 opens on the Colorado Esplanade: The site of what was once Taco Libre became Tacos 1986. Situated in the heart of the tourist district in Santa Monica, this was the seventh outlet the chain has opened in Southern

SEE **APRIL** PAGE 2

APRIL

FROM PAGE 1

California.

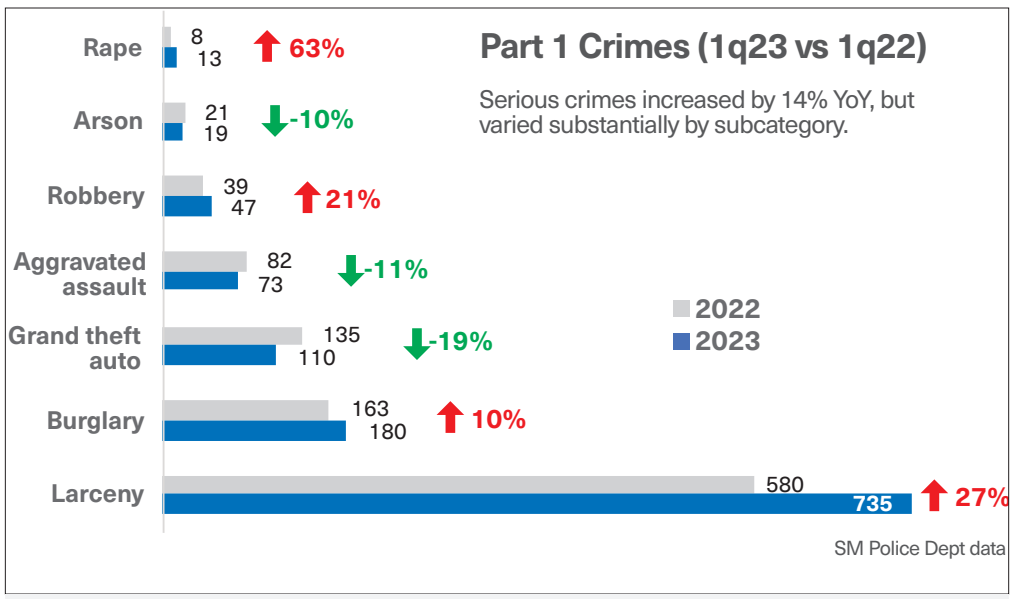
Activists of all ages join the fight against climate change: Phil Glosserman became the Co-Chair of the Southern California chapter of Third Act, a national environmental advocacy organization for people over the age of 60 founded by author and activist Bill Mckibben just a few years ago.

Master Class: Bharatnatyam dancer Ashwini Ramaswamy and her collaborators including Berit Ahlgren and Alanna Morris taught master classes to Santa Monica College dance students at the SMC Core Performance Center ahead of a BroadStage performance of Ramaswamy's "Let the Crows Come."

This National Pet Day pay a visit or make a donation to the Santa Monica Animal Shelter: Local officials made an appeal to support the local shelter. Lieutenant Robert Silverstein, the Santa Monica Animal Shelter Administrator, said that they typically get about 500 intakes every year and they can come from a number of different sources, from rescues off of the city streets to returns because a pet can no longer be cared for.

New young adult novel tells the 'possibly true' stories of a female pirate: Heal the Bay's Aquarium under the Santa Monica Pier served as an appropriate venue for the launch of a new young adult novel, "An Accidental Pirate: The Possibly True Adventures of Fanny Campbell," by Brooks Almy. Almy was inspired to write the book after coming across a single paragraph about Fanny Campbell in a book about women pirates.

Woman killed in weekend Palisades Crash: The beaches on either side of Santa Monica were both dangerous in April with incidents reported at Dockweiler Beach on April 7 and in Pacific Palisades on April 8. At Dockweiler Beach, a Spring Break party erupted into violence when a shooting wounded three teenagers. Meanwhile, a woman was killed near the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Sunset Blvd. in Pacific Palisades when the suspect's vehicle crashed into several pedestrians and parked cars, killing one woman and sending two vehicles tumbling down onto the beach



SMDP Photo

CRIME: Concerns over crime increased in the early part of the year.

What are those blue creatures on the Santa Monica beach?: Called Velella velella, the creatures float on the surface of the water and have a sail-like structure that juts out from their top that catches the wind and dictates their movement, giving them their colloquial name: By-the-Wind Sailors.

Ruling expands options for suing scooter companies: A court ruling found Bird, the pioneer of dockless scooters, can't avoid a personal injury lawsuit as the company is not universally exempt from harm caused by poorly parked scooters. After previously moving to Miami and radically altering its corporate structure, Bird ultimately declared bankruptcy at the end of the year.

Two women hospitalized after being hit by a car on Hill Street: The Santa Monica Police Department investigated a multi-victim crash that sent two women to the hospital. According to investigators, a vehicle hit two women (a mother and daughter) and their dog while they were crossing at an unmarked intersection. One woman was unresponsive at the scene and both were taken to UCLA Westwood. The dog was also reportedly injured in the crash.

Montana Avenue Mexican restaurant Horchata rescued at the last moment: Horchata was set to close after serving the community for 10 years. Albertsons, the parent company of Pavilions, had terminated the lease agreement with the family owned and operated restaurant. However, in a last minute reprieve, the owners received an email from Albertsons stating that the grocery store company had retracted its decision and the restaurant could stay.

City to draft an ordinance guaranteeing healthcare workers minimum wage: City Hall pursued a new minimum wage effort targeting local healthcare workers. Council passed a motion to study and draft an ordinance that would guarantee healthcare workers minimum wage of not less than $25 an hour at all hospitals, clinics and psychiatric facilities within the city.

Downtown Santa Monica to renew contract with City to provide park attendant services: Downtown Santa Monica, Inc. continued overseeing park attendant services in Tongva, Reed and Palisades Park for the seventh year in a row following some debate among DTSM board members as to whether such work is worth the time and effort and fits within the organization's mission.

DUI driver arrested: A DUI driver was arrested after running a red light and causing a collision. The driver sped across the intersection, traveling against the traffic lights. It struck a second vehicle with enough force to spin the second vehicle 90 degrees. The car then hit a third vehicle that was waiting for a green light.

SEE **YEAR** PAGE 3

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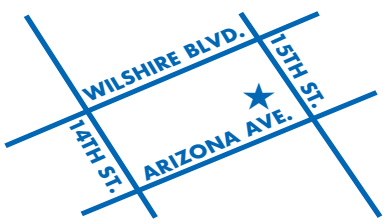

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YEAR

FROM PAGE 2

A $21 million revamp of the Viceroy Hotel adds to the allure of Ocean Avenue: The Viceroy Hotel joined the ranks of the Georgian, the Beacon and the Pierside in reopening its doors following an extensive $21 million renovation. Originally opened in 2000 as the first Viceroy Hotels & Resorts property, the revamped property now features 169 redesigned suites, an all-new poolside experience with an expansive patio, a re-stylized lounge, plus a new signature restaurant and bar called Sugar Plum.

High-end interior design firm from Milan sets up shop in Santa Monica: Bespoke Italian interior architectural agency, the Luca Lanzetta Group, expanded its scope of operations to now include Santa Monica with the opening of a permanent studio at 2421 Michigan Avenue.

Venice Family Clinic's 44th month-long Art Walk and Auction kicks off in Playa Vista: For the 44th time, artists, galleries and collectors joined forces to put on an art walk and auction in support of the Clinic's ongoing work. Proceeds from art sales will help fund the Clinic's work providing comprehensive healthcare services which have vastly expanded since the 1970s to now serve over 45,000 people across West LA and the South Bay, including many in Santa Monica.

Pilot programs invite Big Brother into buses and the downtown library: City Hall launched a pair of pilot programs that combine advancements in artificial intelligence with existing camera technology to identify wrongdoing and theoretically increase quality of life in some areas in town. The City's Department of Transportation is the lead agency for the two programs and neither will cost Santa Monica anything during the testing phase. The first put cameras on buses to track traffic violations and the second used automated cameras to monitor city property.

Beach cleanup gathers hundreds of pounds of trash: Over 750 volunteers gathered at Santa Monica Beach for Heal the Bay's Nothin' But Sand Earth Month Cleanup. Over 266 lbs of trash and 25 lbs of recycling were removed from the beach during the event.

Santa Monica-born Jensen Bering stars in new Nickelodeon TV show: A new Nickelodeon show titled "Erin and Aaron" debuted featuring Santa Monica-born actor and musician Jensen Gering in one of the lead roles. The show follows the lives of two young step siblings who share a same-sounding name and a passion for music, as they navigate their lives following their parents' marriage. Gering plays 14-year-old Aaron.

Child predator with Santa Monica history arrested in Oregon: A former employee of St. Monica's Catholic Church was arrested in Oregon as part of a string operation targeting child predators. Sean Baba, 29, was one of six individuals identified and arrested by the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

Commemoration of Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument takes place: The first in-person commemoration of the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument took place since the pre-pandemic days of 2019.

Ketamine infusion therapy clinic Kure opens on Wilshire Blvd: A clinic that utilizes ketamine to address root causes of mental and chronic physical health issues opened at 2730 Wilshire Blvd. A second ketamine business, Gateway Clinic, led by husband and wife team Clay Kohler and Ariane Sommer, also opened on Montana.

SMDP Photo

BEACH: Seals were stranded.

Berkeley's ban on natural gas is overturned setting "an important precedent for future cases": Berkeley's measure that banned the use of natural gas in new construction was overturned by a federal appeals court, thus supporting the argument made by restaurant owners who claimed that the city bypassed federal energy regulations when it approved the ordinance. In September 2022, Santa Monica joined over 60 other cities across California, including Berkeley, in passing all-electric building codes.

Armed robber could serve 20 years for 26 day crime spree: A serial armed robber connected to at least one gas station robbery in Santa Monica was arrested. Namir Malik Ali Greene, 23, from Los Angeles was arrested after 31 robberies (or attempted robberies) of gas stations/convenience stores and at least two carjackings during a three and a half week crime spree.

Coming soon to a parking structure near you: Rooftop Cinema Club: The rooftop level of Parking Structure 6 (PS 6) in Downtown Santa Monica could soon be transformed into an outdoor movie theater complete with two large LED screens, a snack stand, bar and 450 seats. Rooftop Cinema Club, a company that converts outdoor spaces into movie-viewing venues, submitted a proposal to lease the rooftop space of the parking structure located on 2nd Street.

Nothing corny, apart from maybe the batter, at Hot Dog on a Stick opening: Hot Dog on a Stick hosted a public reopening celebration at its location next to the Santa Monica Pier. Hot Dog on a Stick first opened its doors over 77 years ago. While the company has since opened multiple locations across the state, the original bright red building remains special, replacing the prior building with a new 50% larger version.

Sewage spill won't affect Santa Monica sun worshipers: An estimated 250,000 gallons of sewage spilled into the Los Angeles River and out into the waters of Long Beach Harbor and San Pedro Bay, prompting beach closures in those communities but local beaches were unaffected.

More rent control units were returned to the market than were withdrawn in 2022: In 2022, more rent controlled units were returned to the rental market (32) than were withdrawn (29) and while more units were also returned in 2021, the phenomenon is relatively rare occurring just six times since the city established rent control (1992, 1995, 2010, 2013, 2021 and 2022).

Diner injured after homeless man smashes table mid-meal: Two individuals were seated at a restaurant when they were approached by an unknown suspect. The suspect picked up two chairs and slammed them onto the table. According to SMPD, the victim fell to the ground during the altercation

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Surf report

WATER TEMP: **62.1**

THURSDAY
POOR TO FAIR

SURF: 1-2ft
Knee to thigh

Day to target (Fri the 29th as well). Solid and more westerly angled WNW swell rolls in and kicks up the surf. that could have some size. Wind looks ok at this time. Stay tuned.

FRIDAY
FAIR

SURF: 2-3ft
Thigh to waist

Another day to target as it currently looks close to Thursday in the morning as WNW swell continues. Slow fade in the afternoon. Wind looks ok (both AM and PM at this time). Stay tuned.

Weather

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 66. North wind around 5 mph becoming south southeast in the morning.
Thursday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 52. Northwest wind around 5 mph becoming northeast in the evening.
Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 65. Northeast wind around 5 mph becoming south in the afternoon.
Friday Night: Rain, mainly after 4am. Low around 53. Chance of precipitation is 80%.

Date	Day	Time (LST/LDT)	Predicted (ft)	High/Low
2023/12/28	Thu	02:58 AM	2.48	L
2023/12/28	Thu	09:12 AM	6.09	H
2023/12/28	Thu	4:42 PM	-0.86	L
2023/12/28	Thu	11:28 PM	3.58	H
2023/12/29	Fri	03:36 AM	2.54	L
2023/12/29	Fri	09:47 AM	5.78	H
2023/12/29	Fri	5:18 PM	-0.58	L
2023/12/30	Sat	12:08 AM	3.56	H
2023/12/30	Sat	04:17 AM	2.62	L
2023/12/30	Sat	10:23 AM	5.39	H
2023/12/30	Sat	5:53 PM	-0.24	L
2023/12/31	Sun	12:50 AM	3.57	H
2023/12/31	Sun	05:04 AM	2.71	L
2023/12/31	Sun	11:00 AM	4.91	H
2023/12/31	Sun	6:23 PM	0.20	L
2024/01/01	Mon	01:27 AM	3.67	H
2024/01/01	Mon	06:03 AM	2.72	L
2024/01/01	Mon	11:41 AM	4.29	H

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: 12/25
5 12 20 24 29
Power#: 4
Jackpot: 700 M

Fantasy 5
Draw Date: 12/26
3 19 35 36 38

MEGA MILLIONS
Draw Date: 12/26
8 10 22 58 64
Mega#: 21
Jackpot: 92 M

Daily 3
Draw Date: 12/26
EVENING: 3 8 8
Draw Date: 12/26
MIDDAY: 3 5 9

SuperLotto PLUS
Draw Date: 12/23
12 13 17 36 40
Mega#: 20
Jackpot: 9 M

Daily Derby
Draw Date: 12/26
1st: 05 - California Classic
2nd: 07 - Eureka
3rd: 06 - Whirl Win
Race Time: 1:45.62

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Santa Monica Daily Press

REVIEW

FROM PAGE 3

and cut his hand on broken dishwater on the floor. The victim was transported to the hospital for treatment for the lacerations.

Los Angeles County "remains an abortion safe haven": After the Supreme Court voted to protect access to a widely used abortion drug, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors member Lindsey Horvath told the Daily Press that Los Angeles County "remains an abortion safe haven, where everyone's right to safe, comprehensive, culturally-competent healthcare, including abortion, is protected."

SMC celebrates opening of new campus in Malibu: Over a decade after first being introduced as a concept, the Malibu satellite campus of Santa Monica College finally became a reality. The three acre campus opened its doors to students and a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house were held in April to celebrate the occasion.

A tale of racism and love for two Santa Monica brothers: It was March of 1994 and Peter Slate was dancing at a nightclub on Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade. According to witnesses, Slate, who was biracial, was dancing with a white woman when a white man confronted him, leading to a brief argument before another white man smashed a beer bottle against Slate's head, leaving him bloodied and missing an eye. Peter Slate passed away in a car accident in 2003, but his younger brother Nico Slate published a book, "Brothers: A Memoir of Love, Loss and Race," examining the events of that night, the effects they had on his brother's life and his own and the role that race played in all of it.

Running fundraiser: The Fartleks, a group of Track & Field athletes at Samohi, raised money for local nonprofit The Painted Turtle through sponsored races including the UCLA Bruins 5K and the Big 5K at the Los Angeles Marathon. The Painted Turtle has provided more than 138,000 camp experiences to children and their families — absolutely free of charge — since 2004.

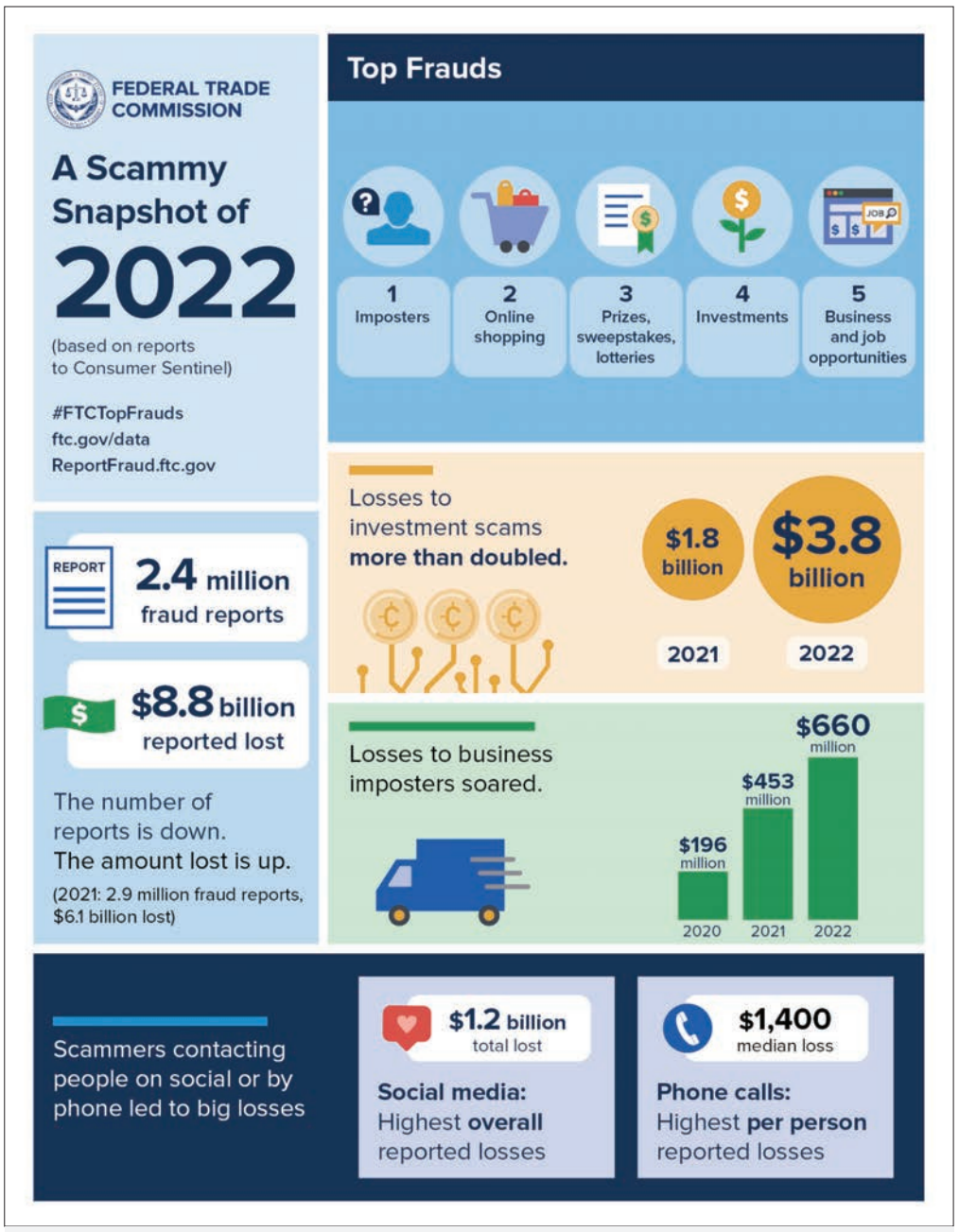
Glass walls and large windows emerge as point of debate in design of future Roosevelt and Lincoln campuses: Community fears over glass-walled classrooms reached a fever pitch at an SMMUSD meeting, with a host of public speakers opposing large glass walls for newly constructed classrooms.

Peter Provenzale leaves behind a legacy in Santa Monica's trees: Peter Provenzale, who worked tirelessly to protect the City's urban forest, was remembered at a public memorial ceremony after an over-20-year career in forestry. During that career, Provenzale played a pivotal role in maintaining and fostering thriving urban trees. During his eight years working as an Urban Forest Supervisor in Santa Monica, he tended to trees on every single street in the City.

30th Anniversary at the School on Wheels: Over 200 volunteers joined School on Wheels staff and board members for brunch at the Santa Monica Bay Women's Club to kick off their 30th Anniversary celebrations with an award ceremony.

City settles all Uller abuse claims for a total of $229.8 million: Santa Monica settled claims deriving from sexual abuse allegations at the Police Activities League for $122.5 million bringing the total from the Eric Uller case to $229.8 million.

Council votes unanimously to incorporate gender neutral restrooms in all applicable new builds: The City Council voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance, and associated design standards, requiring that multi-stall, gender neutral public restrooms be incorporated in all newly constructed buildings for which a complete building permit application is submitted to the City on or after July 1.



SMDP Image

FRAUD: Law enforcement agencies warned of increasing fraud concerns.

Answer at your peril as calls, texts and emails become fertile ground for scammers: Americans lost $8.8 billion to scams in 2022, up more than 30 percent from 2021. In the Los Angeles area, 142,784 reports of fraud were recorded in 2022 and in the first quarter of 2023, officials tracked another 34,417 reports. The most common type of scam in Los Angeles are "imposter scams," where the criminal impersonates someone to solicit money from the victim.

MAY

Barbecue bon viveur Kevin Bludso opens outlet in central Santa Monica: Arguably Southern California's most celebrated local pitmaster, Kevin Bludso, once again expanded his scope of operations and opened an outlet on Santa Monica Blvd. This marks the first time that the celebrated chef has opened a new, full-scale restaurant in a decade.

Senior SETI scientist gives talk at Amateur Astronomy Club: The Santa Monica Amateur Astronomy Club hosted Dr. Seth Shostak for an in-person talk. Shostak is a senior astronomer at the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) Institute, a non-profit research organization established in 1984 that aims to explore and explain the origin and nature of life in the universe.

Chamber of Commerce hosts Women's Health and Wellness Gala: The Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce hosted a Women's Health and Wellness Gala at the carousel building recognizing five local female business owners for their work and achievements in the industry.

Weekend crash kills one and sends nine to hospital: An afternoon crash on the PCH near the Incline killed one person on April 29 and sent nine others to a nearby hospital. A car was heading north on the PCH when it attempted to turn left into Beach Lot 4 North and was struck by a car heading south.

Criminal returns for an encore theft at Santa Monica Music Center: The music store owned by Councilwoman Lana Negrete was burglarized for the fourth time in recent years with a criminal literally returning to the scene of the crime to steal multiple items.

Black Bear captured in the Santa Monica mountains: Wildlife officials captured a black bear in the Santa Monica Mountains. While there have been bear sightings in the area before, the capture was the first time officials captured and collared a bear. Named BB-12, the 210 pound black bear is estimated to be about 3-4 years old. The bear was killed later in the year trying to cross the 101 freeway.

DTSM looking at options to replace ambassadors with security guards: DTSM voted to approve a proposal to redirect nearly $1.7 million funding the Ambassador Program to hire a private security company to help police patrol the downtown. While a private vendor was eventually chosen, that company withdrew from the contract at the last minute following accusations it had an association with an individual who espoused far-right ideology. After the debacle of the initial contract, DTSM regrouped and ultimately hired a second company, Legion, who began patrols by the end of the year.

Coronation celebrations reach Santa Monica: Santa Monica's Anglophile headquarters, Ye Olde King's Head, The Daily Pint and The Britannia Pub, celebrated the coronation of King Charles with several royal events.

Homelessness spikes 15% according to newly released data: Homelessness in Santa Monica increased by 15 percent last year according to numbers from the annual Homeless Count. Volunteers found an additional 73 individuals on local streets and 46 inside (in shelters, motels, or jail) during the January count bringing the total to 926 this year. The results are a reversal from the 2022 count that reported an 11 percent decline from the year before.

More electric vehicles charge into town as dedicated Hyundai EV dealership opens: Celebrating its seventh location in Santa Monica, the LAcarGUY dealership has announced that the latest outlet will be the country's first standalone showroom focused specifically on Hyundai's all-electric brand, called the Ioniq.

Sports brand Wilson defies Downtown downturn with new Promenade retail store: International sportswear manufacturer Wilson expanded its scope of operations by opening a retail store at 1349 Third Street Promenade. The 4,500 square feet space was Wilson's first brick-and-mortar location outside of Chicago and New York.

Santa Monica resident indicted on $800,000 retail theft scheme: A man and a woman were arrested on an indictment charging them with conspiracy and 10 counts of wire fraud related to an organized retail theft scheme amounting to $800,000. Jalen Amir Thomas, 27, of Santa Monica and Armia Ta'Jae Timmons, 25, of Los Angeles, were arrested on the 11-count indictment.

As House of Pies goes up, trees come down: Four California Sycamore trees that were planted by a group of community members along Venice Boulevard nearly 30 years ago were reduced to nothing more than stumps. The missing trees were steps away from construction at the House of Pies restaurant, and neighbors reported the chopped-down trees to the City of Los Angeles. Officials said the developer could be forced to replant the demolished trees.

A Santa Monica senior services center is proving the positive power of the drum: Wise & Health Aging employed a weekly 'drum circle' session to engage senior citizens suffering from neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's dementia and Parkinson's and the results they say have been extremely encouraging.

A new taste of the tropics could soon come to downtown: DTSM approved a new tropical-themed juice, smoothie and açaí bowl shop called Little Hawaii Juice Bar that now graces the ground floor of Parking Structure 6 in Downtown Santa Monica amid a push to revitalize the area and activate underutilized spaces.

Missing man found dead in abandoned building: The Santa Monica Police Department found the body of Beau Mann, more than a year after he was reported missing in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles County Coroner took possession of Mann's remains and worked to determine the cause of death. The Coroner ultimately identified the remains as those of Mann who was last

SEE MAY PAGE 5

MAY

FROM PAGE 4

seen in November of 2021 in the city of Los Angeles. The case quickly became an international sensation due to the mysterious circumstances of his disappearance.

LA man arrested for selling fentanyl that resulted in triple overdose of local students: Law enforcement agencies marked National Fentanyl Awareness Day by announcing multiple arrests for fentanyl related crimes, including a suspect responsible for the triple overdose of a group of Santa Monica teens last year. Officials announced the arrest of 22-year-old Los Angeles resident Adrian Benavides-Schorgi on May 9 in connection with the 2022 incident.

Samohi celebrates construction progress of Exploration Building and Gold Gymnasium with steel topping ceremony: Eight months after construction began on the Exploration Building and Gold Gymnasium on the Samohi campus, SMMUSD community members gathered to celebrate the completion of the buildings' frames.

In first increase since ballot box revolt, Rent Control Board proposes a 2.8% increase: The Rent Control Board's formula returned an increase of 2.8 percent for the next year. The dollar cap on those increases, which is also determined by a preset formula, resulted in a maximum of $67 per month on units already paying $2,375 a month or more.

Samohi hosts mental health panel open to the public: Santa Monica High School hosted a panel of mental health experts as part of an event series being put on throughout the Los Angeles area by non-profit ONE Recovery with support and funding from the L.A. Department of Mental Health during May, which is recognized as mental health awareness month.

'Kitten season' begins at the Santa Monica Animal Shelter: The city's animal shelter braced to be overrun with an abundance of kittens. The term "Kitten season" is used from April to August, spring into summer, when the shelter sees a higher volume of kittens both being brought in and mama cats who are about to have their litters.

Millions in new spending approved as homelessness emergency is extended: Santa Monica City Council approved a series of multi-million dollar contracts to aid in the ongoing fight against homelessness. Recommendations included extension of the local state of emergency, continuation of existing outreach teams from the county (for a four-year total contract worth $5,040,000), and the continuation of an outreach team operated by The People Concern (for a four-year total contract worth $2,400,000).

New report shows significant rise in mortality rates among the homelessness: A new report from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health suggested the mortality rate among people experiencing homelessness has increased by 55 percent, from 2,056 per 100,000 in 2019 to 3,183 per 100,000 in 2021. Drug overdose was once again the leading cause of death for people experiencing homelessness, accounting for 37 percent of all deaths among unhoused individuals in 2020 and 2021, or about two deaths per day on average.

'Gone in a Snap,' parents protest the social media company they view as complicit in their children's deaths: Friday, May 12, marked the fourth time that Amy Neville has marched to Snapchat's Santa Monica headquarters since her 14-year-old son, Alexander, died in 2020 after taking a counterfeit pill containing fentanyl he purchased via the social media app. Other parents who walked alongside Neville as part of the 'Gone in a Snap' demonstration share similar stories and a common goal: to hold Snap Inc. accountable for what they view as complicity in their children's deaths and to advocate for more safety measures and controls on the platform.

Council votes to approve $10 million Human Services Grants budget: The council approved a total of 18 recipients and approximately $10 million as part of the four-year fiscal year 2023-27 Human Services Grants Program funding cycle. The program is designed to address critical community needs and gaps in existing service systems, while also offering funding stability to local social service agencies. With a total operating budget of $10,145,594, the program will fund 21 distinct endeavors run by 18 agencies, serving approximately 27,000 residents.

Population decrease and housing increase drive local vacancy rate to 10%: State officials said Santa Monica's total vacancy rate, including single family homes and multi-unit housing could be as high as 10 percent. According to the California's Department of Finance, Santa Monica's 2023 population was 91,720 with a total of 53,422 housing units for an average household size of about 1.86. Of those units 47,941 were occupied for a vacancy rate of 10.3 percent. Santa Monica's vacancy rate is driven in part by the local expression of a statewide trend: declining population and increased construction. The local population declined by about 1,600 people in the past three years while the city built 793 housing units.

Crossroads swims into the postseason: Crossroads School for Arts and Science had a historic aquatic postseason. All three boys and girls relays qualified to compete in their Southern Section CIF championship meet while a combined fourteen individual events qualified to complete.

Tourism nearly doubles year on year as the city rebuilds post-pandemic: After years of being dampened by the pandemic, tourism was on the rise. The number of visitors nearly doubled last year to a total of approximately 5,320,5000 and annual spending by tourists went up almost 30% to reach $961,711,800.

Samohi scholarships: Three Samohi students received scholarships for their work in promoting peace. Finn Ong, Kelly Larios and Fernanda Casas were winners of the Katherine McTaggart Memorial Scholarship for Violence Prevention, received in the 2023 Senior Scholarship and Honors Program.

Judge eliminates cash bail for pre-arraignment arrestees: The County and City of Los Angeles were prevented from requiring cash bail from defendants who are arrested for non-violent and non-serious offenses while awaiting an arraignment. The courts eventually established a new system that eliminated cash bail for most crimes. Santa Monica joined several cities in filing a lawsuit against the new system and while the suit was still active by the end of the year, the case against cashless bail was significantly weakened when a judge said there was no requirement to use a cash-based system and that the new system was necessary to met the terms of the original lawsuit.

Children aged 13 and 15 accused of armed robbery, burglary and stabbing: A teenager who accidentally shot himself in the hand was accused of multiple crimes including an armed robbery shortly before the accident. Subsequent investigation of the incidents tied the two youth to multiple additional crimes that occurred in the area over the past few months including residential and vehicle burglaries, auto theft, and a stabbing.

Los Angeles Councilwoman targets "vanlord" industry: Venice Councilwoman Traci Park took action to address the growing concern about "vanlords" to rent out RVs to people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles. Park presented a motion to tighten regulations on RV sales and leasing in public rights-of-way that would try to limit the number of vehicles on local streets. While Santa Monica has longstanding prohibition against public camping that includes living in vehicles, the van rental business has been a problem in Venice for years.

SMPD celebrates promotions and new hires: The Santa Monica Police Department welcomed four new officers and promoted five others.

Scuffle highlights Santa Monica's role in culture war protests: A pair of dueling abortion protests forced police officers to physically separate the groups resulting in a small scuffle that highlighted SMPD response to contentious gatherings.

New 17th Street bike lanes spark community debate: A project that relocated existing bike lanes on 17th Street to be between the curb of the sidewalk and parked cars, separated by a concrete barrier, was completed in 2023 prompting debate over the new alignment. While biking advocates praised the streets as safer for non-car users, drivers said the new system was more dangerous for them and made the street difficult to navigate.

Proposed budget restores almost 70 positions to City Hall: Santa Monica's budget projections moved from barely in the black to slightly in the red over the next five years. The Citywide proposed Biennial Budget is $740.9 million in fiscal year 2023-24 and $746.4 million in FY 2024-25. Santa Monica's budget is relatively stable over the next five years with estimates showing a revenue surplus of up to $200,000 over the next three years and a shortfall of about $600,000 in year four followed by a $1.5M shortfall in year five.

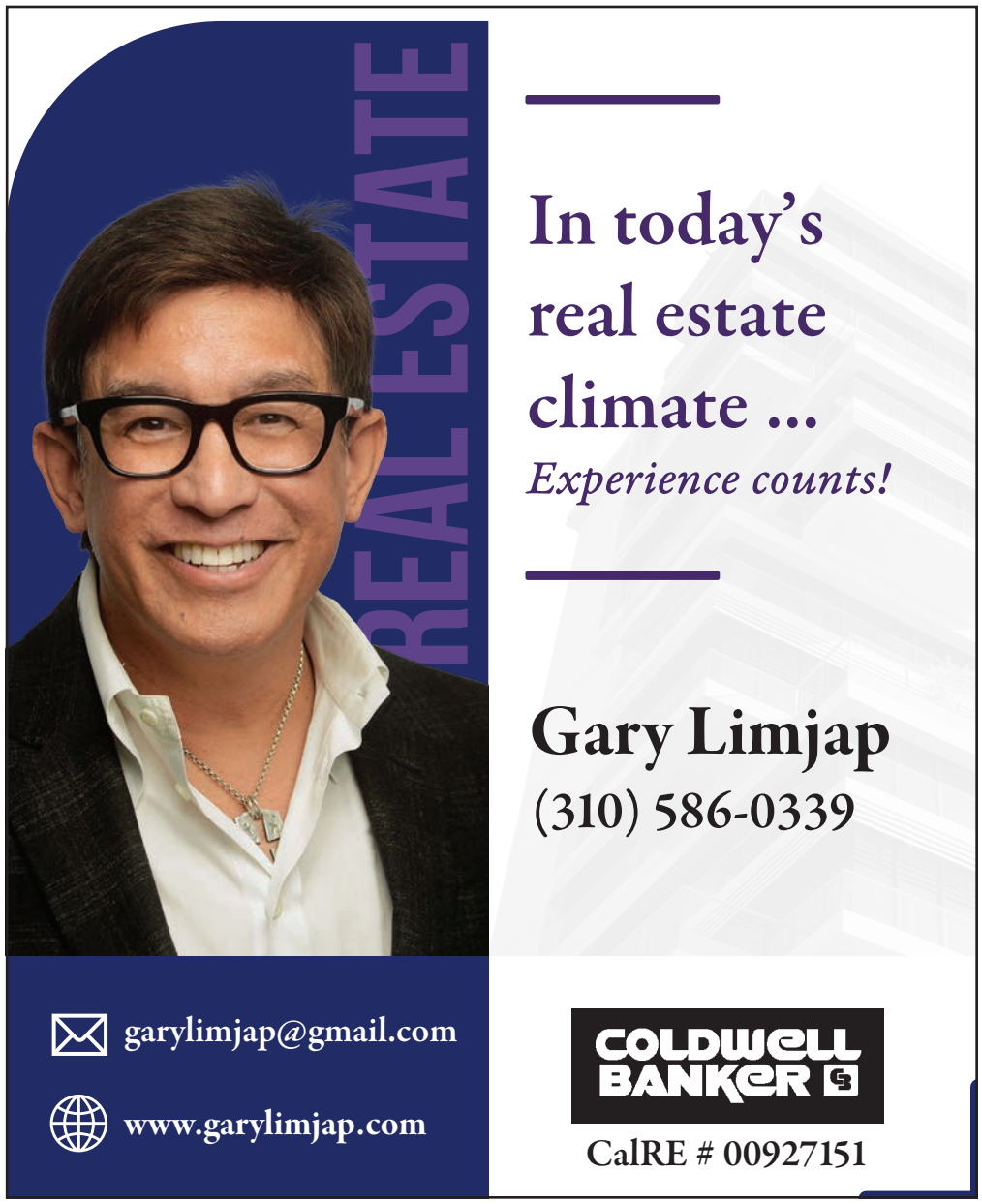
Students most in need of help show little improvement on standardized test scores: While scores improved across the entire population, the percentage of students classified as Urgent Intervention (scoring below the 10th percentile) who are English Learners, Serious Emotional Disability, Special Education, Latinx/Hispanic or African American/Black remained essentially unchanged over the last three testing cycles.

Salvation Army launches Second Chance Campaign: The Salvation Army announced the kick off of its "Second Chances" campaign in Los Angeles — a yearlong initiative designed to de-stigmatize addiction and put the spotlight on recovery.

Police want new laws targeting catalytic converter theft: The Santa Monica Police Department asked for, and received, a new law specifically targeting catalytic converter theft as officials said the lack of specific prohibitions targeting the thefts had prevented officers from deterring, let alone solving, the vast majority of thefts in the city.

Supreme Court sets date for voting rights showdown: The California Supreme Court set a second oral argument session scheduling the Santa Monica California Voting Rights Act case for arguments. The Los Angeles Superior Court ruled against the City in 2018 but an appeal's court overturned that decision in 2020 prompting the Plaintiffs to take the case to the California Supreme

SEE **NEWS** PAGE 6



NEWS

FROM PAGE 5

Court. The Supreme Court overturned the appeal decision but did not make a final ruling on the merits of the case. Instead it sent the case back to the appeals court for a new hearing.

Santa Monica to East LA in about an hour?: Santa Monica Metro riders were able to ride all the way to Atlantic Ave. in East Los Angeles without switching seats thanks to the completion of the Regional Connector project.

AAPI Celebration at Samohi: The Samohi AAPI student clubs successfully hosted a Celebration in honor of AAPI Heritage month. With the help of Japanese Language teacher Ms. Emily Kariya and a generous sponsorship from the PTSA, Koshin Taiko performed during lunchtime.

Strange berry attracts sharks during TV pitch: A small, Santa Monica-based fruit company called Nature's Wild Berry that grows, processes and markets ledidi berries secured financing from two of the multimillionaire investors that appear on the reality television series "Shark Tank."

After Florida bans Amanda Gorman poem, New Roads school rallies in support: Students at New Roads School rallied around one of their famous alumni after a poem by Amanda Gorman was banned from a Florida school. The school hosted an all-school meeting with students in each grade reciting part of the work as part of a larger effort to incorporate the controversy into the schools larger educational philosophy

Jewish Heritage Month: The Santa Monica City Council issued a proclamation in May declaring "Jewish American Heritage Month and Antisemitism definition." Itai Klein said it was a beautiful and important act by the City particularly in light of the rise in antisemitism in the US.

Santa Monica automotive entrepreneur honored in 2023 ASU Sun Devil 100 awards: Santa Monica resident Kevin Emamian, owner of The Haus automotive repair center, was recognized by his alma mater, Arizona State University, in the Sun Devil 100 awards for launching and managing a successful and fast-growing business.

Crimes spike year on year driven by theft, vandalism and assault: Crime, both serious and petty, spiked by double digits in the first quarter of 2023, according to reports from the Santa Monica Police Department that compared the quarter to the same time last year. The most serious crimes, known as Part 1 (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, grand theft auto and arson) increased by 149 crimes (14%). Part II offenses (simple assault, DUIs, fraud, vandalism, narcotics, etc.) increased by 119 crimes (19%).

DTSM hosts first ever Connect Day to promote homelessness resources: As part of DTSM's ongoing efforts to help address homelessness, the organization held its first ever DTSM Connect Day. The event at St. Monica's Catholic Church brought together local service providers in one location to share resources with people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

Lawmakers warned public transit could fall off a "fiscal cliff": Santa Monica resident and State Senator Ben Allen joined a group of lawmakers and transit advocates to argue for more public transportation funding in the state budget. Statewide transit agencies had been sounding the alarm over an impending end to federal money that has helped offset declines in funding over the past few years. Without support from the State, advocates warned that the impending "fiscal cliff" will damage transit infrastructure with cuts to services and increased fares.

Tourists stabbed and groped by homeless man over Memorial Day weekend: A homeless man was arrested over the Memorial Day Weekend after groping and stabbing multiple people near the Pier. Johnathan Peck was arrested and accused of groping two women and then stabbing friends of the victims with a sharpened wooden stick.

HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra visits Venice Family Clinic: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra visited the Venice Family Clinic on Rose Avenue as a stop on his Los Angeles trip aimed at highlighting the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to lower the costs of health care, addresses homeless, improve access to substance use disorder services, and strengthen LGBTQ youth mental health.

JUNE

Santa Monica celebrates the Most Loved Awards: Santa Monica recognized its best businesses with the annual unveiling of the Most Loved contest winners. More than 60,000 votes were cast in the 2023 contest and finalists were invited to the annual award show at City Hall. The contest is a partnership between the Santa Monica Daily Press, the City of Santa Monica and the local business community.

SMDP Image

GRADUATE: Samohi celebrated graduation with its annual ceremony on campus.

The Westside Food Bank braces for worsening humanitarian and hunger crisis: The Westside Food Bank, together with its partner agencies, reported a significant increase in the need for food assistance. Meals on Wheels West, for instance, saw an almost two-fold rise among seniors and other homebound individuals. Moreover, St. Joseph Center, which operates one of Westside Food Bank's largest partner food pantries, saw families who used to access their food pantry 10-15 years ago returning since they can no longer meet their households' basic needs amidst rising inflation and other financial pressures.

Council votes to allow ArcLight cinema complex to be repurposed: The former movie theater stop at the Santa Monica Place Mall will transition to a new art gallery space. The property at 315 Colorado Avenue will become the Arte Museum, self-described as a "50,000 square foot immersive, digital art destination."

New Modern Core Health and Wellness offers pelvic floor therapy and more in downtown Santa Monica: After obtaining her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from Drexel University, Dr. Corrine Macchi, who also has a degree in business administration, recently opened Modern Core Health & Wellness, her own physical therapy practice in Santa Monica.

Pride Month begins on the Promenade: Santa Monica kicked off Pride Month with festivities on the Promenade. Supervisor Lindsay Horvath attended the events as part of her Pride weekend that included visits to several communities in her district. Santa Monica held pride activities throughout June.

Salvation Army celebrates 130 year anniversary and National Donut Day with Downtown giveaway: A large crowd gathered at the Salvation Army of Santa Monica headquarters to commemorate not only its 130 year anniversary and the work accomplished by the Santa Monica division, but also to savor some donuts.

Pedestrian suffers traumatic injury in DUI crash: A Los Angeles man was hospitalized after a DUI driver slammed into him at a bus stop in Santa Monica. John Edward Alevizos, age 23, of Los Angeles, was driving through the intersection of 26th and Wilshire at about midnight when he lost control of his Volkswagen Jetta, left the roadway and hit a pedestrian who was seated at the bus station. Locals organized a fundraiser for the victim, Gelvy Velazquez Ortiz, who was one of three orphaned brothers living in Los Angeles after losing their parents in Guatemala.

Pilot unhurt when plane overturns at Santa Monica Airport: A small, single engine aircraft overturned after landing at the Santa Monica Airport. The pilot was the only person onboard but he was not injured.

Santa Monica man hospitalized in Italy after tragic accident: Michael Shelton died in Italy after a tragic accident. Shelton was visiting Italy for a friend's wedding on May 23, when he fell from a 65-foot cliff while descending a steep set of stairs on Positano.

School budget hits the red next year: SMMUSD's ledger is headed into the red with the District forecasting budget deficits for the next two consecutive budget cycles. The District projected total revenues for the 2023-24 school year as $132,538,788. That is projected to increase slightly to $137,119,554 for the 2024-25 school year. Expenses are estimated to be $141,918,920 for next year and $139,110,031 for the 2024-25 school year. The district was projecting a possible $9.3 million deficit for 2023-24, and a $1.9 million deficit for 2024-25.

Army Deputy Under Secretary encourages relationship building at Santa Monica College: The Deputy Under Secretary of the Army, Mario A. Diaz, along with a number of other high-ranking veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, visited Santa Monica College to tour the Veterans Success Center and learn about the many educational opportunities that are provided to make college affordable for student veterans.

Man convicted in 2018 Malibu park killing sentenced to life in prison: A man convicted in the shooting death of a father who was camping with his daughters at a Malibu park was sentenced to life in prison. A jury found Anthony Rauda guilty of second-degree murder in the death of Tristan Beaudette and of the attempted murders of the two young girls.

Council wants to restore historic preservation programs in new budget: In the new budget Council wants to reestablish monthly meetings for the Landmarks Commission, waive application fees for non-profits and Landmarks Commissioners for Landmark Designations and Certificates of Appropriateness, review legal considerations for placing pending Demolition Permit applications on the Landmarks Commission agendas and explore the possibility of limiting consultant review of Landmark Designation applications.

Congratulations, Class of 2023: Samohi's class of 2023 may have had their introduction to high school disrupted by a global pandemic, but the 169th graduating class of the school persisted through some unprecedented times to emerge triumphant, dedicated and ready to leverage their unique experience to change the world.

PBL: The future of learning? Samohi has been graduating students for more than a century, but every year brings something new to the tradition and the class of 2023 includes the first cadres of Samohi Project Based Learning students.

Santa Monica's first cannabis dispensary opens, six years after the original application: June saw the first cannabis dispensary open in the city of Santa Monica, more than a year and a half after the permit was granted, six years after the application was requested and over 26 years since medical marijuana was made legal in the state of California.

Attempted arrest of felony suspect ends in suicide: The suspect in a violent felony case committed suicide rather than face arrest when confronted by police. The Santa Monica Police Department served a warrant in the City of Inglewood for Arthur Isaac, age 36, who was wanted for two violent felonies, one committed in the City of Inglewood and the other in Santa Monica. Officers negotiated with Isaac for about two hours before he shot himself.

Wayfinder kiosks: a first look at the functioning prototype: The first working prototype of the digital way finding and out-of-home advertising kiosk program was made available for Santa Monica residents to inspect, examine and evaluate.

Restaurateurs win millions in leak lawsuit: Daniel Snukaland and co-owner Mark Mittleman of the former Tacos Punta Cabras were awarded $1.5 million as well as $250,000 in punitive damages after leaks forced them to close the restaurant.

Marina del Rey man charged with more than $3 million in COVID fraud: Federal law enforcement authorities alleged a Marina

SEE JUNE PAGE 7

JUNE

FROM PAGE 6

del Rey resident used shell companies to defraud the government of nearly $3.2 million in business aid. Mark Farag Shehata, a.k.a. "Samy Farag," "Mark Farag," and "Mark Fshehata," was arrested by federal agents and accused of submitting at least seven false and fraudulent loan applications under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), a financial aid plan Congress enacted to support businesses harmed by the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact.

Waters surrounding Santa Monica Pier ranked most polluted in California: According to environmental non-profit organization Heal the Bay's 2022-2023 Annual Beach & River Report, both Santa Monica Pier and Playa Blanca, on the southern city limits of Tijuana, tied for the top spot as both faced significant water quality challenges.

Los Angeles man arrested for shooting at vehicle: A Los Angeles man was charged with attempted murder after shooting at an occupied vehicle. Freddy Martinez, an 18-year-old resident of Los Angeles, was charged with attempted murder, assault with a firearm and shooting at an occupied vehicle after he fired on the victim when the victim came upon a group of people fighting in the street.

Using music to fight mental illness at the Whole Minds concert: The "Whole Minds in Concert" event was held at the JAMS Performing Arts Center in June, helping to raise awareness and provide an opportunity for first-time singers, musicians and songwriters with talents that shine above a diagnosis of serious mental illness.

Juneteenth welcomes all to Saturday celebration: Santa Monica celebrated Juneteenth with its annual festival at Virginia Ave. Park. The weekend's events included music, unique food and craft vendors, and local resources under the theme of Coming Together in Appreciation, Reconciliation, and Commemoration. The main stage featured a lineup of musicians emceed by KLJH's Arron "Bobo" Amel and DJ Sucafree. Performers included local Blues artist Sonny Green, Chazz Ross, rising solo artist Victory Boyd, prominent American roots reggae band Arise Roots and American all-female pop/R&B band KLYMAXX featuring Cheryl Cooley.

SMDP Image

BIKE LANE: New bike lanes were installed along 17th street.

The Class of 2023 graduate from Santa Monica College: Thousands of graduating Santa Monica College students gathered at Corsair Field to college their bachelor degrees, associate degrees and other certifications.

Teen entrepreneurs hope to literally spread the wealth: A group of Samohi students are spreading their love of all things financial to their peers through a new educational partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Santa Monica. The nonprofit organization Youth Entrepreneurship Association (YEA) has partnered with the club to create a summer program, Teenpreneurship, focused on teaching financial literacy to teens.

$27 million replacement for the Pier Bridge moves forward: The much delayed, desperately needed and shockingly simple plan to replace the bridge to the Santa Monica Pier took another small step towards reality with Council's approval of an environmental document required for the project.

Council asks for new restrictions on local gun sales and ownership: Council advanced a proposal for new restrictions on sales and ownership locally directing staff to restrict the sale of guns and establish new restrictions on ownership.

City will remain in a "Stage 2 Water Shortage Level" despite recent wet winter: Council voted unanimously to continue the 20 percent reduction in water use per the 2020 Water Shortage Contingency Plan despite an abnormally wet winter that pulled much of the state out of drought.

Pier officials want to reel in donors to support annual budget: The Santa Monica Pier expanded its search for revenue following two years of sobering financials and the entity made an active push into community donations, expanded retail offerings and continued use of its space as a rental venue to provide fiscal stability.

Resident anger and frustration over homelessness response reaches City Council: Crime, homelessness and security were prime concerns among residents who attended a Council meeting with about 15 individuals speaking during public comment to condemn, cajole or critique the City over its response to the situation. The night's agenda had no specific item related to the subject meaning Council was prevented from addressing the speakers directly but the theme of the criticism was clear: patience is wearing thin when it comes to chronic homelessness and crime in the city.

Shoppers favor more security downtown, but question the use of guns: Visitors to the

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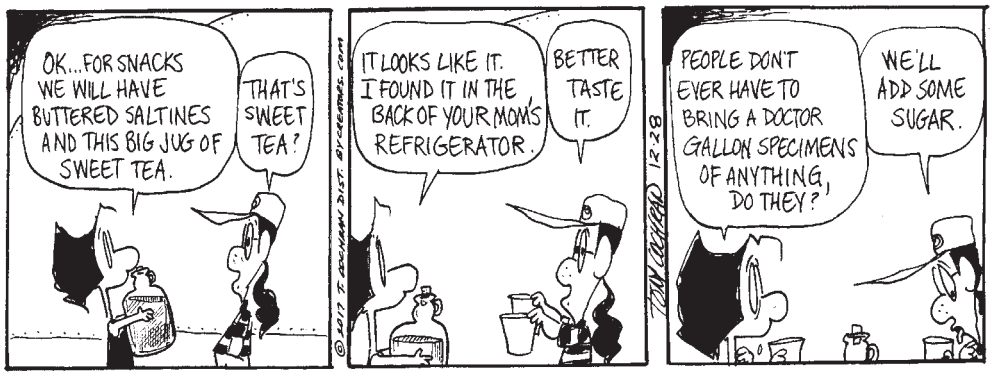
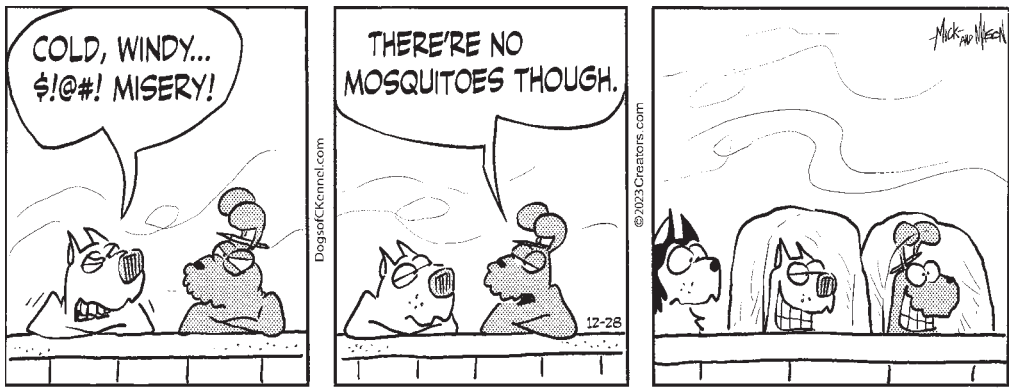
Agnes

By TONY COCHRAN



Dogs of C-Kennel

By MICK & MASON MASTROIANNI & JOHNNY HART

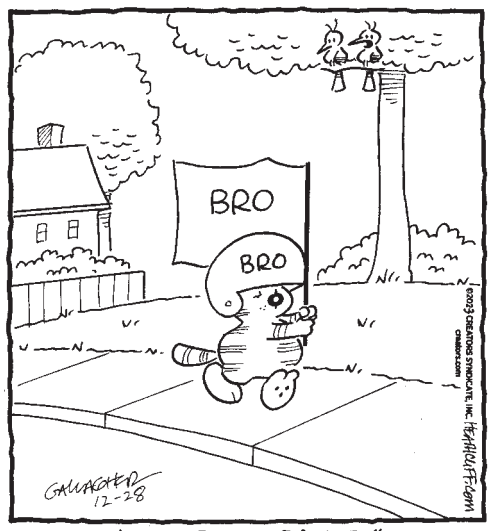


Zack Hill

By JOHN DEERING & JOHN NEWCOMBE

Heathcliff

By PETER GALLAGHER



"THAT BOTHERS ME."

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

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Let's dance

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

Achieve
Adapt
Asked
Barre
Caper
Crowd
Dress
Easy
Energy
Enjoy
Exhaust
Fast
Floor
Frug
Gavotte
Glide
Heat
Hip hop
Hula
Improvise
Instructor
Jazz
Jive
Jota
Juba
Latin
Lead
Legs
Mambo
Music
Onestep
Pairs
Pavan
Plan
Rave
Reel
Relax
Rhythm
Rumba
Sedate
Shoes
South America
Style
Tempo
Trot
Turn
Valse
Watch

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TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Dec. 28)

It's a year of great imagination. Your wide awake to inspiration whether it floats on silent wings or clamors in like a marching band and will use both kinds to build something incredible in your life, to be enjoyed by many. A pivot at work brings more money in. New trust, faithful companionship and wondrous heart connections are featured too! Taurus and Gemini adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 6, 19, 23, 32 and 14.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Lovers whisper words that would make no sense to anyone else. Colleagues crack up over their own in-speaking. Friends exchange nonsense that means everything. Private jokes make the world go around.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You know how to be the star of your show, but now you'll shine in a foreign arena too. In this round, you will rule. You'll dominate the tasks, win the competitions and generally take over.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). At any given moment, most people are responding to obstacles and impulses particular to them. Since none can fully understand another person's experience, you'll cushion your responses with wide margins of compassion. Go easy on everyone, including (and especially) yourself.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). A sense of belonging is nurtured on two sides of an equation, the giving and the taking. You'll feel the security of being well taken care of and your comfort increases when others are receptive to your contributions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Aim for tangible, quantifiable outcomes and you won't go wrong. A coach can help you along. You'll get the most out of feedback that doesn't pander or meander. Ask for direct advice from straight shooters.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The framing of things matters. The reality of a situation has more potential than you think; you just have to ask different questions of it. Someone who is in a different place in life will help you get a more helpful perspective.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your winning attitude is a match for any task. Your empathy is your great talent and your strong suit. Bring it to discern the most effective ways to contribute to a situation.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). The new you is on the horizon. Your apprehension is a form of intelligence, keeping you alert. Heed the internal signals that rise. When the time is right to make your move, you'll know it and be certain. It will, at that time, seem like the only option.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You could confront your feelings, although you'll probably have more luck when you simply accept them. Keep in mind that emotional fitness, like physical fitness, takes practice. Move and lift the heavy things until they feel lighter.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When people seem very controlled, you'll wonder what they are hiding. Their restraint prompts you to poke around and see if you can get a reaction and more information. You need a better sense of a person's character before you place your trust.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). The most interesting parts of the day will be those in-between moments, small details, fleeting feelings, normalcies and oddities that make you smile. You'll enrich others as you share your thoughts and direct their attention.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). To make yourself present to another person's pain is to expose yourself to it and risk being hurt as well. Even so, you'll show up with an open heart, ready to share in the full range of sorrow or joy. That's what friends do.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

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

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

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

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

Newsday Crossword

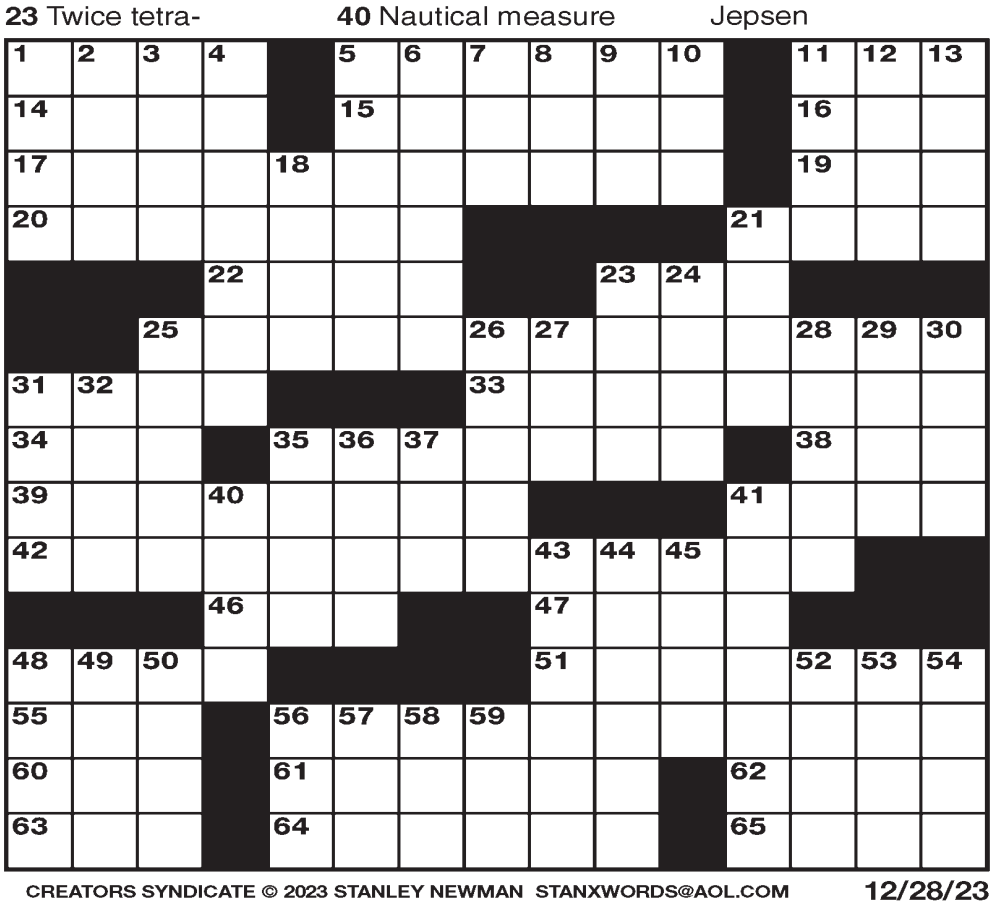
BACK IN FRONT by Mark McClain
Edited by Stanley Newman
www.stanxwords.com

ACROSS

1 Vague suggestion
5 Didn't mind donating
11 Coordinated collection
14 Verbal waffle
15 With little effort
16 Ostrich cousin
17 Compression socks
19 Pic file format
20 Trooper's catch
21 Homer's son
22 T. rex, e.g.
23 Winged wisdom symbol
25 Credit cost
31 Compared with
33 Dubious protagonist
34 Slip in a pot
35 County fair fare
38 Bronze element
39 Parakeet cousin
41 Foal fare
42 Really scary
46 John __ Lennon
47 Credit cost
48 Slight squabble
51 The opposition
55 In high demand
56 Two-star officer
60 Before now
61 Mind reader of a sort
62 Turkish money
63 Palindromic parent
64 To a greater extent
65 Discern

DOWN

1 Cat fight sound
2 "My turn!"
3 Mane area
4 Entered on a keyboard
5 Venus' relative
6 Major contributor
7 Shade of gray
8 Spanish river
9 Wall bracket shapes
10 Darken or lighten
11 Big name in gaming
12 Mideast leader
13 Clump of grass
18 Valhalla boss
21 Far from scintillating
23 Twice tetra-
24 President Taylor or Fillmore
25 Immunologist in 2020s news
26 Ecclesiastical laws
27 Wind down
28 Mark down, say
29 Courageous quality
30 Long times
31 Quirky habits
32 Earring shape
35 Normandy city
36 Comic strip canine
37 French king
40 Nautical measure
41 Common horse race length
43 Hall of Famers
44 Shout on a ship
45 Gossip topic
48 Phony deal
49 __ stick (bouncy thing)
50 Bit of matter
52 Part of the eye
53 Old West icon
54 Amuse highly
56 Sleep lab letters
57 Broody music
58 National Lawn and Garden Mo.
59 Singer Carly __ Jepsen



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

SUMMARY

FROM PAGE 7

Promenade had mixed opinions to a proposal to increase security guards in the area. The Santa Monica Daily Press spent several hours on the Promenade asking people what they thought about the proposal to increase security guards in the area. Of the 24 individuals who responded, 12 were neutral on the proposal, nine viewed it favorably and three thought it was a bad idea. Several people, both local and visitor, didn't think the proposal would impact their decision to shop or visit downtown Santa Monica but others questioned the optics of having armed individuals on patrol.

Santa Monica Seafood holds six week sustainable fishing awareness campaign: Santa Monica Seafood, the largest specialty wholesale distributor of fresh seafood across both the Southwest and Midwest, partnered with the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) for a six-week promotional campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of sustainable fishing.

Santa Monica's sensational summer festival, Pier 360, returns: Santa Monica's sensational summer beach festival, Pier 360 celebrated beach life at the Santa Monica Pier with a wide range of activities for all ages, including thrilling ocean sports competitions, captivating live music performances, delectable food and drinks, interactive games, brand sampling and more.

Sick sea lions left stranded on local beaches: Local wildlife rescue organizations were overwhelmed with sick sea lions as an algae bloom offshore endangered hundreds of large animals. Hundreds of sea lions were believed to have died in the first weeks of June, according to a statement by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service, known as NOAA Fisheries, and experts believe bloom of harmful algae is to blame.

Private security cuts theft from vehicles by almost half in Downtown garages: A contingent of private security guards working in municipal garages significantly impacted crime and cleanliness concerns in the facilities according to the Santa Monica Police Department. A comparison from January through May of 2022 to 2023 showed a decrease of 48% in calls for service and calls for service specific to theft from vehicles have decreased 60%. Library staff noticed the impact of overnight security in stairwells, library grounds, and elevators.

Santa Monica Playhouse saves musical after cascade of cries: Santa Monica Playhouse presented the opening night of Murder Ballard after a string of unfortunate events very nearly derailed the production. Originally set to open in May, in a theater in Long Beach, the cast and crew of the Mid-World Players found themselves homeless when that venue unexpectedly closed. Thankfully after a few weeks of non-stop cold calling, Santa Monica Playhouse responded positively and a new date was confirmed.

Bus driver stabbed in Venice: A bus driver was stabbed in the back in Venice prompting outrage and concern from Los Angeles officials. The attack took place on South Main Street, near Windward Circle, with the assailant approaching the bus driver from behind and stabbing him in the back while he was working on the vehicle. Witnesses said the suspect may have been homeless and a passerby ran to the scene and pepper-sprayed the attacker, who was later seen handcuffed and being loaded into an ambulance.

Illegal firework complaints increase during July 4 season: All fireworks are illegal in Santa Monica and officials warned potential Independence Day celebrants to keep the illegal activity out of the city.

Metro plans for new police force following board vote: The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority board voted to move ahead with a plan to create a new police force dedicated to patrolling the County's bus and train system.

Approval of $745M annual budget anchors council meeting: The Santa Monica City Council concluded its annual budget cycle with a revised proposal that predicts the city's financial footing is secure in the short term.

Building blitz hits two blocks of Lincoln: Four large-scale demolition and construction projects were simultaneously undertaken within a two-block radius of the former Vons site at 710 Broadway. Along with the demolition process of the former Vons, projects will begin directly opposite the 710 Broadway site, adjacent to the Bay Cities Italian Deli & Bakery car park, at 1527 Lincoln Blvd, as well as just around the corner and behind the Vons site at 711 Colorado Avenue and at 1430 Lincoln Blvd, the car park many of went to buy Christmas trees, next to Centinela Feed and Pet Supplies.

Rent Control's Executive Director to retire 36-year career: Tracy Condon, the Executive Director of the Santa Monica Rent Control Board who intends to retire by the end of 2023, began working with the Rent Control Agency in 1987, taking on various roles throughout her career. In 2007, she was selected as the Executive Director of the Agency, responsible for managing its day-to-day operations, including budget development, personnel management, contract oversight, and research for the Rent Control Board.

Now Open: Santa Monica celebrated the opening of two fitness themed businesses on the Promenade. John Reed, an international fitness brand, hosted a Grand Opening of its newest location at 1202 3rd Street Promenade. Nike reopened its downtown store at 395 Santa Monica Place with a newly opened Rise store, which according to Nike, serves consumers who are passionate about sport and enjoy being active through a curated product assortment focused on running, fitness, and basketball favorites for the full family.

Santa Monica revealed as a Secret Chef: Hulu and David Chang's newest cooking show, a self-judged spin on the average competition series, featured a local Santa Monica resident and TikTok personality. Jazmin Tyler was featured in Hulu's new food competition series "Secret Chef."

Westside homelessness spikes by 45%: Homelessness increased by about 9% countywide and by 45% in the Santa Monica area this year according to the latest results released by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). LAHSA released the results of the 2023 Homeless Count and said homelessness increased by 9% to 75,518 in Los Angeles County and the City of Los Angeles saw a 10% increase to 46,260. The increase was driven almost entirely by huge spikes in the western and southern regions of the county, including the area covering Santa Monica.

Parts 3, and 4 of Year in Review will publish through January 2. Visit smdp.com to find regular coverage including columns, events and breaking news.

THURSDAY | DECEMBER 28

THE GRINNS, THE HAYDS, FOXTIDE

This event is 21 and over. Any ticket holder unable to present valid identification indicating that they are at least 21 years of age will not be admitted to this event, and will not be eligible for a refund. The Venice West, 1717 Lincoln Blvd, 8 p.m. $15.

OJB BLUES!

Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. OJB (Oscar Jesus Bugarin) Born on Sunset Blvd, a Southern California native and child prodigy, picking up a 6-string at 6/7 years old, and brought up by a Mexican family with a long history of musical and artistic talent. Harvelle's Santa Monica 1432 4th St, 9:30 p.m. $10.

FRIDAY | DECEMBER 29

5 BANDS FOR 5 BUCKS

Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. Harvelle's Santa Monica, 1432 4th St.

FRIDAY NIGHT JAMS AT TAVERN ON MAIN

Start those weekend vibes buzzing with hot tunes by a roster of rotating DJs at Tavern on Main. This is a 21+ event with no cover charge. Enjoy lively music, great drinks and the best food. Tavern on Main, 2907 Main St, 9 - 10:30 p.m.

SATURDAY | DECEMBER 30

HAPPY NOON YEAR'S STORYTIME

Make some noise for the new year at a storytime that ends with a practice countdown at noon! For ages 2 - 5. Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd. 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

PRESERVATION RESOURCE CENTER: SHOTGUN HOUSE TOUR

Stop by for a free tour! Explore the last intact shotgun house in Santa Monica, which now serves as an award-winning Preservation Resource Center for our community. Discover the journey of this tenacious little house, which was saved from demolition and moved - on wheels - three times before becoming a model for adaptive reuse. Tours are available on a walk-up basis. Santa Monica Preservation Resource Center, 2520 2nd St, 12 - 2 p.m.

COCOMELON PARTY TIME

A play-based party experience where kids can dance, sing, play & explore the world of CoComelon. Tickets include a meet & greet with CoComelon friends! Children under 12 months are free. Santa Monica Place, 395 Santa Monica Pl, 10 - 11 a.m. $33 - $38.

SUNDAY | DECEMBER 31

CAYTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM NEW YEAR'S EVE BASH

Ring in the the New Year with play. Join the Cayton Children's Museum for a day filled with exciting activities for the whole family. From crafting noisemakers and party hats in Art Studio 1 to lively parades, confetti countdowns and bubbly celebrations, our schedule is packed with festive fun. Cayton Children's Museum, 395 Santa Monica Place, events included with price of admission. https://www.caytonmuseum.org/special-events $15.

NEW YEAR'S EVE COMEDY SHOW AT THE CROW

Crying is so 2023. Laugh into 2024 with stand-up comedy, music, and a New Year's Eve countdown that gets you home by 10 PM. Bergamot Station Arts Center, 2525 Michigan Ave, $40, https://jetbook.co/e/new-years-eve-comedy-show-at-the-crow40yl

54TH ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S EVE MUSICAL REVUE

Champagne, sparkling juice, and a delectable dessert buffet accompany this rousing, family-friendly Rudie-DeCarlo musical revue with Playhouse joining in the singing, dancing, humor and other delights culled from over 6 decades of audience favorite Santa Monica Playhouse productions. $24.50 to $49.50—7pm $39.50; 10:30pm $49.50; discounts for sr, military, kids Santa Monica Playhouse, 1211 4th St, https://www.santamonicaplayhouse.com/nye2023.html

NEW YEARS EVE WITH TOLEDO

Tix $25 online or $35 at the door!! Doors open at 8 PM. Show starts at 9:30PM. Online ticket sales end at 7 PM, tics available at the door after 8 PM. 2 drink minimum. Party favors, noise makers and free Champagne at midnight Soul Fusion Twist serving BBQ, Tacos and more out back!! Reservations available for an added fee. Harvelle's Santa Monica, 1432 4th St, https://santamonica.harvelles.com/shows/244084

NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION OF SPIRIT WITH FABIO

Welcome to their New Year Money Spell Ceremony and Soundbath, a transformative experience designed to usher in financial abundance and prosper. IntoMeSea, 1812 Lincoln Blvd, $99. https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-years-celebration-of-spirit-with-fabio-tickets-769391650137

SANTA MONICA NEW YEARS EVE PUB CRAWL PARTY 2024

Why limit yourself to one NYE party spot when West LA invites you to hop, skip, and jump from bar to bar? Let the Santa Monica New Year's Eve Pub Crawl be your guide through the city's hottest spots, providing VIP entry, exclusive deals, and drink specials that won't break the bank. $12 - $50. https://vipnightlife.com/events/santa-monica-new-years-eve-pub-crawl-party-2024

NEW YEARS EVE SANTA MONICA THE VICTORIAN

Join them in the biggest New Years' celebration Santa Monica has to offer! The Victorian, 2640 Main Street, $60, https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-years-eve-santa-monica-the-victorian-tickets-767931211927

NEW YEARS EVE 2024 AT THE BUNGALOW SANTA MONICA

Ride the wave to midnight with them as they countdown to the New Year! Keep a glass in hand from their premium hosted bar while you dance into 2024 under the disco ball. DJ's Kayper and Graham Funke will keep you grooving all night long. Life is Better at The Bungalow this New Year's Eve, your home away from home. Secure your tables, tickets and raise a glass to our biggest party of the year. $150. https://thebungalow.ticketsauce.com/e/new-years-eve-2024-at-the-bungalow-santa-monica/tickets

LOS ANGELES MARATHON

PRESENTED BY asics

March 17, 2024

Marathon | Half Marathon

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