



Partly cloudy,  
with temps  
around 70

# BEVERLY PRESS

## INSIDE

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- WeHo Chamber president retires pg. 7

Volume 35 No. 12

Serving Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, Hancock Park and Miracle Mile

March 20, 2025

## BHUSD board member recall petitions put on hold

■ Councilwoman Wells hosts meeting with board members, parents

BY TABOR BREWSTER

An effort to recall two Beverly Hills Unified School District Board of Education members is on hold as the initial filing did not meet state

requirements. According to parent Jackie Kruger — who presented the original notice of intention to circulate the petitions at the March 11 school board meeting — the notice of intention was served too early.

Parents intended to begin recall proceedings for board members Sigalie Sabag and Russell Stuart. However, under the California

See **BHUSD recall** page 21



photo by Tabor Brewster

A notice of intention to circulate two recall petitions was submitted on March 11. However, that notice did not meet state timeline requirements.

## Steadfast LA moves rebuilding forward

■ Caruso vows to help Altadena, Palisades, Malibu fire victims

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Businessman and developer Rick Caruso has been critical of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and the response to the devastating wildfires in the Pacific Palisades, Malibu and Altadena.



Rick Caruso

While he believes there is much that could have been done better in terms of preparation and response, Caruso does not support an effort to recall Bass.

“I’m against this process happening now because it’s going to cost the city approximately \$30 million, the city is already financially strapped, it doesn’t have the money, my understanding is we’re about half-a-billion dollars underwater with the budget, so it’s a waste of money,” Caruso said in a



photo by Tabor Brewster

Rick Caruso’s Steadfast LA is working to get people in the burn zones back into their homes faster and more efficiently.

March 19 interview with the Beverly Press. “And then the process will take eight to 10 months and will push right up to the June primary, so residents of Los Angeles are going to have the ability to vote for or against Bass within a month or two of when this recall would happen. It’s just not smart to do. At this time, it’s better to wait, save the \$30 million, or use it on things that are

much more important in my opinion, and wait for the June primary to happen.”

Caruso said there are many things that went wrong with the response to the Palisades fire.

“They ran out of water, to start with. That’s pretty negligent in my opinion. They didn’t have the fire trucks pre-deployed. They knew the winds were coming. They had

See **Caruso** page 22

## Maddox leads L.A. Civil Rights in challenging times

■ City department uplifts women, marginalized groups

BY RANCE COLLINS

The Los Angeles Civil Rights Department was established in 2020, and it has been led by Capri Maddox since its inception. Its objective is to maintain, uplift and strengthen Los Angeles’ diversity. It also seeks to hold institutions and businesses accountable in the pursuit of equity.

The department focuses on providing resources for those that experience discrimination based on race, age, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion, among other protected classes. Maddox views her work in the department as a calling — an extension of her faith.

“This is like a spiritual mandate to make sure all people feel seen and heard because where there is unity, I believe this is where God gets his glory,” Maddox said. “How can you treat one group inappropriately or shut people out?”

Since the beginning of the Trump administration on Jan. 20, diversity and inclusion initiatives have been scrutinized and cannibalized at the



photo courtesy of Capri Maddox

Capri Maddox is the executive director and general manager of the Los Angeles Civil Rights Department.

federal level. Many organizations have followed suit, with large companies like Target, Google, Amazon and McDonald’s rolling back DEI programs. On March 17, it was reported that the San Francisco Office of Civil Rights was closed due to funding cuts at the United States Department of Education.

“As a Fairfax High graduate of

late ‘80s, I didn’t think we would need to start a civil rights department for the city of Los Angeles in 2020, and even if that were the case, when I took the assignment, I didn’t think this job would be harder in 2025,” she said. “You have to lead in good times and challenging times. And these are challenging, complex times that we are living in, and history is happening now.”

Maddox said that she has felt supported by Los Angeles leadership, even with headwinds from the executive branch.

“I do feel supported by our City Council to continue to serve communities in need, and to make sure we continue to lift a Los Angeles for all,” she said. “And I’m going to do this work until folks above my pay grade tell me to stop doing it.”

Alison Simard, who serves as the L.A. Civil Rights public information officer, said that while they are “reeling from the fear of all that’s going on in the federal level,” the department has tools to help individuals experiencing discrimination.

“Our department’s very foundational service is to put the free tools in the public’s hands to say if you experience discrimination ... let us

See **Maddox** page 22



photo by Rance Collins

The square on Santa Monica Boulevard dedicated to Matthew Shepard will soon be renovated.

## WeHo advances plans for Matthew Shepard Square

■ Council approves renewal of memorial first created in 1998

BY RANCE COLLINS

In October 1998, Matthew Shepard was brutally attacked and murdered in Wyoming, in a

case that brought attention to hate crimes, particularly against the LGBTQ+ community. On Dec. 7, 1998, the West Hollywood City Council voted to rename what was previously the East Crescent Heights Triangle Xeriscape Garden, located at the corner of Crescent Heights and

See **WeHo** page 21



### LACMA

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CALENDAR

Larchmont comedy benefit

Enjoy a free comedy show benefitting LAFD Fire Station 52 on Friday, March 21, in the Larchmont Village Farmers Market Lot parking lot. The event is organized by Backyard Comedy Series, Larchmont Buzz and Larchmont United Neighborhood Association. Pre-show sips and bites by La Bettola di Terroni are available for purchase from 6-7:30 p.m., followed by the show from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Suggested donation is \$15. 209 N. Larchmont Blvd. eventbrite.com/e/larchmont-blvd-comedy-tickets-1255106911559?aff=ebdssh-ios&utm\_experiment=test\_share\_listing.

LA Phil ‘Handel & Bach’

The LA Phil presents “Haïm Leads Handel & Bach” on Friday and Saturday, March 21-22, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, March 23, at 2 p.m., at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. In the first season of her three-year role as artist collaborator, Haïm and her ensemble join the LA Phil for two magnificent choral works by Bach and Handel. Tickets start at \$49. 111 S. Grand Ave. laphil.org.



María Magdalena Campos-Pons

The Getty Center presents “María Magdalena Campos-Pons with

Kamaal Malik & The Funk” on Saturday, March 22, at 5 p.m., and “When I Am Not Here/Estoy Allá: Conversation with María Magdalena Campos-Pons” on Sunday, March 23, at 4:30 p.m. On March 22, experience a new performance by Campos-Pons exploring her vision of radical love as a force for healing and transformation. On March 23, Campos-Pons, who was born in 1959 in Cuba, explores themes of migration, diaspora and memory in a variety of media including photography, drawing, painting, installation and performance. She is joined in conversation by exhibition curators Mazie Harris and Jenée-Daria Strand. 1200 Getty Center Drive. (310)440-7300, getty.edu.



‘Two Small Bodies’

Neal Bell’s play “Two Small Bodies” runs Saturday, March 22, through Saturday, April 26, at the GGC Theatre in Hollywood. In the murder mystery set around 1972, two children have disappeared. A tough-talking detective investigating the possible kidnapping or murder case plays a cat-and-mouse game with the mother, a voluptuous hostess at a strip joint. Their relationship becomes an unusual and intimate dance as he pushes her to confess that she murdered her children, but he gets more than he bargained for. Showtimes are at 8 p.m., Saturday; 7 p.m., Sunday. Tickets are \$35. 6502 Santa Monica Blvd. (310)366-5505, onstage411.com/newsite/show/play\_info.asp?show\_id=7351.

LACMA Fiber Maker’s Circle

Calling all fiber aficionados. Join the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s Fiber Maker’s Circle on Sunday, March 23, at 12:30 p.m. Bring a current project or use supplies from the museum. Led by experienced fiber artists, the workshop teaches new techniques and is open to all ages and skill levels. Admission is free. 5905 Wilshire Blvd. lacma.org.



Japanese weaving demonstration

Japan Foundation Los Angeles is holding a lecture, demonstration and pop-up exhibition with bamboo craft artist Chiemi Ogura on Tuesday, March 25, from 7-8:30 p.m. Ogura’s bamboo art is known for intricate design and delicate aesthetics. The artist will discuss traditional Japanese bamboo craft and demonstrate bamboo weaving techniques along with her pop-up exhibition. 5700 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 100. jflalc.org.



Piano Spheres

Piano Spheres emerging artist Thomas Mellan presents “Collective Hysteria: A Celebration of the Legacy of Pierre Boulez on his 100th birthday” on Wednesday, March 26, at 8 p.m. in the Coburn School’s Thayer Hall. Boulez’s music showcases rigorous complexity and sensual tenderness. The program centers around an extremely rare performance of

Boulez’s monumental “Second Piano Sonata from 1948.” Mellan also performs Anton Webern’s “Variations for Piano” and three new piano pieces by organist-composer Rashaan Allwood, underground metal legend Colin Marston and Ukrainian violin virtuoso Orest Smovzh. Tickets are \$15.75. 200 S. Grand Ave. pianospheres.org.

Miracle Mile Chamber

Join the Greater Miracle Mile Chamber of Commerce for a luncheon on Thursday, March 27, from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Andre’s Italian Restaurant. Enjoy lunch, networking and an opportunity to learn about and sign up for Metro’s free “Eat Shop Play!” program benefitting businesses. Participants can also join a raffle. Tickets are \$35 for members, \$45 for non-members. RSVP requested by noon on March 26 by emailing info@miraclemilechamber.org.

Holocaust lecture

Holocaust Museum L.A. welcomes professor Therkel Straede for “The Heroism of Ordinary People: Rescuers of the Jews of Denmark,” a lecture on Thursday, March 27, at 6:30 p.m. Learn how the Danish population rescued 95% of the country’s Jews during the Holocaust, and what made thousands of “ordinary people” engage in acts of rescue. Straede, a professor of contemporary history at the University of Southern Denmark in Odense, is an expert on the October 1943 rescue (and deportation) of the Jews from Denmark. Admission is free but reservations are required. 100 The Grove Drive. holocaustmuseumla.org.

Music of Bob Dylan

Music fans are invited to the Grammy Museum for “Fifty Years in Sixty Minutes: An Evening with the Bob Dylan Center” on Thursday, March 27, at 7 p.m. The event includes a special screening of short films and videos from the Bob Dylan Archive with unreleased clips of Dylan and a post-screening discussion with director Steven Jenkins. Dean and Britta, of the indie-rock band Luna, will also perform. Tickets are \$30.59. 800 W. Olympic Blvd. grammymuseum.org.

‘Nat Geo Live’ at BroadStage

Join BroadStage and National Geographic for “Nat Geo Live: Untangling the Mind” on Thursday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. Explore on a cellular level the foundations of thoughts, emotions and memories. Neuroscientist Steve Ramirez guides the audience on a journey through the most remarkable human organ. Tickets start at \$60. 1310 11th St., Santa Monica. (310)434-3200, broadstage.org.



L.A. Women’s Theatre Festival

The Los Angeles Women’s Theatre Festival celebrates its 32nd anniversary with four days of performances, panels and workshops from Thursday, March 27, through Sunday, March 30. The Opening Night Gala will take place on March 27 at 8 p.m. at Bardsdall Art Park Gallery Theatre, 4800 Hollywood Blvd. Additional events, including productions, will be held at the Theatre 68 Arts Complex, 5112 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. (818)760-0408, lawtf.org.



photo by Edwin Folven

Upgrades are being made to the former 99 Cents Store at Sixth Street and Fairfax Avenue.

Former 99 Cents Only Stores site still under transformation

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Work is occurring at the former 99 Cents Only Store at the corner of Sixth Street and Fairfax Avenue as the property is being converted into a new commercial space. The Beverly Hills-based real estate investment and development firm Bolour purchased the property – which includes three buildings at 601, 611 and 619 S. Fairfax Ave. – in May 2024 for approximately \$6 million during a bankruptcy auction for the 99 Cents Only Stores’ property. Bolour announced plans for the buildings to be used as gallery, design, furniture or

showroom space. Long-term, Bolour plans to develop the site into 120 multifamily residential units. A portion of the exterior of the building along Sixth Street was recently painted and work is ongoing both outside and inside. There is no timeline for the current work to be finished and no tenants have been selected, said Kevin Saghian, acquisitions manager for Bolour. “They’re still doing construction. This is a big project amongst multiple buildings and it takes time. You have to go through the process,” he said.

See Store page 22



photo by Edwin Folven

Deadwood is being removed from trees in Hancock Park for safety. The work started on March 17 on June Street.

Tree trimming begins along streets in Hancock Park

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Crews are trimming trees in Hancock Park, removing deadwood and dangerous limbs on public property near roads. Mariposa Tree Service is conducting the work, which started on March 17 on June Street. The work is not aesthetic pruning, instead focusing on safety. The crews will attempt to shape each tree that is cut, and healthy trees will not be pruned. The Hancock Park Homeowners Association will update residents as the trimming progresses to adjacent streets including Rosewood Avenue, Oakwood Avenue, Highland Avenue, Beverly Boulevard, Clinton Street,

Wilcox Avenue, Cahuenga Boulevard, Lillian Way and Rossmore Avenue. Temporary no parking signs will be posted on streets prior to the tree work. The Hancock Park Homeowners Association is also holding a virtual town hall meeting on Tuesday, March 25, at 7:30 p.m. The special guest will be Senior Lead Officer Tyler Shuck, of the LAPD’s Wilshire Division, who will provide updates on burglaries and crimes such as copper wire theft in the Hancock Park and Larchmont Village communities. To register for the virtual meeting, visit us02web.zoom.us/j/83702236608. For information, visit hancock-parkhomeownersassociation.org.

BEVERLY PRESS PARKLABREA NEWS

Founded 1946

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BEVERLYPRESS.COM

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The Beverly Press and Park Labrea News are weekly newspapers, published on Thursdays. Mail subscription is \$120 annually. Decreed newspapers of general circulation, entitled to publish legal advertising, Feb. 10, 1960 by Superior Court Order No 736637. Decreed newspapers of general circulation, entitled to publish legal advertising in the City of Beverly Hills and the County of Los Angeles, Dec. 22, 2020 by Superior Court Case Number 19STCP04891. Government Code 6008.



# Activists show support for DuPont Clinic

■ Beverly Hills mayor says city is seeking a settlement

BY TABOR BREWSTER

Dozens of activists attended the Beverly Hills City Council meeting on March 18 to show support for DuPont Clinic, a women’s reproductive health care facility that is currently engaged in a lawsuit against the city. Attendees wore purple ribbons in support of reproductive rights and called on the city to take accountability for its alleged actions and settle the lawsuit fairly with DuPont.

Gay Abrams and Andrea Grossman, co-founders of pro-choice group Beverly Hills for Choice, presented a petition – which was signed by more than 640 people – to the City Council urging it to reach a fair settlement with DuPont Clinic.

“Please do not help give radical forces who would take reproductive health care backwards the victory they want – putting DuPont out of business,” Grossman said to the council. “Please settle this fairly.

Remember, DuPont was the victim. People who need reproductive health care that this clinic offers will be victims too. Do not be the tool of extremists. Do not let this be your legacy.”

The clinic would have offered reproductive health care during all trimesters of pregnancy, and was originally scheduled to open in fall 2023 at 8920 Wilshire Blvd. The company that owns the property, Douglas Emmett, rescinded the lease on June 12, 2023, following anti-abortion protests in the city. Some anti-abortion organizers – including from a group called “Survivors of the Abortion Holocaust” – communicated directly with city employees and council members. DuPont Clinic filed separate litigation against both the city and Douglas Emmett.

The city’s alleged involvement prompted an investigation by California Attorney General Rob Bonta. Bonta concluded that the city violated the California Constitution and state laws in its actions, which he called “reminiscent of those in extremist red states by illegally interfering with, and ultimately preventing a new reproductive health care clinic from

opening.”

Although Bonta’s findings supported DuPont Clinic’s position that the city illegally interfered with its lease, in December 2024 a judge ruled partially in favor of the city. In the lawsuit filed by DuPont Clinic, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Schultz granted the city’s anti-SLAPP motion, which dismissed evidence including a letter penned by the city and the police department that would be sent to the building’s existing tenants warning them of potential safety risks if DuPont Clinic were to open.

The city of Beverly Hills is now seeking to recover attorney fees from DuPont Clinic. According to DuPont’s attorney Jessica Corpuz, the city is seeking to recover \$416,942.

“DuPont has appealed the court’s ruling granting the anti-SLAPP [motion] filed by the city of Beverly Hills because DuPont strongly believes that the court erred in granting the motion, especially in light of the complaint filed by the California Attorney General which points to clear wrongdoing on the part of the city of Beverly Hills,” a statement from DuPont read. “DuPont will similarly be opposing the city’s claim [for] attorney’s fees, both as to the merits of the anti-SLAPP motion and as to the exceedingly large amount sought. DuPont remains committed to its claims against the city of Beverly Hills and believes that the merits of its case will ultimately prevail.”



photo by Tabor Brewster

Attendees called on the city to take accountability for its alleged actions with DuPont Clinic and settle the ongoing lawsuit fairly.

According to DuPont Clinic, it invested almost \$2 million in the planned location in Beverly Hills before it was preemptively shut down. Many of the attendees at the March 18 meeting criticized the city for seeking legal fees – which they said will financially harm DuPont Clinic.

“Please do not align Beverly Hills with anti-abortion radicals. Demonstrate through your actions – and not just words – that you support the legal right to reproductive health care and the people who provide it,” said Alissa Roston, a Beverly Hills resident who came in third in the 2024 City Council election. “Inflicting further financial hardship on DuPont Clinic harms women who rely on its critical services, especially when few other options exist. Please do not add to their burden. I must reiterate that their work helps women and saves lives. Be magnanimous. Reach a

fair and favorable settlement with DuPont.”

In response to the many public comments and letters sent to the city, Beverly Hills Mayor Lester Friedman read a statement by the city at the onset of the public comment period. He opposed the statements made by Bonta, referring to them as “allegations that were never tested in a court of law.” Additionally, he stated that the city is seeking a settlement with DuPont.

“It would be in the best interest of both parties to settle the case, but in order to do so, each party needs to be reasonable. The city participated in a mediation, and discussions have continued since, but a settlement has not been reached. Any claim that the city desires to financially harm DuPont is groundless and simply not true,” Friedman said. “Even though the

See **Activists** page 22



photo by Edwin Folven

The city will pay employees who refer successful candidates to the Beverly Hills Police Department.

## Beverly Hills approves BHPD referral incentive program

■ City employees will get compensation for successful candidates

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Beverly Hills City Council on March 18 approved a new program that will offer financial incentives to city employees for the referrals of prospective police officers. The program was presented to the City Council by Beverly Hills Police Department Capt. Andrew Myers.

“It’s an opportunity for empowering and encouraging our dedicated city employees to take an active role in shaping the future of our police department,” Myers said. “This program is also designed to recruit quality. Our city employees already understand the Beverly Hills high standards and values. Referrals from trusted employees increase new hires’ quality and success rate.”

Myers said the police department is hoping to increase staffing ahead of the upcoming Metro expansion, the 2026 FIFA

World Cup and the 2028 Olympics – events that will bring many visitors to Beverly Hills.

The program will be available through June 30, 2028, and can be modified or discontinued as necessary.

Employees who refer successful candidates to the BHPD can receive up to \$5,000 as a financial incentive.

For the referral of lateral police officers – individuals who already work as police officers in California – the compensation awarded to employees will be \$2,500 upon successful hiring and \$2,500 after the officer completes 18 months of standard probation.

For entry-level referrals, employees will be awarded \$1,000 upon hiring, \$1,500 upon police academy graduation and \$2,500 after the officer completes one year of standard probation.

“These structured payouts ensure our candidates meet key milestones before full incentive disbursement,” Myers said.

All full-time and part-time city

See **Program** page 22

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photo by Edwin Folven  
The armed robbery occurred on the outdoor patio of THE Blvd restaurant, on the sidewalk of Wilshire Boulevard.

## Suspect in robbery at Beverly Wilshire Hotel pleads guilty

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

A suspect in an armed hold-up last August on the restaurant patio of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel pleaded guilty on March 17 to a federal criminal charge of interference with commerce by robbery.

Jamer Mauricio Sepulveda Salazar, 22, a Colombian national who authorities said entered the United States illegally, faces a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison. Salazar is a member of a robbery crew that targeted victims for luxury jewelry last summer. Authorities said the defendant was the getaway driver during a robbery on Aug. 7 in which he and another armed suspect stole a Patek Philippe Nautilus wristwatch valued at \$1 million from a victim dining at THE Blvd restaurant at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Salazar and the second armed suspect – Jesus Eduardo Bryan Padron Rojas, 20, a Venezuelan national who was also illegally in the U.S. – were arrested last August and have since remained in custody. Police believe other members of the crew are still at-large and the investigation is ongoing.

Salazar and Rojas allegedly conducted surveillance outside the hotel and restaurant two days

before committing the robbery, authorities said. A member of the robbery crew also robbed another man at gunpoint who was walking in a residential neighborhood in the 400 block of Doheny Road in Beverly Hills on Aug. 5. The suspect stole a watch valued at \$30,000, authorities said. Investigators determined the men were staying at a short-term rental in South Los Angeles and found multiple firearms during a search of the property. One of the guns found belonged to Christopher Dorner, a former LAPD officer who killed four people and injured three during a series of targeted attacks in 2013, and was later killed by police. The LAPD confirmed shortly after the gun was found that it was not Dorner’s service weapon, and authorities have not disclosed how the firearm ended up in the possession of the robbery crew.

United States District Judge Otis D. Wright II scheduled a July 14 sentencing hearing for Salazar. Criminal charges are still pending against Rojas.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Beverly Hills Police Department. Anyone with information is urged to call the BHPD at (310)550-4951.

## Three in custody, four sought for Melrose robbery

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Three men were arrested and another four suspects remain at-large in a violent robbery that occurred on March 13 at a smoke shop in the Melrose area.

Officers from the Los Angeles Police Department’s Wilshire Division received a call shortly before 9 p.m. from two victims who told police they had been robbed by a group of suspects at the Hubci Smoke Shop at 7223 Melrose Ave. The victims told police they had been contacted earlier by one of the suspects, who arranged for them to film a music video at the store. When the victims arrived, they were confronted by several men, some armed with handguns. The suspects pistol-whipped the men and stole property, including two handguns the victims were carrying and an earring, police said. The suspects fled the location by the time police arrived.

Around 12:30 a.m., officers saw a yellow Lamborghini SUV matching a description provided by the victims and attempted to stop the vehicle. The Lamborghini drove away, leading officers on a 40-minute pursuit into the San Fernando Valley.

Wilshire Division officers later disengaged from the pursuit, which was taken over by an LAPD helicopter and the California Highway Patrol. The suspects drove into the Santa Rosa Valley, where the Ventura County Sheriff’s Department and CHP eventually stopped the vehicle and detained



photo by Edwin Folven  
The robbery occurred at the Hubci Smoke Shop at 7223 Melrose Ave.

two men, including Isaiah Dukes, a rapper from Chicago known as “Lil Zay Osama.” Police arrested the Lamborghini’s driver – Jalen Chamber, 22, of Bourbonnais, Ill. – who investigators said is the man who called the victims and made arrangements for the music video. Based on statements by Dukes and the victims, police determined that Dukes was not directly involved in the robbery and he was released after being interviewed.

Ventura County deputies also located a black BMW 850 that was identified by the robbery victims near the location where Chamber

and Dukes were pulled over. They found a handgun in the second car and arrested Davon Battiste, 29, and Anthony Ramsey, 20, both of Chicago. Police believe the men all know each other and were staying in Ventura County. Chamber, Ramsey and Battiste were arrested and booked for robbery. Police impounded the Lamborghini and the BMW as evidence.

No description or information was provided about the additional suspects. Anyone with information is urged to call the LAPD’s Wilshire Division at (213)922-8205 or (213)473-0476.

## Statistics show crime is on downward trend in L.A.

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Fewer homicides and violent crimes occurred in the city of Los Angeles in 2024 compared to 2023, according to statistics released on March 17 by Mayor Karen Bass and Los Angeles Police Department Chief Jim McDonnell.

The city leaders said Los Angeles is a safer place and crime is trending downward, but more work needs to be done. They stressed vigilance and pledged to continue an aggressive approach to reducing crime.

Homicides decreased 14% citywide in 2024 compared to the previous year, McDonnell said. Person crime, which was formerly classified as violent crime and includes homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault, decreased by 2,586 crimes in 2024 from 30,574 in 2023. The number of victims shot

decreased approximately 19%, with 255 fewer shootings in 2024.

Aggravated assaults also decreased by 2,371 crimes in 2024, down from 30,042 aggravated assaults in 2023. Ninety-seven fewer rapes were reported last year, down from 1,505 the previous year.

“As we continue to make the city of Los Angeles safer for residents and visitors, L.A. has seen a decrease in homicides and person crime citywide,” Bass said. “This progress is the direct result of the tireless work of our law enforcement officers, community leaders and residents who have come together to build a safer, stronger city. While we recognize this progress, we remain committed to sustaining these reductions and ensuring that every resident feels safe in their home, on their street and in their community. Public

See Statistics page 22

## We’re building better transit from DTLA to the Westside.

### D LINE SUBWAY EXTENSION PROJECT Section 2 – Beverly Hills

#### March Updates

The contractor will close Wilshire Bl to perform deck removal and street restoration work for three weeks.

From March 17th through April 7th, Wilshire Bl will be fully closed to traffic between Crescent Dr and just east of El Camino Dr.

Work will take place 24/7.

#### Detour map of full closure of Wilshire Bl for deck removal work.



Detour map provided by The City of Beverly Hills.



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# Beverly Hills commission approves mixed-use project

■ Development will replace The Stinking Rose

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Beverly Hills Planning Commission on March 13 approved a development plan review and density bonus permit for a seven-story mixed use building at 55 N. La Cienega Blvd. After a discussion that lasted almost four hours, the commission approved the project in a 3-2 vote, with added conditions.

The site – currently a vacant building and parking lot – is across the street from the Metro Wilshire/La Cienega subway station, which is under construction and scheduled to open later this year. The lot was previously home to The Stinking Rose, a garlic-centered restaurant.

The project was proposed by developer Abraham Assil and designed by Kevin Tsai Architecture. It includes 140 residential units with 19,055 square feet of ground floor commercial space for retail and restaurant use. A three-story underground parking structure will contain 172 spaces.

Housing within the project includes four studio apartments, 111 one-bedroom units and 25 two-bedroom units. While a building at the site would usually be limited to 70 units, the project makes use of the state’s density bonus permit which allows more units in exchange for the inclusion of affordable housing. The project includes 22 affordable housing units, with 11 reserved for low-income tenants and 11 reserved for those with moderate incomes.

The rooftop level will have an outdoor lounge and living area, outdoor bar and kitchen, pool, sun deck and restrooms. According to a city staff report, the rooftop open space would not have a direct line of sight to single-family residences to the west due to structures lining the rooftop’s western side.

Assil submitted various iterations of a similar project at the site since 2016. In 2021, the planning commission rejected plans that would have brought a 216-room hotel to the location. In 2023, the planning commission approved Assil’s plans for a six-story project with 105 housing units. However, the state’s density bonus law was amended in January 2024 to allow additional

units. Assil reworked the project to include more affordable housing, for a total of 140 units.

The final project approved by the planning commission is approximately 20 feet taller than the version approved in 2023. Additionally, the new version has 11,200 less square feet of outdoor space.

Assil described the project as a “catalyst for change” in the south-east neighborhood of Beverly Hills. He said the development is targeted toward the next generation of Beverly Hills residents.

“The [adult] children of this town do not have the ability to rent or have a location to call home because of not being able to afford it,” Assil said. “They cannot afford a house that’s \$2 or \$3 million, even much higher, or they cannot rent because there is no available units for this size that we’re proposing – 600-700 square feet. Those who want to stay within the city near their parents who are older, and they want to be remaining and be part of the community going forward, these units were designed for them.”

The project abuts single-family properties on Le Doux Road to the west – an aspect that raised many concerns from neighbors. Several residents opposed the project in public comments.

“All of this is too much. Everything should be done within reason, that’s all we’re asking,” Le Doux Road resident Sherol Manavi said. “Development is absolutely fine, but keeping this to a much lower level of development would mean a lot to us.”

Additionally, 19 Le Doux Road residents signed a letter to the planning commission opposing the project. Residents asked that the commission enact several conditions on the project, including no balconies on the side of the building facing the backyards of the homes on Le Doux Road, increased setbacks and limiting the use of the rooftop space. The letter also stated that some residents were hesitant to sign it due to fear of retaliation.

“The last time residents on North Le Doux Road publicly commented on this project, some felt harassed,” the letter read.

Assil strongly opposed the letter, which he called a “character assassination.” He stated that if he were to agree with the requests, the development would be a “prison.” He also denied harassing residents

on Le Doux Road, and said he did not reach out to neighbors in the recent development process out of fear it would be seen as harassment.

Some planning commissioners took issue with Assil’s behavior toward residents.

“I have some problems,” Ross said. “I have some problems with the way that this applicant team comes to us without doing any outreach to the neighbors, with a complete – in my mind – disregard for the neighbors and no empathy.”

Commission Vice Chair Jeff Wolfe brought up a visual discrepancy in the renderings provided by the applicant. In the renderings, the development is shown only slightly taller than the building to its north. However, in reality, the development would be almost twice as tall – 86 feet compared to 45 feet.

Assil and the architect Tsai insisted that the discrepancy was a mistake, and that they created the renderings without finding exact measurements of the adjacent building.

“We eyeballed the building adjacent to our proposed development,” Tsai said.

“It just seems to me odd than an architect would make such a dramatic mistake when it comes to something like height of a building,” Wolfe said. “I can think of another reason why that was drawn this way, and that was to intentionally mislead the relative height of this building to the surrounding buildings. That would also be another reason to do it – to mislead this commission, to mislead the public and make it seem as though this building was only slightly higher than the building next door when in fact it’s almost double in size.”

Tsai denied intentionally skewing the height of the development in the renderings, calling the error an “oversight.”

The commission ultimately voted to approve the project with added conditions, including: a 20-foot privacy hedge will be planted to the building’s immediate west to provide privacy for the residents on Le Doux Road; amplified sound will be prohibited on all outdoor spaces – including the rooftop and balconies; a six-foot sound barrier must be installed on the western side of the rooftop; a four-foot translucent barrier must be installed on each balcony on the west side of the building to prevent sight into nearby properties; and the use of



rendering courtesy of Kevin Tsai Architecture

Commission Vice Chair Jeff Wolfe pointed out that in the renderings, the development is shown only slightly taller than the building to its north (pictured to the right). However, the development would be almost twice as tall – 86 feet compared to 45 feet.

barbecue grills is prohibited on each balcony and on the rooftop.

Ross and Wolfe voted against the project. Each stated that they

believed the conditions were not sufficient in addressing further concerns, including a rooftop kitchen and the height of the project.



## Pet Insurance: Breed is Need

In over a decade as an ER veterinarian, I’ve seen many thankful clients able to accept expensive care due to their pet insurance. However, I’ve also witnessed clients who paid high premiums over their pet’s lifetime, only to be declined coverage for treatments without clear medical justification. It’s really a challenge to navigate the insurance industry but when asked if pet insurance is worthwhile, **my primary consideration is always breed type and associated health risks.**

### BREEDS WITH KNOWN ISSUES

Not all pet breeds are created equal — dogs and cats with unique traits typically face greater (and more expensive) health challenges. Pugs, Bostons, Bulldogs and Persian cats with their bulbous eyes, flattened faces and skin rolls experience eye, respiratory and skin issues. Dachshunds and Corgis, known for their elongated backs and short limbs, commonly suffer from spinal disc herniations. Giant and large breeds like Great Danes, Saint Bernards, Newfoundlands and Shepherds are particularly prone to joint dysplasia, osteoarthritis and shorter lifespans. Toy breeds like miniature poodles tend to have the most severe dental problems. Cavalier King Charles Spaniels and Sphynx cats are almost famous for heart issues. For these breeds, chronic conditions often become expensive with more veterinary visits, diagnostics, procedures, medications, specialist referrals, and emergency care.

### CHOOSING COMPANIES

Pet insurance enables optimal healthcare decisions with less worry of high medical bills. Here, I typically highlight insurance carriers focused mainly on illness coverage, though some also include wellness care such as routine blood work, preventive care, and vaccinations. I am not an expert in insurance but from clients I have heard positive things about a few companies - specifically Healthy Paws, Embrace and ASPCA. When I practiced overnight ER, I often found Trupanion to be trustworthy and responsive—particularly due to their excellent after-hours and weekend support—but recent frustrating client experiences have made me more cautious about recommending them.

Ultimately, choosing pet insurance involves weighing breed-specific vulnerabilities and individual circumstances. If your pet’s breed is covered by one of the categories above - I definitely recommend considering pet insurance. *Until next week!*

### About Dr. Ameis

Dr. Ezra Ameis is an ER veterinarian and independently owns and operates **Paw Priority** in West Hollywood, which provides general practice, urgent care and acupuncture. Please email us with your pet-related questions and topics you’d like covered: [hello@pp.vet](mailto:hello@pp.vet)



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# Three-week closure of Wilshire begins

■ All lanes closed between El Camino, Crescent drives

BY TABOR BREWSTER

Metro began a three-week full closure of Wilshire Boulevard between El Camino and Crescent drives in Beverly Hills on March 17. All lanes are scheduled to reopen on April 7. The closure will allow the continued construction of the Wilshire/Rodeo subway station, as part of Metro’s D-Line Extension Project.

“[The closure] is going to enable us to remove the street decking and also perform the needed utility relocation work at the same time,” Metro communications director Dave Sotero said. “If we didn’t do it this way, it would have required 18 weekend closures. One task would have to be done first and then the other. This gives us the ability to



photo by Tabor Brewster

Wilshire Boulevard is closed between El Camino and Crescent drives.

accomplish two major construction milestones in one closure period.”

The Beverly Hills City Council approved Metro’s request for the closure on Feb. 5. While the work is

expected to be complete by April 7, the council approved three contingency weekends to address unforeseen issues. Additional weekend

See page 7



# Morrill steps down from the WeHo Chamber

■ CEO will stay with organization until new candidate is ready

BY RANCE COLLINS

After 15 years leading the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, president and CEO Genevieve Morrill will step down, although a timeline for her retirement has yet to be determined. Morrill first announced her intentions at the chamber’s annual member meeting and board installation on March 6, and she again acknowledged her plans at the March 17 West Hollywood City Council meeting.

Morrill told the Beverly Press

that she indicated her intentions internally more than two years ago, which she noted was long before the 2024 City Council election. Last year, neither of the candidates backed by the chamber-aligned political action committee were elected to the council.

“The chamber has been an amazing part of my life and I am incredibly grateful to all it has given to me in relationships and friendships,” Morrill said. “The search for new leadership and the transition will be fluid and will be conducted through a board process. As we begin transitioning, I will stay on to support the transition to assure that we have a solid plan in place to carry on the chamber’s strong leadership in advocacy and support for our busi-

ness community.”

Several City Council members wished Morrill well in her future endeavors in comments to the Beverly Press.

“I want to congratulate Genevieve Morrill on her upcoming retirement and recognize her many years of service with the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce,” Councilman Danny Hang said. “Throughout her tenure, she has been a dedicated advocate for the business community, working to support our local economy. Her leadership has played a role in shaping West Hollywood’s business landscape.”

“Genevieve has been a dedicated champion for the West Hollywood business community,” Vice Mayor

John Heilman said. “She has been instrumental in developing numerous programs for our both businesses and residents. Her leadership will be missed.”

“I wish her well in her next endeavor,” Councilman John Erickson said.

Morrill said that she would miss serving the West Hollywood community, and has not yet decided what her next step will be.

“I want to take some time for myself and explore what my next career phase might be,” Morrill said. “I will miss our amazing businesses, many of the relationships I made at City Hall, some long gone, but mostly my staff and board who have become important in my life beyond a job.”

Morrill said that she anticipated that a candidate should be chosen before fall, with a target of complet-



photo courtesy of Genevieve Morrill

Genevieve Morrill has been with the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce for 15 years.

ing a transition to the next CEO and president before the end of the year.



photo by Tabor Brewster

Crews began work at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Beverly Drive on March 17.

From page 6

closures may occur on April 26, May 3 and May 17.

Detour routes during the closures include Santa Monica Boulevard, Beverly Boulevard, Burton Way, Olympic Boulevard, Robertson Boulevard, San Vicente Boulevard and La Cienega Boulevard.

However, some cars are also using Charleville Boulevard as an alternative route through residential neighborhoods.

“As people are driving on Wilshire [westbound] toward the closure area, the detour will be getting on La Cienega Boulevard and traveling to San Vicente Boulevard and then Santa Monica Boulevard. There’s another one they can take on Robertson Boulevard. They can detour off Robertson and then go on Burton

Way,” Sotero said. “If they’re traveling [eastbound] they can detour off Santa Monica Boulevard to Century Park East and then get on Olympic Boulevard and bypass the area.”

Pedestrian access along Wilshire Boulevard will be maintained.

Brian Torres, manager at Chaumont Bakery and Café, said the closure has not affected business as much as expected. The café is located on South Beverly Drive near Wilshire Boulevard.

“It hasn’t affected us much yet. We’re still getting a lot of foot traffic, but it just started, so we’ll see,” Torres said.

However, Ilana Teshuva – owner of the nearby clothing store Spes – said the closure has already negatively impacted her business and her life.

“People cannot come, they cannot park, it’s really bad,” Teshuva said. “Wilshire is an important

street – it’s crossing all L.A.”

Ken Goldman, a Beverly Hills resident and president of the Southwest Beverly Hills Homeowners Association, said the traffic impact in the surrounding neighborhood does not appear to be as bad as he expected.

“We are getting more traffic than usual,” Goldman said. “But so far I don’t see it as a huge burden.”

The Wilshire/Rodeo Subway station is scheduled to open in 2026.

“The dream of providing a subway line along Wilshire Boulevard goes back many decades,” Sotero said. “This is a high-priority transit line that’s going to connect Downtown [Los Angeles] with the westside of L.A. which is critically important, because these are two major urban areas. Both of them are major sources of employment and residential areas.”

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# Gadot star ceremony draws protestors

BY RANCE COLLINS

Actress Gal Gadot received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame March 18, making her the first Israeli actor to receive the honor. The “Wonder Woman” actress, who plays the Evil Queen in Disney’s “Snow White” opening March 21, previously served in the Israel Defense Forces and has been an ardent supporter of Israel in its

ongoing war with Hamas. Dozens of pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel protestors appeared outside the ceremony, vocally advocating each side of the issue. Some protestors hoisted signs demanding that Israeli hostages held by Hamas be freed, while others flew Palestinian flags. Videos from the event shared on social media showed some people being handcuffed on Hollywood

Boulevard, though the Los Angeles Police Department said that no arrests were made. Gadot referenced her heritage when accepting the star, calling herself “a girl from a town in Israel.” While the supporters could be heard, their appearance did not derail the ceremony. “I never dreamt of becoming an actress,” she said. “I never knew that these things were possible.” Gadot’s “Fast & Furious” co-star Vin Diesel, “Wonder Woman” director Patty Jenkins, Gadot’s husband and four children all attended the star ceremony to celebrate the actress.



photo courtesy of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce  
Gal Gadot received her star on March 18.

# Hillside Memorial Park offers new ways to connect online

Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary has launched a newly redesigned website at hillsidememorial.org. Designed with families in mind, the new website serves as an extension of Hillside’s commitment to providing unparalleled service and compassionate care rooted in Jewish values and traditions. The redesigned website highlights Hillside’s superior service, ensuring families have access to information, guidance and support whether planning ahead or facing an immediate need. The user-friendly experience reflects Hillside’s dedication to exceeding expectations. Comprehensive content highlights Hillside’s expert guidance, personalized care and attention to detail as a leader in funeral and memorial services. Intuitive navigation makes it simple for visitors to explore burial and cremation options, learn about preplanning and connect with staff for support. The website integrates information about Jewish customs, rituals and values, and welcomes interfaith families and people from all walks

of life. The fully mobile-optimized site ensures families can access Hillside’s resources and services from any device. The serene beauty and thoughtful design of Hillside Memorial Park is shown through striking photography, providing a glimpse into the peaceful environment. “Our mission has always been to offer families not just a service, but an experience marked by compassion, respect and professionalism,” Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary general manager Rafael Ochoa said. “This website brings that mission to life, offering a platform that mirrors the care and support we deliver every day.” The new website is also an educational resource, offering guidance on preplanning, grief support and Jewish customs. Families can schedule complimentary consultations and receive personalized recommendations. Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary is located at 6001 W. Centinela Ave. For information, call (310)641-0707, or visit hillsidememorial.org.



photo courtesy of Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary  
Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary offers serene beauty throughout its grounds.

## Notable Quotes

“Earth laughs in flowers.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

From his 1847 poem, “Hamatreya.”

\*source: Poetry Foundation

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# County commissions new report on response to fires

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a motion on March 18 directing the county to contract with an external entity to produce a recovery and repopulation after action report for the January wildfires.

Authored by Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District, and Board Chair Kathryn Barger, 5th District, the motion comes as other after action reports are advancing, including a report on the county’s emergency alert and notification system, and reports being conducted by the state. The supervisors want to close any remaining gaps in the after action analysis to ensure the county can learn and improve its emergency management practices and better coordinate with regional agencies involved in wildfire response and recovery.

“All communities impacted by this year’s wildfires have important questions that deserve to be answered,” Horvath said. “We must understand all that occurred and refine our emergency management practices to keep one another safe. Unfortunately, natural disasters are a part of our everyday life. It’s imperative that we apply every lesson learned and provide the accountability and transparency that our residents deserve.”

“Disaster readiness is rooted in learning from past emergencies and acting on those lessons,” Barger said. “I’m proud to co-author this motion because it underscores the importance of improving our county’s emergency response systems to better serve our communities. By

evaluating our past actions and strengthening our coordination efforts, we can ensure a more effective and timely response when disasters strike. Our residents deserve a system that is continually evolving to protect their safety and well-being.”

The independent recovery and repopulation after action report will examine multiple facets of the response including multi-jurisdictional coordination for the Eaton and Palisades fires, disaster recovery centers, debris removal and assistance for people experiencing homelessness. It will analyze strategic communications during the fires and their aftermath between first responders, law enforcement, municipal governments and impacted communities. The report will examine the implementation of a comprehensive donation intake system so public donations can be received and distributed, and a system to direct volunteers. Community repopulation notification and procedures, including any conflicts amongst cooperating agencies, the implementation of access passes for residents and effective communication of road closure status, will also be included in the report.

The supervisors called for an evaluation and expansion of existing evacuation shelter locations, shelter resources and coordination with shelter partners, and an evaluation of the role of Department of Public Health, including the impact of the declaration of a local health emergency on response and recovery efforts.

The county has now directed two after action reports and the state is also conducting two after action reports. A report led by Gov. Gavin Newsom is focused on preparedness and the immediate response to the incident by state and local agencies in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. A more expansive statewide after action report led by the California Office of Emergency Services will more broadly cover the longer response and recovery time frame of the incident. CalOES plans to include reports by local agencies in its report.

For information, visit [recovery.lacounty.gov](https://recovery.lacounty.gov).



photo by Edwin Folven

The county is seeking an independent after action report on the devastating fires in the Pacific Palisades and Altadena.

# Metro work advances at key construction sites along Wilshire

Crews are working on the D Line subway extension in late March, restoring streets and sidewalks in the Wilshire Center, Miracle Mile and Beverly Hills areas, and building the underground subway stations at Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire/Fairfax, Wilshire/La Cienega, Wilshire/Rodeo and Century City/Constellation.

Through the end of March, lanes will be closed along Wilshire Boulevard between Sycamore Avenue and Detroit Street, and on La Brea Avenue between Sixth and Eighth streets. The work supports construction of the Wilshire/La Brea subway station. Crews are also working in the Miracle Mile on Wilshire Boulevard between Courtyard Place and Masselin Avenue. A K-rail work zone in the area supports cross passage work between the tunnels.

Street restoration work is ongoing near the Wilshire/Fairfax subway station. A K-Rail work zone is in place in the middle of Wilshire Boulevard east of Fairfax Avenue. Wilshire Boulevard is reduced to

two lanes in each direction between Wilshire Boulevard and Curson Avenue. Farther west, a K-rail enclosure is in place on the west side of the Wilshire/La Jolla intersection. Wilshire Boulevard is also reduced to two lanes in each direction at La Jolla Avenue.

At the Wilshire/ La Cienega station, a K-rail work zone remains in place along the north side of Wilshire Boulevard between San Vicente and La Cienega boulevards. Two lanes in each direction are open on Wilshire Boulevard between San Vicente and La Cienega boulevards. Intermittent closures will be implemented on North Hamilton Drive at Wilshire Boulevard through March 30. Access to businesses on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard will be maintained from San Vicente Boulevard and North Hamilton Drive.

For questions and concerns about the D Line Extension project, call the 24-hour project hotline at (213)922-6934, email the project team at [purplelineext@metro.net](mailto:purplelineext@metro.net), or visit [metro.net](https://metro.net).



photo by Edwin Folven

Preparations for deck removal are ongoing near the Century City/Constellation station.

## CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the West Hollywood Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing to consider the following item:

<b>LOCATIONS:</b>	Citywide, West Hollywood, California
<b>REQUEST:</b>	The Planning Commission will consider a zone text amendment adopting new policies, regulations, design standards, and definitions for Shared Housing Buildings and Shared Housing Units.
<b>PERMIT(S):</b>	Zone Text Amendment, and any other required permits.
<b>APPLICANT(S):</b>	City of West Hollywood
<b>TIME/PLACE OF HEARING:</b>	Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard West Hollywood, CA 90069
<b>ZONES:</b>	Citywide
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:</b>	Categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Sections §15061(b)(3) (Review for Exemption).

**Complete digital agenda packets** will be available on Thursday, March 27, 2025, and additional information regarding participation options can be found on the posted agenda or the calendar page on-line at [www.weho.org](https://www.weho.org)

**ALL INTERESTED PERSONS** are invited to participate in said Public Hearing to express their opinion in this matter.

**IF YOU CHALLENGE** this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in the written correspondence delivered to the West Hollywood Planning Commission, via the Community Development Department at, or prior to, the Public Hearing.

**To comply with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990**, If you require special assistance to participate in this meeting (e.g., a signer for the hearing impaired), you must call, or submit your request in writing to the Office of the City Clerk at (323) 848-6800 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

For further information regarding this item, contact Tahirah Farris, Senior Planner at (323) 848-6472, or via email at: [tfarris@weho.org](mailto:tfarris@weho.org)

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

Мы сообщаем вам об обсуждении проекта. Для дополнительной информации на русском языке звоните: 323-848-6826.



RESTAURANT NEWS

Masters of Tastes transforms into Generous Plates

Due to the devastating impact of the Los Angeles wildfires, Masters of Taste has made the difficult decision to postpone the highly anticipated eighth annual Masters of Taste event. However, in the spirit of resilience, generosity and community, Masters of Taste is proud to introduce Generous Plates – A Benefit for Union Station Homeless Services, a one-night-only premier dining experience set to take place on Sunday, April 6, in the iconic Locker Rooms at the historic Pasadena Rose Bowl.

The exclusive event will offer guests an intimate and immersive dining experience featuring two exquisite five-course tasting menus created by some of Los Angeles’ most celebrated culinary masters. Accompanied by premier selections of spirits, cocktails, wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverages from top-

tier beverage masters, and delectable desserts from L.A.’s top sweet masters, this night promises to be an unparalleled culinary journey. The evening will kick off with a cocktail party at 4:30 p.m. before the main tasting experience starts at 6:30 p.m. For information, visit [mastersoftastela.com/generous-plates](http://mastersoftastela.com/generous-plates). The Rose Bowl is located at 1001 Rose Bowl Drive, Pasadena.

Start the day off right with Breakfast Republic

Breakfast Republic is serving up morning favorites for the whole family. Every location is open from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. 365 days a year, making this the perfect holiday hangout. Whether it’s a post-Easter egg hunt feast or a laid-back brunch, there’s something on the menu for everyone. Their expansive menu pays homage to morning-time classics, while also reimagining favorites.

Indulge in flights of pancakes with flavors like Oreo cookie, churro and strawberry cheesecake, and French toast samplers with flavors like s’mores, banana split and gluten-free cinnamon raisin. For the savory breakfast lover, enjoy chilaquiles, shrimp and grits, crab and crawfish cake benedict, and breakfast bacon mac ‘n’ cheese. A vegan menu is also available. For information, visit [breakfastrepublic.com](http://breakfastrepublic.com). Breakfast Republic is located at 7141 Santa Monica Blvd., 1918 W. Sunset Blvd. and 9901 Washington Blvd., Culver City.

Panera opens ‘to go’ in Hollywood

Hollywood is home to country’s newest Panera Bread. The new digital-forward Panera to Go bakery-café is just the second of its kind in the Los Angeles area. The Panera to Go experience is optimized for guests on the go – featuring a smaller footprint than traditional bakery-cafes with updated ordering kiosks, a fully digitized menu and a new tracking screen providing more detailed order status. To celebrate the new location for a limited time



photo by Stan Lee  
Executive Chef Bum Oh has crafted a Korean-inspired special menu for Fanny’s.

Fanny’s adds a touch of Korean ‘Inspiration’

Fanny’s – the restaurant at the Academy Museum – is launching a Korean Sunday Supper series Sunday, March 23. The series is inspired by and in conjunction with “Director’s Inspiration: Bong Joon Ho,” the museum’s first exhibition honoring the Oscar-winning filmmaker, which is opening the same day. The menu is the brainchild of

Fanny’s Executive Chef Jun Bum Oh, who will be drawing on his native Korean heritage to craft the special dishes being offered. In addition to the restaurant’s regular menu, guests can expect to find a rotating selection of traditional Korean dishes such as ssam jun-sik, bibimbap and galbi jjim, as well as cinema-inspired craft cocktails.

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(through June 14), local nonprofit organizations, including schools, sports teams and scout groups can host a fundraising event at the new Panera bakery-cafe and Panera will donate 30% of the net sales from the event back to the organization. The initiative is an extension of Panera’s existing Fundraising Night program but with a higher give-back during this window.

For information, visit panera-bread.com. The new location is 6775 Selma Ave., Unit 101A.

## Larchmont staple celebrates 15 years

Osteria Mamma, the beloved Italian staple in Larchmont, is celebrating its 15-year anniversary with exciting new offerings that honor its rich culinary roots while embracing fresh innovations. The milestone marks the arrival of a new chef and a refreshed menu, alongside immersive dining experiences that invite guests to connect with the heart and soul of “Mamma’s” Italian cooking.

A refreshed menu will be offered at Osteria Mamma created by Chef Fabio di Stasi that brings a fresh new take on the restaurant’s traditional Northern Italian flavors. Launching later this year, guests can enjoy a hands-on culinary experience where they’ll learn to make the chef’s signature dishes from the new menu, followed by a delicious meal with wine pairings. Tickets will be available at opentable.com/r/osteria-mamma-hollywood.

Launching April 24, the team is offering an expertly-led tasting featuring 3-4 seasonal wines, each paired with light bites from the kitchen. The monthly wine tasting experience will be held on the last

Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. for \$35 per person, bookable on OpenTable.

For information, visit osteriamamma.com or call (323)284-7060. Osteria Mamma is located at 5732 Melrose Ave.

## About Last Knife gets jazzy

The Godfrey Hotel Hollywood’s About Last Knife will host a Wellington live jazz soiree on Saturday, March 29, featuring a finely curated evening by Wellingtons, Barr Hill Gin and ALK, pairing a four-course tasting menu with live jazz music. For \$125 per person, guests can expect a welcome toast of blood orange French 75 crafted with Barr Hill Artisan Gin paired with buffalo chicken and cheeseburger welly bites; starters like lobster gruyère welly bites and a mesclun salad with gribiche dressing; and mains featuring a sea and land wellington duo – including beef and salmon with Yukon gold purée, broccolini and beurre rouge. Indulge in a delectable dessert and end the meal with Wellington’s apple pie bites. Reservations can be booked via OpenTable under the “Wellington 4-course Tasting Menu” experience by visiting opentable.com/r/alk-at-the-godfrey-hotel-hollywood-los-angeles.

For information, visit godfrey-hotelhollywood.com/alk.html. The Godfrey Hotel Hollywood is located at 1400 N. Cahuenga Blvd.

## Wrangle-up a good time at Desert 5

Kick off the Stagecoach festivities this Thursday, March 20,

## Alta Adams is available for Everytable

Everytable, the mission-driven company making nutritious food accessible to everyone has partnered with James Beard-nominated Watts native chef Keith Corbin, co-owner and executive chef of the critically acclaimed Alta Adams and best-selling author, to provide a soul-satisfying gumbo. Inspired by the smoked chicken and sausage gumbo on the Alta Adams menu, Corbin’s California Gumbo, the newest offering through Everytable, features tender, boneless, skinless chicken thigh, andouille sausage and the classic trinity of bell peppers, onions and celery in a rich, dark roux, served over rice and finished with fresh parsley for a soulful Cali twist.

Chef Corbin’s California Gumbo is available online and for pick-up, delivery and dine-in options at all 38 Southern California Everytable shops.

starting at 9 p.m. for the Road to Stagecoach event in collaboration with Wrangler at Desert 5 Spot. Enjoy an exciting night of live entertainment from the Desert 5 Spot band, delicious tacos, handcrafted cocktails and a variety of fun activities. Guests will receive a complimentary Wrangler-branded denim bucket hat (available until they run out), which can be customized at the Large Lemonade chainstitch station. In between dancing and heading over to the bar, stop by the Wrangler Butts Drive Me Nuts photo booth to snap a memorable photo of you and your friends. RSVPs can be made



photo courtesy of Teal Moss Photography

Chef Keith Corbin’s California Gumbo is the latest offering from Everytable.

Pricing will vary by Everytable location, ranging between \$8.95 and \$10.25 as per the company’s unique variable pricing model based on the median household income of the neighborhood where

each store is located.

For information, visit everytable.com. Everytable locations include 5164 Wilshire Blvd., 8717 Santa Monica Blvd. and 6775 Santa Monica Blvd.

via Partiful at partiful.com/e/cCx4PctsdTtw48UEB1AB?. Desert 5 Spot is located at 6516 Selma Ave. For information, visit desert-fivespot.com.

## Bar Lis honors Tina Turner

Looking for a spot to enjoy jazz in Hollywood? Head to Bar Lis next Tuesday, March 25, from 9 p.m. until late for a special Tina Turner tribute, part of the renowned

Jazz Eclectic LA series. The evening will be hosted by Gilles Amsellem. The tribute has become an annual celebration of the late queen of rock and soul, always offering a lively and fun atmosphere. Arrive early for cocktails with friends or a romantic dinner for two and enjoy dishes like the spicy rigatoni vodka pasta or the delectable sea trout with sautéed farro and butternut squash. RSVPs can be made via the Partiful at partiful.com/e/NxoN86cS6Ip08oRNOFWK. For information, visit barlis-la.com. Bar Lis is located at 1541 Wilcox Ave.

## Musso & Frank Grill adds new cabernet to wine list

Musso & Frank Grill, an iconic Hollywood dining destination for 105 years and winner of Wine Spectator’s Award of Excellence for the last seven years, has released the newest addition to its wine list: Musso’s 2021 Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve. Musso & Frank Grill President and CEO

Mark Echeverria jointly made the announcement with general manager and wine director Andrea Scuto.

“While Musso’s is primarily known for offering the greatest martinis in the world as well as other popular cocktails, we are excited to be offering customers our specially blended new vintage wine

as well,” Echeverria said. “During the course of the past seven years, and under Andrea’s expert guidance, we have become renowned for our wine selections in addition to our always in demand steaks, chops, seafood, salads and of course, legendary martinis.”

Musso & Frank’s partnership with Challen Winery in Santa Maria started seven years ago with the release of Musso’s first label. In 2020, Scuto wanted to create a new cabernet with Challen’s winemaker, Mary Bradley, to produce the wine using old world principles – combining Musso & Frank’s roots in Europe with the exceptional fruit quality of California.

“It was a fantastic experience working with such a talented winemaker as Mary. The new wine shows incredibly well – it’s powerful and yet elegant,” Scuto said. “Our 2021 Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve has now reached the right maturity to be fully enjoyed by our guests.”

Musso & Frank Grill is located at 6667 Hollywood Blvd. For information, visit mussoandfrank.com.



photo courtesy of Musso & Frank Grill

Musso’s 2021 Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve is now being served at the iconic restaurant.

## It’s a new ‘Day’ at the Actors Company

P3 Theatre Company will present “Day After Day (The Life and Music of Doris Day)” by Tony Santamauro for a limited engagement at The Actors Company Let Live Theatre on April 5-6. The musical, which premiered to critical acclaim in Long Beach in 2020, celebrates the life and legacy of one of Hollywood’s most beloved stars.

A nostalgic journey through the life and music of an icon, “Day After Day” is a family-friendly production that takes audiences on an intimate journey through the life of Hollywood icon Doris Day from age 16 to her 40s. Best

known for her radiant screen presence and timeless songs, the show reveals the woman behind the golden voice by blending her greatest hits – including “Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered,” “Sentimental Journey,” “Secret Love” and “Que Sera Sera” – audiences will gain a deeper understanding of Day’s personal triumphs and challenges as she navigated her way to becoming a Hollywood icon.

For tickets and information, visit p3theatre.biz/day-after-day. The Actors Company Let Live Theatre is located at 916 N. Formosa Ave.



photo by Caught In The Moment Photography

Deborah Robin plays Doris Day in “Day After Day.”





# GMCLA dons spurs and ‘Rhinestones’

Gay Men’s Chorus of Los Angeles, now in its 46th year, will present “Rhinestone Cowboys” on March 22-23 as part of its 2024-2025 Season. The country music celebration will feature hits from icons who inspired generations to today’s country superstars and new voices from the genre. The nearly 200 chorus members, led in performance by music director and conductor Ernest H. Harrison will perform (and sometimes dance) more than 20 songs. The concert will feature choreography by Ray Leeper (GMCLA regular, Fox’s “So You Think You Can Dance,” ABC’s “Dancing with the Stars”). “Rhinestone Cowboys” will be held at the historic Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills.

“At this difficult time, we’re

holding so many Angelenos in our hearts. The GMCLA family knows that Los Angeles will once again prove it is resilient – or, as we say, L.A. Strong; and we hope that our music can play a small role in healing and rebuilding connections,” executive director and producer Lou Spisto said. “It’s been years since GMCLA performed a country music tribute, and the sound of country has never been more popular, more diverse or more present in every corner of the country and this city. I’m certain that the chorus will bring something extraordinary to this genre and we can give our audiences a joyous and uplifting experience at Rhinestone Cowboys.”

It’s time for country music to get a GMCLA makeover as GMCLA’s

200 fabulous artists will sing, strut and two step to the first ladies, and gay icons of country with Dolly, Reba, Shania, Kacey and The Chicks. They will also celebrate today’s hippest and gayest artists and allies reinventing country like Beyoncé, Brandi Carlile, Lil Nas X and Chappell Roan. Audiences will hear charters-toppers like “That Don’t Impress Me Much” (Shania Twain); “Old Town Road” (Lil Nas X); “Love Story” (Taylor Swift), and of course, “Rhinestone Cowboy” (Glenn Campbell), and many more incredible hits. Sequin studded line dancing and production numbers from Shania’s Twain’s “Man I Feel Like A Woman” to Chappell Roan’s “Pink Pony Club” will make this a true GMCLA extravaganza.



photo by Gregory Zabalski

“Rhinestone Cowboys” will perform March 22-23 at the Saban Theatre.

“Rhinestone Cowboys” will take place on Saturday, March 22 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 23 at 3:30 p.m. at the Saban Theatre, 8440 Wilshire Blvd. Tickets range from

\$45-\$125 and are available at gmcla.org. The parking facility located at 8484 Wilshire Blvd. (at La Cienega) is the most convenient structure for theater parking.

# Greystone hosts final ‘Music in the Mansion’ concerts on March 23



photo courtesy of the city of Beverly Hills

Duo Olivia and HyeJin Kim will perform on March 23 at 2 p.m. at Greystone Mansion and Gardens.

The city of Beverly Hills’ Community Services Department invites the public to the grand finale of the Music in the Mansion chamber concert series on Sunday, March 23, at the historic Greystone Mansion and Gardens. The special event, titled “The Romantic and The Folk,” will showcase remarkable talent from the Beverly Hills National Auditions, featuring emerging soloists, concertmasters and musicians.

The afternoon will commence with a performance by the duo Olivia Jeongah Kim and HyeJin Kim at 2 p.m., followed by the ensemble Magic Strings at 4 p.m.

Olivia Jeongah Kim and HyeJin Kim, who are accomplished musicians and close friends, have captivated audiences in South Korea and Los Angeles with dynamic performances, showcasing a deep musical connection.

Olivia, a celebrated violinist from Seoul, has garnered numerous accolades, including wins at the Beverly Hills National Auditions and the Artist International competition. A graduate of Seoul National University and the England

Conservatory, she made her debut at Carnegie Hall and recorded the album “Love Poem” with the Nuremberg Symphony.

Pianist HyeJin Kim is renowned for her exceptional technique and vibrant interpretations. She has won prestigious awards, including at the Ferruccio Busoni Piano Competition, and has performed at esteemed venues such as Carnegie Hall and Konzerthaus Berlin.

The second concert at 4 p.m. will feature Magic Strings, a dynamic ensemble known for performances on traditional Eastern European instruments. Previously known as Firebird Balalaika, the group has been enchanting audiences since 1995. Its repertoire includes a range of traditional Ukrainian songs, beloved classics and original compositions.

Magic Strings is comprised of Iryna Orlova, music director and domra virtuoso; Anatolly Mamalyga, principal arranger and former music director of the Ridni Naspiv Ensemble; Peter Rothe, balalaika performer; Tom Barnes, contra-bass

balalaika; Lynn McConnell, alto balalaika; Guzel Safiulina, domra; and Anna Belaya, soprano.

The series is curated and produced in collaboration with Laura Schmieder, director of iPalpiti Artists International, Inc.

For tickets and information, visit [beverlyhills.org/csevents](http://beverlyhills.org/csevents).

## Establishing a Family Trust

Thinking about what happens to your assets once you’re gone is never fun but spending just a few hours preparing for the inevitable could save your family months of confusion, arguments, court costs, attorney’s fees, and grief.

The Kramer Law Group offers clients the peace of mind that comes from knowing families will be taken care of and shielded from unnecessary expenses and probate administration.

Trusts are personalized and can be created to address your unique needs. Whether you own your home and want to avoid probate fees and other costs, or you’re interested in placing assets such as investments into a trust, The Kramer Law Group will endeavor to partner with you to help ensure that your assets are ultimately distributed according to your wishes.

Call us for a courtesy consultation to learn more about the benefits of creating a trust and determine whether it’s the right choice for you and your family.

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# FAFSA and CADAA deadlines extended to April 2

The California Student Aid Commission has extended the deadline for the Free Application for Student Aid, also known as FAFSA, and California Dream Act Application to April 2. The extension comes as a response to a significant decline in financial aid application submissions across California, particularly among first-time applicants and students from mixed-status households, due to the delayed opening of the application process and concerns that FAFSA application data could be used for purposes other than awarding financial aid by the federal government.

Recent data shows that completed FAFSA applications from high school seniors have decreased by more than 25% compared to last year, and overall FAFSA submissions for California students have dropped by 14%. Additionally, the number of CADAA submissions has dropped by 38% with new FAFSA filers from mixed-status families experiencing a 44% decrease. The declines are alarming, particularly because they disproportionately impact first-generation college students, whose continued education dramatically changes a family’s trajectory. Financial aid is a lifeline for

students who would not otherwise access higher education. It ensures every student has the opportunity to achieve academic and career goals, while easing financial burdens. A college education is essential to achieve long-term success, as it provides the skills and opportunities to contribute to communities and drive economic mobility.

The extension provides additional time for students and their families to make informed decisions regarding financial aid applications, particularly as students navigate the new application process and concerns about the safety of their per-

sonal data.

post-secondary success, and we are committed to making it more accessible for all students,” Rivas said.

“Dual enrollment is a powerful opportunity for students to challenge themselves academically, earn college credit early and build the confidence needed for future success,” LAUSD Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho said. “By bridging the gap between high school and higher education, we empower students to take charge of their learning and open doors to greater career and college opportunities.”

The resolution acknowledges dual enrollment improves student success by increasing college retention, completion rates, academic performance and workforce readi-

ness, while reducing financial barriers to post-secondary education and providing students with in-demand skills and improved access to high-growth sectors.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, 81% of dual enrollment students enroll in a post-secondary institution within one year after high school graduation and have higher rates of completing a college degree, with an average increase of 25%.

By prioritizing dual enrollment, LAUSD reaffirms its commitment to academic excellence and equitable higher education access, aligning with the 2022-26 strategic plan.

For information, visit [lausd.org](http://lausd.org).

# LAUSD passes resolution to expand college access through dual enrollment

In a decision to advance college readiness, leadership and equity, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education unanimously passed Resolution 060-24/25, Expanding Opportunities: Celebrating Dual Enrollment Awareness Month. The district reaffirmed its commitment to equity by increasing access to college credit courses, career technical education pathways, industry certifications, internships and apprenticeships, and the opportunity to earn an AA degree for students in grades 9-12.

The district highlighted the importance of collaborating with East Los Angeles College, the California Community Foundation and the Los Angeles Community College District on outreach events such as ELAC’s annual student-led Dual Enrollment Summit, educational webinars and student advocacy.

LAUSD District 2 Board Vice President and author Dr. Rocío Rivas highlighted the benefit of early college.

“Dual enrollment is a proven tool for increasing graduation rates and



# Descanso spices up the Miracle Mile

BY KAREN VILLALPANDO

The Miracle Mile has been waiting for a miracle since 2018. When Callender’s Wilshire closed, local residents and employees of LACMA and other institutions were left with fewer offerings for after-work gathering places. Then, a sign appeared several months ago that the large space at 5773 Wilshire Blvd. had been leased. The community anxiously awaited the announcement of what would occupy the space, perhaps rejuvenating what late former Councilman Tom LaBonge called the “Champs-Élysées” of Los Angeles – Wilshire Boulevard.

Ultimately, it was announced Descanso, an upscale Mexican restaurant with roots in Orange County, would be opening in early 2025. The Greater Miracle Mile held a ribbon cutting in January and the doors officially opened, adding to the transformation of the Boulevard ignited by the progress being made at the LACMA campus.

Descanso owner Rob Arellano and his design team transformed the space into a sleek and sophisticated bar space. Dining areas inter-

twined traditional and La Plancha offerings, and a section resembling a Mexican street-style experience. Whether gathering family around a La Plancha grill, grabbing margaritas in the “outdoor” inspired bar space, or having a traditional meal at a cozy booth, Arellano wants his customers to enjoy each experience.

I have dined at Descanso on several occasions, sampling different dishes each time. A must-have starter is the tropical ceviche, featuring tangy mango mixed with lime infused local sea bass. Jicama, Fresno chiles, cucumber and red onion provide texture. The dish is plated with cilantro micro greens, giving it an elevated touch. Another outstanding starter is the choriqueso verde served piping hot. Green chorizo combined with poblano suiza, three cheeses, an avocado Toreado salsa, spring onion, serrano chiles and cilantro spooned on flour tortillas makes for a delicious bite of food. It is perfect for sharing at the table.

Tacos are generally one to an order. We tried several of them like the Don Chingon, an al pastor taco on a blue corn tortilla with two sal-



photo courtesy of Descanso

The circular bar at Descanso invites comraderie, while bartenders shake up specialty cocktails and signature margaritas. Draft beer and a nice selection of wines by the glass are offered as well as a full tequila menu.

sas and chamoy – pickled fruit. The flavors were tantalizing. The relleno taco is an Anaheim chili stuffed with Tatum squash, corn, peppers, red onion and cheese. I found it easier to eat with a fork – making it easy to share too. The vegetables combine with the melting cheese for a savory, satisfying taste.

On a recent visit with colleagues Rance Collins and Tabor Brewster, they sampled dishes I had not yet tried. Rance ordered the plato de quesadilla.

“No matter how many appetizing choices might be available on a Mexican restaurant’s menu, my eyes always land on perhaps the simplest of dishes,” Rance said. “Yet, it should be noted, that when a specialized eatery manages to master the basics, that’s when you know it’s worth the while.”

It came presented beautifully, with two open faced chicken quesadillas (you can add veggies, carnitas, al pastor, shrimp or steak) on a flour tortilla. The quesadillas included tres quesos, salsa verde, cilantro and Cotija cheese. On the side was delicious Mexican fried rice and refried pinto beans.

Tabor selected the torta, a seemingly simple choice as well. To the uninitiated, the idea may seem unusual, he said.

“Guacamole, beans, onions, lettuce, queso and marinated meat on bread? Why not wrap it up in a tortilla?”

The wonders of a “torta” are found in the juxtaposition of vibrant Mexican flavors with a warm bread roll – telera bread, to be specific. Telera, a traditional panaderia staple, is fluffy with a slight crust, like a soft baguette – believed to be the result of the French Empire’s brief occupation of Mexico in the 1860s. On Descanso’s torta, fresh guacamole, charro beans and chile morita aioli act as the spread. The pillowy telera and rich spread lay the foundation for the main event: a choice of steak, al pastor, carnitas or chicken. Marinated in bright Mexican spices and grilled, the steak option was topped with pickled jalapeños for an extra kick.

The menu offers many salads, entrées and side dishes, with artistic plating and an abundance of food. I found the dishes to be spicy when needed, and mild when expected.

We haven’t even discussed the circular bar, centered in the main room and rises to the ceiling for a dramatic effect. The bartenders curate six specialty margaritas,

interesting cocktails, wines by the glass and bottles and beers on tap. It’s a convivial gathering space, a perfect spot post Museum Row visit or to join friends after work. Summer on the front patio promises to be a thrill.

Descanso is just what the Miracle Mile needed to jumpstart the buzz of activity awaiting in the near future with the subway and the museum activations.

Descanso Restaurant is located at 5773 Wilshire Blvd. (213)672-2444. [Descansorestaurantla.com](http://Descansorestaurantla.com)

*Rance Collins and Tabor Brewster contributed to this story.*



photo by Karen Villalpando

Shrimp taquitos, chips and smoky salsa and the choriqueso are terrific starters, especially when paired with a house margarita. The sea bass ceviche, right, is a zesty twist on the popular dish, with mango, jicama, Fresno chilies and cucumber.



photo by Karen Villalpando

The relleno taco is stuffed with squash and cheese and served open-faced on a blue corn tortilla topped with a salsa verde, cotija cheese and micro cilantro greens.

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# SCOTTSDALE

A road trip to the desert soothes  
the mind, body and spirit

BY KAREN VILLALPANDO

Breathtaking sunsets, warm days and cool nights. Scottsdale, Arizona emerges as a welcome destination during the winter and spring months, especially when L.A. experiences more rainy and cloudy days. Nestled in the northeast area of Scottsdale in the Sonoran Desert, the Four Seasons Resort at Troon North offers a serene landscape accented by granite boulders and a forest of saguaro cacti.

We recently took a road trip to Scottsdale to take in a Dodgers pre-season game and really to get away for some R&R following the L.A. wildfires. Four Seasons Troon North is located approximately an hour northeast of Phoenix. Once we arrived and immersed ourselves into resort living, we realized how necessary it is to give the mind and soul a breather. The Four Seasons provides a comforting atmosphere, large sized guest rooms and an inviting pool where one can find a luxurious towel-covered chaise lounge.

Pathways guide guests to their individual townhouse-style rooms. Our king bedroom with a patio also had a comfortable couch and fire-place, and a walk-in closet. The patio with lounge chairs looked out at Pinnacle Peak and the pool area, a perfect setting for photos of the sunset.

Our arrival coincided with the barbecue wafting smoky aromas through the resort for diners at the casual Proof restaurant. Oversized barn doors open to a lively bar area with servers in checkered shirts pouring craft tap beers and shaken cocktails. An expansive outdoor terrace wraps around the western edge of Proof, providing the ultimate sunset watching venue. Fireplaces and heaters warm the patio during the winter and spring,

and overhead misters and fans keep it cool in summer. Proof is known for its pretzel knots with a chili cheese dipping sauce. Savor the slow-smoked half chicken and the Bulleit bourbon glazed baby back ribs. The all-day restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner and the vibe inside transforms from a comfy breakfast spot to a sports bar theme in the afternoon.

The sleek Onyx Bar and Lounge occupies part of the lobby and an outdoor patio space, with fire pits and cozy couches facing Pinnacle Peak and the Sonoran Desert’s natural beauty. We started our evening here where the bartender crafted a delicious Empress gin French 75, giving the classic New Orleans cocktail a tempting violet hue. On the patio, guests enjoyed the desert views, mixology drinks and even watched a wedding proposal on the lawn below. The scene set the stage for a romantic, fire-lit dinner at the Spanish steakhouse, Talavera.

Talavera’s dishes range from classic steakhouse to edgy Spanish creations. The steak tartare is dramatically prepared and plated at the table. The evening we dined, a server guided a roaming cart of jamon Ibérico through the restaurant, slicing tastes of the Spanish delicacy. Paella Talavera is the house specialty, and several tapas are offered. I highly recommend the endive salad served on top of whipped goat cheese. Be sure to combine the ingredients to get the full flavor of pistachios, goat cheese and endive – it’s delightful. Rib-eye, New York and Kansas City strip steaks come with two sauces and a lobster tail can be added – who doesn’t love a classic surf and turf?

The service throughout the resort is top-notch, exactly as one expects at a Four Seasons. We appreciat-



photo courtesy of the Four Seasons Scottsdale

The architecture of the Four Seasons at Troon North pays homage to the natural landscape by complementing the tones and hues of the flora and brush. The adobe casitas are spacious and have balcony patios overlooking the valley and Pinnacle Peak.

edthe attention to detail and extra steps to make our stay so enjoyable, from the turn-down service to the small touches like additional water bottles and Nespresso pods.

For spring, the resort introduces the “Heart of the Desert” promotion running through May 31, showcasing the “the unique charm of the breathtaking region through thoughtfully curated experiences, culinary offerings, wellness activities and interactive events that connect guests with the desert’s vibrant spirit.”

Onyx Bar & Lounge Patio will transform into a serene desert retreat, with cacti, serene earth tones and cozy lounge areas. Desert-inspired cocktails and curated dishes featuring bold, Latin flavors will be served at the special pop-up space. An agave ritual tasting will be held on April 19 and May 31.

Other activities include a Paloma Stand, a Tarot and Cocktails night on April 4 and May 2, and a Cocktail Master Class on April 18. On Earth Day, April 22, enjoy a succulent workshop. A desert-inspired afternoon tea with a Southwestern twist is offered Friday, Saturday and Sunday through June 1.

The Four Seasons “Heart of the Desert” lies in the spa with desert-inspired treatments, floating sound baths and “desert-bathing” with guided tours and immersing oneself in the natural surroundings.

An extended weekend getaway or week-long adventure to Scottsdale satisfies one’s soul and rejuvenates the batteries. Whether you travel by car or airplane, you will find relaxation in the heart of the desert.

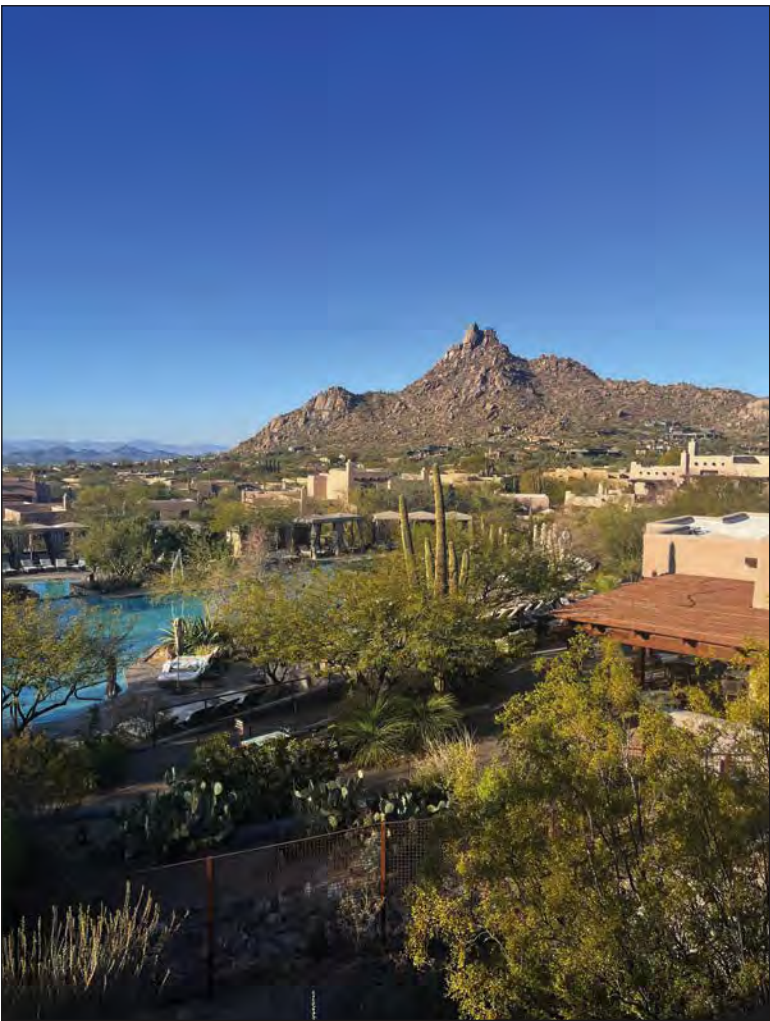
Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, 10600 E. Crescent Moon Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85262. For more information or reservations, call (480)515-5700 or visit <https://www.fourseasons.com/scottsdale/heart-of-the-desert>.

Pinnacle Peak beckons travelers to the Four Seasons at Troon North. The resort is nestled in the Sonoran Desert northeast of Phoenix and downtown Scottsdale. Enjoy an Empress gin French 75 at Onyx Bar and take in the sunset.



photo courtesy of the Four Seasons Scottsdale

Take a dip in the inviting pool and adjacent spa for complete relaxation. Napping in the comfortable chaise lounges is encouraged. The Saguaro Blossom cafe offers a lunch menu and cool beverages.



photos by Karen Villalpando





# ‘The Electric State’ makes me nervous for ‘Avengers 5’

This has to be some kind of record. The Russo brothers, who delivered four of the best Marvel films, just dropped a star-studded mediocre mess that cost \$320 million. Netflix’s “The Electric State” is the filmmakers’ third middling contribution since “Avengers:

Endgame,” which makes me very nervous for their return to Marvel with “Doomsday.” I could drag “Electric State,” but plenty of critics beat me to it. They’re right, despite a memorable premise. It’s the 1990s. In the aftermath of a human/robot war, clear



photo courtesy of Netflix

“The Electric State” is a new big budget sci-fi film that doesn’t reach its full potential.

## Fire relief effort offers Judaica items for families who endured loss

The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles is co-sponsoring a drive and “boutique” store on Sunday, March 23, and Tuesday, March 25, at Leo Baeck Temple for fire victims to select new Judaica items for their homes.

The “Rebuilding Judaica” event is open to families impacted by the Palisades and Eaton fires. Candles, candlesticks, Havdalah sets, Kiddush cups, challah covers and boards, seder plates, matzah covers, menorahs, mezuzot and other items

will be available. JFEDLA and the Board of Rabbis of Southern California are supporting efforts to restore Judaica collections lost in the recent wildfires. Hours for the “Rebuilding Judaica” event are noon-5 p.m. on March 23; 3-5 p.m. on March 25. People are also encouraged to donate to the fire relief effort. The Leo Baeck Temple is located at 1300 N. Sepulveda Blvd. For information, email [judaicadriveforla@gmail.com](mailto:judaicadriveforla@gmail.com) or visit [jewishla.org](http://jewishla.org).

## ON SCREEN WITH TIM POSADA

lines divide both sides until a droid locates Michelle (Millie Bobby Brown). The pair must move quickly before they’re caught by aggressors on both sides. Luckily, smuggler Keats (Chris Pratt) and his robo-buddy Herman (voiced by Anthony Mackie) help them seek answers about their unique connection.

This is a promising concept, but the credit for that belongs to Simon Stålenhag, author of the 2018 illustrated novel of the same name. Whatever this is, I don’t know. It’s neither terrible nor measurably good. Call it watchable-adjacent. Still, the critical score below 20% is too severe, but I understand the critical frustration. The cost, cast size and acclaimed source add up to a whole lotta wasted potential.

Amidst a struggling film industry, the idea that this bland flick was greenlit at the expense of several other projects that would add up to \$320 million feels perverse. At least “Electric State” looks like an expensive film with tight computer graphics. Those droids, including a robotic Mr. Peanut (voiced by Woody Harrelson), do look fantastic, even if they have little to do for two hours. If only the human hands behind this film cared more about the story’s plotting and the performances.

Please don’t let this serve as foreshadowing. For the next two



photo courtesy of Netflix

Chris Pratt and Millie Bobby Brown star in “The Electric State,” a film by the Russo brothers.

“Avengers” films, the Russos likely will receive whatever budget they want. They can also bring in any household names they desire, including Robert Downey Jr. returning to Marvel not to play Iron Man but supervillain Dr. Doom. That news is concerning enough – add to it another weak film from the directing duo who seemed unstoppable six years ago.

Frankly, simpler bits like humor are now a concern. The Russos have a background in comedy (“Arrested Development,” “Community”), but not even a single laugh lands here. Pratt is especially unfunny throughout the entire thing, though he sure tries. It’s all so forced.

I think back to how effortless “Infinity War” infused more than 40 characters into the story. Here, we get to know around eight characters well. Beyond that, it’s all cameos: Holly Hunter as an on-air reporter, Jason Alexander as a dead-beat foster parent, Kurt Loder as

himself and Colman Domingo as a smuggler, perhaps a setup for a sequel. The voice cast does much of the same with the likes of Jenny Slate, Alan Tudyk, Hank Azaria and Brian Cox. This is excess without a payoff.

I don’t mean to drag the Russos. Apparently, they drew ire for comments on A.I. and arthouse films last weekend. Those are distractions to this argument. Instead, consider this venting. I’m invested in the “Avengers” films (clearly not this one), finding so much joy in them and plenty of other Marvel contributions. I don’t want them to fail.

Maybe the Russos work better with established characters, not new ideas. Let’s hope that’s the case. If not, then be prepared for a film that might look fantastic but won’t get off the ground. That’s “The Electric State.” Hollow and lacking a pulse while it wastes money best spent on other things.

## VINTAGE PARKLABREA NEWS

### Assistance League stages theater programs for children



Members of the Assistance League of Los Angeles’ Nine O’Clock Players children’s theater program were shown in the March 17, 1955, issue of the Park Labrea News during a production of “Once Upon a Clothesline.” The theater company celebrated its 26th anniversary that year. Seventy years later, the Assistance League and Nine O’Clock Players continue to offer engaging children’s programming, with their production of “Alice” running on Sundays at 2 p.m. through April 6 at the Assistance League Theatre, 1367 N. St. Andrews Place. For information, visit [assistanceleaguela.org/theatre-for-children-program](http://assistanceleaguela.org/theatre-for-children-program).



## Mixed Use Overlay Zone Community Outreach Meeting

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025 | 6:00 - 7:30 P.M.

Attend in person to engage in interactive discussions on mixed use zoning in commercial areas and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Share your ideas about potential opportunities and impacts, and contribute to shaping policies that balance business and housing needs.



**Municipal Gallery | City Hall**  
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**Phone participants:** 310-285-1020  
**Contact:** [longrangeplanning@beverlyhills.org](mailto:longrangeplanning@beverlyhills.org)



**Virtual Meeting Access**  
**Zoom link:** [www.beverlyhills.org/mycommunity](http://www.beverlyhills.org/mycommunity)  
**Meeting ID:** 880 146 2711



See more information at:  
[www.beverlyhills.org/mixeduse](http://www.beverlyhills.org/mixeduse)



# L.A. Zoo hosts Youth Conservation Symposium

The Los Angeles Zoo’s Teen Council for Conservation hosted the second annual Youth Conservation Symposium on Saturday, March 15. This year’s event was themed “Conservation is M.A.G.I.C.” The full-day symposium, designed and executed by the students of the Teen Council for Conservation, included interactive workshops and an inaugural organizational expo aimed at helping the young leaders consider mindful choices, advocacy for nature, growing sustainability, innovative solutions and community impact in achieving conservation goals in communities.

“Los Angeles has an opportunity to be a beacon of positive change for conservation and climate action,” said Jake Owens, director of conservation for the L.A. Zoo.

“These young minds are not only setting themselves up for long-term success as leaders and advocates for biodiversity and the health of their communities, but they are also collaborating hand-in-hand with their peers to create impacts that will last a lifetime. We are watching the next generation teeing themselves up for success, and taking ownership of a strong, vibrant and equitable tomorrow.”

The Youth Conservation Symposium featured a keynote presentation by Marta Segura, chief heat officer for the city of Los Angeles and director of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Office. It also incorporated interactive workshops led by leaders in conservation, advocacy and sustainability including Karri Ann Frerichs, founder and CEO of Circular

Fashion L.A.; Maryanne Pittman, director of public engagement at the Theodore Payne Foundation; Thomas Yount, CEO and founder of Clean Earth Future; and representatives of Our Children’s Trust, a nonprofit public interest law firm.

In its third year, the zoo’s Teen Council for Conservation is a nine-month program that engages young people and encourages them to think and work toward a future centered on conservation solutions in Los Angeles. The program empowers young Angelenos from all communities and highlights their strengths as leaders, builds skills in conservation and community building, and inspires teens to enact change in themselves, at the zoo and in their communities. The Teen Council for Conservation focuses on issues surrounding conservation,



photo courtesy of the L.A. Zoo

The annual event provides youth with the opportunity to explore conservation, biodiversity and sustainability.

social and environmental justice and climate, with the specific focus being determined by the students each year.

Applications and recruitment for the 2025-26 Teen Council for

Conservation cohort will begin later this summer. Interested teens should follow the L.A. Zoo’s social media @lazoo and visit lazoo.org/teencouncil for information and eligibility requirements.

# Beverly Hills hosts Youth in Government Day

On March 17, Beverly Hills High School Associated Student Body members experienced an engaging day at Beverly Hills City Hall, participating in the reinvigorated Youth in Government Day. The event, spearheaded by Mayor Lester Friedman as part of his mayoral initiative, aimed to provide the next generation of student leaders with a firsthand look at the workings of local government.

The day kicked off with a welcome from Friedman, followed by introductions from City Council members and department heads,

including the chief of police and fire chief. Each ASB student was assigned a leadership role, such as student mayor, student city manager or student commissioner, and had the unique opportunity to work alongside their real-world counterparts. Through roundtable discussions with city officials, students gained a deeper understanding of municipal leadership and governance, preparing them to apply the knowledge in a mock City Council meeting later in the day.

In two groups, students embarked on informative tours of

city departments. Notably, tours included the Beverly Hills Police Department’s Real Time Watch Center, which showcased cutting-edge public safety technology. Students also visited the Beverly Hills Public Library, gaining insights into another vital aspect of municipal operations.

The program culminated in a mock City Council meeting, where students assumed their roles, engaging actively in discussions and policy strategizing. The session allowed them to apply their newfound understanding to real-world scenarios, focusing on the logistics and community impact of hosting major global events such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Olympics and Paralympics.

“This event was not just an educational opportunity – it was a chance for our ASB students to envision themselves as the leaders of tomorrow,” BHHS Principal Drew Stewart said. “Their proactive participation and the insights they gained today are instrumental in understanding how they can impact their community and embody the spirit of our school’s motto, ‘Today Well Lived.’”

The Youth in Government Day underscores the importance of partnerships between the Beverly Hills Unified School District and the city of Beverly Hills, fostering a collaborative spirit to enrich student education and civic engagement.

For information, visit bhUSD.org.



photo courtesy of BHUSD

Beverly Hills Mayor Lester Friedman, center, led the Youth in Government Day with participation by Beverly Hills High School students.

# BHHS hosts career day

Beverly Hills High School’s College and Career Center, in partnership with the local community, held its annual career day on March 12, providing students with a dynamic exploration of diverse career opportunities. The event was attended by more than 90 professionals, including many alumni from Beverly Hills High School, to share insights across more than 40 fields such as entrepreneurship, medicine, real estate, law and technology.

The day was particularly special as it connected students directly with various career pathways and helped clarify potential educational directions. The program was designed to deepen students’ understanding of professional fields and inspire them to envision their futures.

“Today’s career day was a profound opportunity for our students to

connect their current academic pursuits with future career possibilities,” BHHS Principal Drew Stewart said. “It was inspiring to see so many from our Beverly Hills community, including our alumni, come forward



photo courtesy of BHUSD

The school’s career day featured local leaders including Beverly Hills City Clerk Huma Ahmed, left, Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian and Community Outreach Manager Magdalena Davis.

to guide and mentor our students.”

The event emphasized the strong ties between Beverly Hills High School and the broader Beverly Hills community, showcasing the supportive network available to students as they consider future careers.

For information, visit bhUSD.org.

# BVMS band and orchestra hold concert

On March 13, the Beverly Vista Middle School band and orchestra held a spectacular concert event, demonstrating the extraordinary talents and commitment of the young musicians. BVMS’s auditorium was filled with family, friends and community members who came out in strong support to experience a night of exceptional musical performances.

“Our band and orchestra concert is not just a display of musical skill, but a celebration of the hard work and passion our students invest in their art,” Assistant Principal

Ashley Tomovich said. “It’s inspiring to see how they grow not only as musicians but as individuals committed to excellence.”

The event showcased a variety of musical pieces ranging from classical to contemporary, highlighting the diverse talents of BVMS students. The evening was not only an exhibition of students’ skills but also a testament to the supportive and nurturing environment fostered by the educators and staff at Beverly Vista Middle School.

For information, visit bhUSD.org.



photo courtesy of BHUSD

Beverly Vista Middle School students played a variety of musical pieces ranging from classical to contemporary.



**K-EXHIBITION**

OPEN CALL JURIED GROUP EXHIBITION

**EDGE OF NOW**

Mar. 6 - 28, 2025

Opening Reception: Mar. 6, 6-8pm

**Open Call Juried Group Exhibition 'Edge of Now'**

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✓ March 6th - 28th

✓ KCCLA Art Gallery

✓ WALK-IN

**K-PERFORMANCE**

**'Rabbit's Eight Sufferings' Screening**

Join us for an unforgettable evening of **Changgeuk**. (Korean traditional Opera)

✓ March 20th, 7 PM

✓ KCCLA Ari Hall

✓ KCCLA Website RSVP

**K-TOUR**

**KCCLA Field Trip Day**

Apply for KCCLA's field trip for teachers and students to explore **Korea's rich culture and history.**

✓ Monday - Friday

\*Tour schedule can be adjusted based on the applicants' requests.

✓ KCCLA Website RSVP

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# New IMAX film at California Science Center explores the human body

Audiences can explore the inner workings of the human body and exciting breakthroughs in science and medical technologies with the new giant screen film experience “Superhuman Body 3D,” narrated by Academy Award-winner Matthew McConaughey, which is making its West Coast premiere at the California Science Center IMAX Theater on Saturday, March 29.

Told through the inspiring stories of researchers, scientists and every-day people behind ground-breaking medical innovations, “Superhuman Body 3D” shows the extraordinary ways human bodies work, and how science and technology help people intervene and save lives when bodies fail. Audiences will meet Ty Duckett, an adaptive athlete with an above-the-knee amputation who is living life to the fullest with an innovative prosthetic; James Garrett, whose heart condition was

treated with an artificial valve so advanced it didn’t require open-heart surgery; and Emily Whitehead, a teen whose childhood leukemia was cured after life-changing CAR T-cell therapy.

“Superhuman Body takes us for a tour inside the human body and shares compelling personal stories behind some of the most significant medical breakthroughs of the past decade,” producer and co-director Shaun MacGillivray, President of MacGillivray Freeman Films, said. “We show how, when up against the toughest odds, the human body so often triumphs in inspiring ways. You’ll be amazed by what your superhuman body can do.”

The film also features the scientists behind the medical innovations, including Dr. Carl June, who helped invent the CAR T-cell therapy that Whitehead underwent; Dr. Ayanna Howard, a pioneering

roboticist who has made major advances in medical robotics; and Dr. Hugh Herr, a double amputee and professor at MIT responsible for major advancements in bionic limbs and prosthetics.

“At the California Science Center, we are dedicated to inspiring curiosity and a passion for science learning in people of all ages,” California Science Center president and CEO Jeffrey Rudolph said. “Superhuman Body 3D showcases the incredible intersection of science, technology and human resilience – sparking wonder and encouraging the next generation of scientists, engineers and medical innovators to push the boundaries of what’s possible.”

The film runs through June 13. Showtimes are at 9:30 a.m. (groups only), 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$9.79 for adults, \$7.59 for children. The California Science Center IMAX Theater is located at 700 Exposition Park Drive. For information and tickets, visit [californiasciencecenter.org/imax/superhuman-body-3d](http://californiasciencecenter.org/imax/superhuman-body-3d).

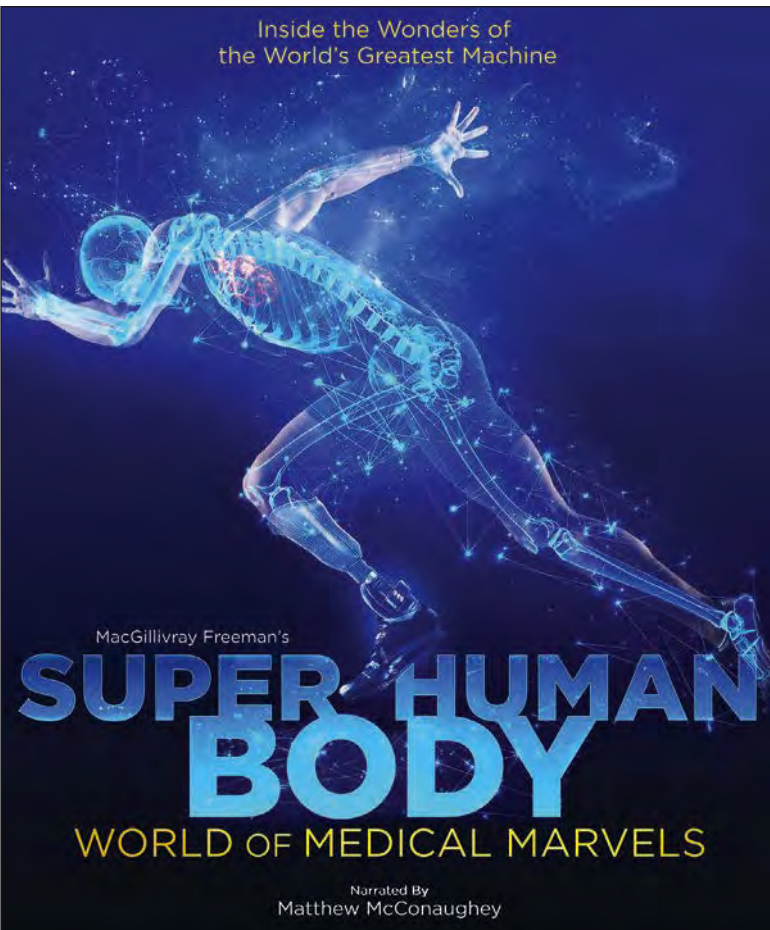


photo courtesy of the California Science Center

“Superhuman Body 3D” takes an in-depth look at innovations and breakthroughs in science that are transforming medical treatment.

# All Saints’ Beverly Hills hosts special tribute to Canon Dr. Craig Phillips

Join a special evening of music and celebration at All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills on Friday, March 21, at 8 p.m. during a celebration of the church’s 100th anniversary.

The concert will feature the musical talents of Canon Dr. Craig Phillips, All Saints’ music director, with performances by the All Saints’ Choir and Orchestra. The extraordinary performance will honor Phillips’ long-standing tenure at All Saints’ Beverly Hills and his global impact on organ and choral music. The evening’s program includes works by Phillips showcasing his innovative compositions and deep connection to the sacred music tradition.

Phillips is a distinguished composer, organist and conductor known for his contributions

to church music. He has performed with world-class ensembles such as the Philadelphia Orchestra and his music has been performed in concert halls across North America, Europe and Asia. Phillips was named the American Guild of Organists’ Distinguished Composer in 2012 and has received numerous honors, including an honorary doctorate from Virginia Theological Seminary and an honorary canon title from the Cathedral Center of St. Paul. His compositions have been commissioned by the National Cathedral and the Episcopal Church.

The concert is part of All Saints’ Centennial celebration and features an unforgettable evening of music honoring the history of the church and the extraordinary



photo courtesy of All Saints’ Beverly Hills

The March 21 concert honors the work of Canon Dr. Craig Phillips, who serves as music director for All Saints’ Beverly Hills.

musical legacy of Phillips. Tickets are available at the door and are \$30 for adults, \$15 for seniors and students. All Saints’ Beverly Hills is located at 504 N. Camden Drive. For information, call (310)275-0123, or visit [allsaintsbh.org](http://allsaintsbh.org).

# Christina Aguilera added to ‘We Love LA’ lineup

The LA Phil has announced the programming details for the free “We Love LA” concert on Tuesday, April 1 at the Hollywood Bowl, presented to honor impacted communities and thank the first responders who bravely fought the Los Angeles Fires.

Gustavo Dudamel will lead the Los Angeles Philharmonic and special guests in a program featuring the music of close LA Phil collaborators John Williams and Gabriela Ortiz alongside selections from Mahler, Gershwin and the popular canon. Guests include pianist Gerald Clayton, the Palisades Charter High School Band and Christina Aguilera.

The April 1 program will be broadcast live on Classical California KUSC in LA on 91.5 and streaming at [kusc.org](http://kusc.org) and [kdrc.com](http://kdrc.com). The Hollywood Bowl is located at 2301 Highland Ave. For

information and tickets, [hollywoodbowl.com/events/performance/3796/2025-04-01/we-la](http://hollywoodbowl.com/events/performance/3796/2025-04-01/we-la).



photo courtesy of LA Phil

Christina Aguilera

# Spring has sprung at the zoo

Spring is in the air, and the Los Angeles Zoo is buzzing with excitement. The Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association, the nonprofit partner of the Los Angeles Zoo, is thrilled to

announce the return of Spring Fling at the L.A. Zoo, a lively weekend-long celebration of nature’s renewal, pollinators and sustainability happening Mar. 22 and 23. Packed with

live music, hands-on activities and special animal presentations, the annual favorite is the perfect way to welcome the season.

Spring Fling encourages everyone to explore the critical role of pollinators – from hummingbirds to bees to butterflies – while discovering ways to help the planet thrive. Guests will enjoy engaging education stations, animal enrichment and interactive musical performances, all free with paid zoo admission and for members.

Join for a weekend of discovery, music and springtime magic – only at the L.A. Zoo, located at 5333 Zoo Drive. For information, visit [lazoo.org](http://lazoo.org).



photo by Jamie Pham

Egg-cellent activities are available for families this spring.



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# POLICE BLOTTER

The following crimes occurred in West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and the areas patrolled by the LAPD’s Wilshire and Hollywood divisions between Sept. 13 and Sept. 19. The information was compiled from crimemapping.com. To report a crime, call local law enforcement agencies: Los Angeles Police Department, Wilshire Division (213)473-0476, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department West Hollywood Station (310)855-8850, and the Beverly Hills Police Department (310)550-4951.

## Beverly Hills Police Department

### March 9

At 1:15 a.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs near Rexford and Charleville.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 200 block of S. Crescent at 12:55 p.m.

At 2:30 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 9300 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 300 block of S. Rexford at midnight.

### March 10

At 1:51 p.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the 400 block of Shirley.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 200 block of S. Crescent at 3:15 p.m.

At 5:53 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 9700 bock of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 400 block of N. Beverly at 10:30 p.m.

### March 11

At 7:30 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 200 block of S. Doheny.

A vandalism incident was reported in the 9900 block of Santa Monica at 6:30 p.m.

At 9:23 p.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 100 block of S. Bedford.

### March 12

At 7:15 a.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 9700 block of Wilshire.

### March 13

At 10:30 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 200 block of S. Reeves.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 400 block of S. La Peer at 12:11 p.m.

At 11 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 600 block of N. Doheny.

### March 14

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of S. Rodeo at 3:26 a.m.

At 10:30 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 100 block of S. Reeves.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Beverly at 11:45 a.m.

At 2:40 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8700 block of Charleville.

A suspect was arrested on suspi-

cion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs near Rexford and Lomitas at 5:08 p.m.

At 8:14 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 1000 block of Hillcrest.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 100 block of N. Cañon at 11:59 p.m.

### March 15

At 3:33 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 100 block of N. Crescent.

An unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 1200 block of N. Loma Vista at 4:23 p.m.

At 7:30 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 800 block of Foothill.

## West Hollywood Sheriff’s Station

### March 9

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft near Santa Monica and Larrabee at 1 a.m.

At 3 a.m., an unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 1200 block of N. Crescent Heights.

A suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 8200 block of Santa Monica at 4:30 a.m.

At 11:15 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

An arson fire was reported in the 7300 block of Santa Monica at 11:33 p.m.

### March 10

At 1 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1200 block of N. Fairfax.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 9300 block of Burton Way at 8:30 a.m.

### March 11

At 10:45 p.m., an unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 1100 block of Ogden.

### March 12

At 1 a.m., a suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 800 block of N. Kings.

A suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 1000 block of N. Curson at 10:30 a.m.

At 1:08 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1000 block of N. Fairfax.

An unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 7100 block of Santa Monica at 3:20 p.m.

### March 13

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 8200 block of Santa Monica at 3:40 p.m.

At 6 p.m., a domestic violence incident was reported in the 900 block of N Curson.

### March 14

At 5:30 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 8500 block of Sunset.

### March 15

At 3:20 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8800 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 1000 block of Hancock at 1:50 a.m.

## Los Angeles Police Department

The Los Angeles Police Department is currently experiencing technical difficulties in posting incidents on the crimemapping.com website.

# Fairfax District man convicted of stealing public benefits

A former resident of the Fairfax District was sentenced on March 17 to three years in federal prison for his role in a scheme that used illegal devices called skimmers on bank ATMs to obtain account holders’ data. The defendant used the information to create counterfeit debit cards and made cash withdrawals from victims’ accounts.

Sorin-Miguel Ghiorghe, 47, was sentenced by United States District Judge John F. Walter, who will schedule a separate restitution hearing in the coming months. Ghiorghe pleaded guilty in October to one count of conspiracy to commit bank

fraud, three counts of bank fraud, one count of aggravated identity theft, one count of possession of 15 or more unauthorized access devices and one count of possession of device-making equipment.

A Romanian national who prosecutors believe illegally entered the United States, Ghiorghe admitted that he and accomplices used counterfeit cards to fraudulently make withdrawals from the accounts of numerous victims, and that he specifically used the counterfeit cards to withdraw thousands of dollars from victims’ accounts.

The skimming ring focused on

illegally accessing funds administered by the California Department of Social Services to low-income California residents through Electronic Benefit Transfer accounts including CalFresh and CalWorks benefits. When law enforcement searched Ghiorghe’s apartment, they located ATM skimming equipment and EBT account numbers in other peoples’ names.

The United States Secret Service investigated the case with the Los Angeles Police Department. Anyone with information about financial crimes and fraud is encouraged to call the LAPD at (877)LAPD247.

# Assemblyman Zbur withdraws self-defense bill

Assemblyman and Democratic Caucus Chair Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood) has withdrawn Assembly Bill 1333, which was sponsored by Everytown for Gun Safety.

The bill was introduced in February and sought to update the state’s self-defense laws. The legislation would have explicitly clarified that Californians must avoid resorting to fatal actions when they have the opportunity to de-escalate or disengage from a conflict outside their homes. Everytown for Gun Safety sought to counter what it called widespread misinformation that the bill would have restricted Californians’ ability to protect themselves. Zbur also said misinformation about AB 1333 unfairly led to opposition to the legislation, and he remains committed to gun policies that promote safety.

“Protecting public safety has always been my top priority. AB

**“I remain committed to keeping our communities safe and will continue working with law enforcement, legal experts, and public and gun safety advocates to advance smart policies that protect victims and safeguard the right to self-defense.”**

*-Assemblyman Rick Chavez Zbur*

1333 sought to close a dangerous legal loophole that could allow armed aggressors to initiate confrontations in public, kill their victims and then exploit self-defense laws to escape accountability. The bill does not change the long-standing Castle

Doctrine and was never intended to affect anyone’s ability to protect themselves, their family or their home. As a father and as the victim of a home invasion myself, I understand how essential the right to self-defense is,” Zbur said. “We have worked closely with law enforcement partners and gun safety organizations to strive for the right balance of protecting victims from armed vigilantes in public spaces while simultaneously safeguarding the right to self-defense. Unfortunately, misleading information has fueled fear and confusion about the bill. I have decided to withdraw AB 1333 from further consideration. I remain committed to keeping our communities safe and will continue working with law enforcement, legal experts, and public and gun safety advocates to advance smart policies that protect victims and safeguard the right to self-defense.”

For information, visit [a51.asmdc.org](http://a51.asmdc.org).

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# BHUSD recall notices didn't meet requirements

From page 1

recall procedure, recall proceedings may not commence if the school board member has not held office during the current term for at least 90 days. Stuart and Sabag were both sworn in on Dec. 17, 2024. The notice of intention was served on March 11, 84 days after the board members were sworn in.

While Sabag and Stuart have been in office for 90 days as of March 17, the notice of intentions have not been served, according to Kruger.

Kruger said she and Tasha Turner, another recall supporter, met with Sabag and Board Vice President Judy Manouchehri at the home of Beverly Hills City Councilwoman Mary Wells on March 17. Kruger said Wells – a former school board member – coordinated the meeting because she “wanted to create a forum for communication” and “ensure that the recall people were being heard and considered.”

Wells said she set up the meeting after Kruger reached out to her as a former board member for advice.

“As important as it is that we continue to have public comment, and the board being able to make their comments and statements at the meetings, it’s also important sometimes for them to just sit down and have a conversation face-to-face, because I think it’s a more relaxed setting and people can really listen to each other and communicate in a more intimate way,” Wells said.

Wells said the meeting went well, and established a line of dialogue between the board and concerned community members. She added

that she does not support a potential recall of Sabag or Stuart.

“I don’t support a recall,” Wells said. “I think it’s better for the community to get together and have conversations.”

According to Kruger, she and Turner expressed concerns over several issues within the school district at the March 17 meeting. She said that Sabag and Manouchehri made several promises – mostly surrounding transparency. Kruger added she was “hopeful” after the meeting that the board would listen to the concerns of the community moving forward.

Kruger and other parents began the recall effort following the resignation of Michael Bregy as BHUSD superintendent and the subsequent elimination of several administrative positions within the district. The recall petition alleged that Sabag and Stuart “made consequential decisions without adequate understanding of school board governance,” “restructure[ed] critical roles without transparency” and “actively work[ed] to remove effective administrators.” However, many of the recent changes to school district organization – including the termination of Sarah Kaber’s contract as El Rodeo principal – were passed in unanimous, 5-0 decisions.

“There’s a lot that happens in closed session. I’m not aware of exactly what happens in these closed sessions. But I do know that those are the two new members of the board and that’s when everything turned in this direction,” Kruger said.

Although Kruger said the recall

petitions are “ripe to be filed and served,” she wants to see if the board will commit to more transparency and communication moving forward before recall petitions are filed.

In order for a recall election to occur in Beverly Hills, the notice of intention must receive at least 10 signatures. The notice of intention for Sabag and Stuart have each received 75 signatures. After the notice of intention is served, the public official has the opportunity to respond to the recall effort. A recall petition must include the public official’s answer, if provided. Additionally, for school board member recalls, the petition must include the estimated cost of conducting the recall election “as determined by the county elections official and the school district.”

The Secretary of State then reviews the recall petition to determine if it meets the criteria. If approved, a recall petition may circulate. In order for a recall election to occur, the petition must receive signatures from at least 20% of all registered voters in Beverly Hills. According to the California Secretary of State, there are 22,737 total registered voters in Beverly Hills as of Feb. 10. According to this figure, 4,547 residents would need to sign the recall petition for an election to occur.

In the election, if a majority of the votes for a recall proposal are yes, “the officer is removed and the office shall be vacant until it is filled according to law,” according to the Secretary of State. However, if the recall election order is declared within 180 days of a regularly

scheduled election, the election may be consolidated with a regularly scheduled election to determine replacement board members.

“I am not urging [the community] to file and serve [the notice of intention] this week. Maybe Monday. Perhaps maybe they’ll serve it either way. I don’t know. I think that after this meeting on [March 17] there is interest in hearing the community and let’s see if [the board members] fulfill the conversation that we had,” Kruger said.

Kruger said that the meeting did not include Stuart because of the Brown Act, which mandates that any meeting of a majority of members of a legislative body, even if informal, must be open to the public. Kruger added that she is “not hesitant” to meeting with Stuart if he shows interest.

Kruger said she has further concerns over Stuart, including a social media post he made with the phrase “BHUSDOGE” edited over the BHUSD logo, a reference to Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency. The initial petitions alleged that the post constituted “compromising board impartiality by publicly expressing personal political views in an official capacity.”

Stuart has defended the post, stating that it was a personal statement advocating for fiscal responsibility within the school district and it was not targeted at any individual.

Stuart said he was not made aware of the March 17 meeting by Kruger, Sabag, Manouchehri or Wells before or after it occurred.

“I was definitely taken aback by the fact that a meeting had been arranged,” Stuart said. “I find it interesting that a City Council member is getting involved. I hope it’s for the positive, which I’m

assuming that it was.”

He added that he would “absolutely” meet with Kruger if presented the opportunity.

“I think I’ve made it perfectly clear on the record that I’m very easy to find. I’m very easy to communicate with. For someone who is questioning why I’ve not reached out to them, I can ask the same question. I’ve been very transparent that I am easy to communicate with and if you want to speak to me and you want to learn from me or you want to voice your opinion to me, I’m an open book and I’m very easy to find,” Stuart said.

Kruger has asked that the school district be more transparent and collaborative with the community in its ongoing search for a permanent superintendent.

The acting superintendent, Jason Hasty, said in an interview with the Beverly Press that he has recused himself from the search for a superintendent to avoid a conflict of interest.

When questioned as to why some recent actions were taken in closed session – including the termination of Kaber as El Rodeo Principal – he said the district has a policy to protect employee confidentiality when actions are taken for individual personnel.

“The district as a whole is working hard to really revisit the communication strategy,” Hasty said. “Some of these items, we’ll see some refinement moving forward.”

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY HOSPITAL CLOSURE

Effective January 1, 2025

This is to provide public notice that DOCS Surgical Hospital, located at 6000 San Vicente Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036, will be closing temporarily on January 1, 2025, in order to complete construction of an entirely new hospital facility to replace the existing facility. The new facility, which will be a state-of-the-art hospital facility located at the same address and which will meet all seismic safety and other legal requirements, is expected to open after approximately one year.

The three nearest facilities offering comparable services are as follows:

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

8700 Beverly Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90048

Kaiser Permanente

West Los Angeles Medical Center

6041 Cadillac Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90034

Southern California Hospital at Culver City

3828 Delmas Terrace

Culver City, CA 90232

DOCS Surgical Hospital provides services to Medicare patients, as do all of the above facilities.

Further information regarding the Hospital’s temporary closure may be obtained by contacting the facility or its owner:

Facility:

DOCS Surgical Hospital, LLC

6000 San Vicente Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90036

Tel. (323) 930-1040

Owner:

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Los Angeles, CA 90048

Tel. (310) 746-5918

Attn: Khawar Siddique, Co-CEO

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# WeHo considers changes at Matthew Shepard Square

From page 1

Santa Monica boulevards, in Shepard’s honor. 27 years later, on March 17, the City Council approved an ordinance that would bring about a renewal to the space.

“Improving the landscaping and updating the Matthew Shepard triangle at Crescent Heights and Santa Monica will make the triangle more usable for the community,” Vice Mayor John Heilman said. “I hope we can also use this as an opportunity to call attention to Matthew Shepard’s senseless death and his important legacy in the battle against hate crimes.”

“This is a beautiful area that many in the community come to for various reasons,” Councilman John Erickson said. “I’m glad that we’re working to renew the space

and bring it up to date for years to come.”

The park has only one sign, fixed to a pole high in the air only visible to westbound traffic, that marks its namesake.

“There’s no sign there on the ground indicating what it is,” resident Kevin Burton said. “So, I’m sure the city can do better than that, and we look forward to the improvements.”

The city staff’s direction suggests updates to the landscaping to enhance its functionality and appearance. The intention is to have the project completed by 2028, marking the 30th anniversary of Shepard’s death.

“The renewal of the Matthew Shepard Memorial is about more

than just updating a space – it’s about honoring Matthew’s legacy and reinforcing West Hollywood’s commitment to human rights and LGBTQ+ equality,” Councilman Danny Hang said. “By completing this project in 2028, we’ll be marking the 30th anniversary of Matthew’s tragic passing while also welcoming visitors from around the world for the L.A. 2028 Olympics. It’s a chance to showcase our city’s dedication to inclusivity and remembrance on a global stage. This isn’t just about aesthetics – it’s about creating a space that feels meaningful, welcoming and reflective of the community’s values. We want residents to be part of the process, sharing their input and ideas. Together, we can

ensure this memorial continues to stand as a powerful symbol of resilience, progress and the fight for justice.”

Shepard’s murder led to a conversation that helped bring about substantive legislation to address hate crimes and LGBTQ+ rights, of which West Hollywood has long been on the frontlines.

“The Matthew Shepard Triangle is such a special place in the city and as we approach the 30th anniversary of Matthew’s tragic murder, this effort to restore and upgrade the space will bring renewed attention to his story and the need for better protections for the LGBTQ community,” Mayor Chelsea Byers said.

The park’s renewal will now go through a design process that includes concept considerations, impact reports and community feedback, before it receives final approval from the City Council.



photo courtesy of Television City

The festive event was held on the stage at Television City that was formerly home to “The Carol Burnett Show.”

# Purim celebration brings families together at Television City

Television City hosted the 23rd annual Purim Extravaganza on March 13 for Kol Yakov Yehudah, an after-school nonprofit and neighborhood youth group.

The holiday of Purim celebrates the Jewish people of ancient Persia (now Iran) being saved from death by the bravery of Queen Esther and her uncle Mordechai. Television City hosted the event for a second year. Kol Yakov Yehudah continues to expand, and the Purim celebration outgrew previous venues. The program was founded by

Rabbi Mendel Duchman and is run by Srula and Dovber Chaiton.

The Purim celebration was held on historic Stage 33 – the former home of “The Carol Burnett Show.”

“We think Ms. Burnett would approve of filling her stage with hundreds of kids enjoying a variety show,” said Adeena Bleich, vice president of community relations for Television City.

For information, visit [kolyakovyehuda.com](http://kolyakovyehuda.com) and [televisioncityla.com](http://televisioncityla.com).

Further information regarding the Hospital’s temporary closure may be obtained by contacting the facility or its owner:

Facility:

DOCS Surgical Hospital, LLC

6000 San Vicente Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90036

Tel. (323) 930-1040

Owner:

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### Crossword Puzzle by Myles Mellor

- Across**
1. Alternatively
  5. "Worm of the Nile"
  8. "Mona Lisa," e.g.
  11. "High" time
  12. Big furniture retailer
  14. PayPal product
  17. Length
  18. Length
  20. Physicist's study
  22. Kickoff needs
  23. Tanks
  24. Arctic sight
  26. Lengths
  29. Length from here to there
  34. "Pulp Fiction" star, Thurman
  35. Court wear
  36. Cyclades island
  37. Get inside data
  38. Roman god of love
  39. Baseball V.I.P.'s
  40. Scaleless fish
  41. Ignored, with "out"
  42. "\_\_\_ Haw"
  43. Circle length
  45. Paws
  47. Number in the Pledge of Allegiance
  48. Lower foreleg
  50. Designer demand
  53. Larry King trademark
  59. Lengths
  61. Length
- Down**
1. New Ager who often sings in Gaelic
  2. Student aid
  3. Class
  4. Salad ingredient
  5. Set one's sights on
  6. Short stories
  7. Trapper's prize
  8. Original manufactured item
  9. Summer cooler
  10. Modern
  13. Sierra Nevada, e.g.
  15. Visit
  16. Day divs.
  19. Colored like a rainbow
  21. More, in Madrid
  25. Pennies, abbr.
  26. Pondered
  27. L'Enfant Plaza designer
  28. Eric Clapton love song
  29. DEA target
  30. Footnote abbr.
  31. This has "a thousand eyes" in song
  32. Tailed celestial body

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59				60							61			
62					63						64			
		65					66				67			

33. Curved letters
  35. Mysterious letter
  38. Precious
  41. Highest rating score, often
  44. Some coffee selections
  45. Short while, abbr.
  46. Mumbai native
  48. Rampage
  49. "The Glass Bead Game" writer
  50. Certain camera, for short
  51. Lemon meringue, e.g.
  52. Cartonful, maybe
  54. 180° turn, slangily
  55. Soccer announcer's cry
  56. Suffix with consist
  57. Force whose motto is "Maintiens le droit", abbr.
  58. Take off
  60. Cable choice
- answers on page 22



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(left to right) Dylan Dordick, Esq., Taylor Dordick, Esq., Gary A. Dordick, Esq., Nava T. Dordick, Esq., Michelle Dordick, Esq.

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