



Partly cloudy,
with temps
around 70

- Wilshire closes for three weeks in BH pg. 6
- 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



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

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

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.

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

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



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.

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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



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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=ebdshios&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 Malak & 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. 6505 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. jflac.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 Barnsdall 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/8370223660 8. For information, visit hancock-parkhomeownersassociation.org.

BEVERLY PRESS PARKLABREA NEWS

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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.

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

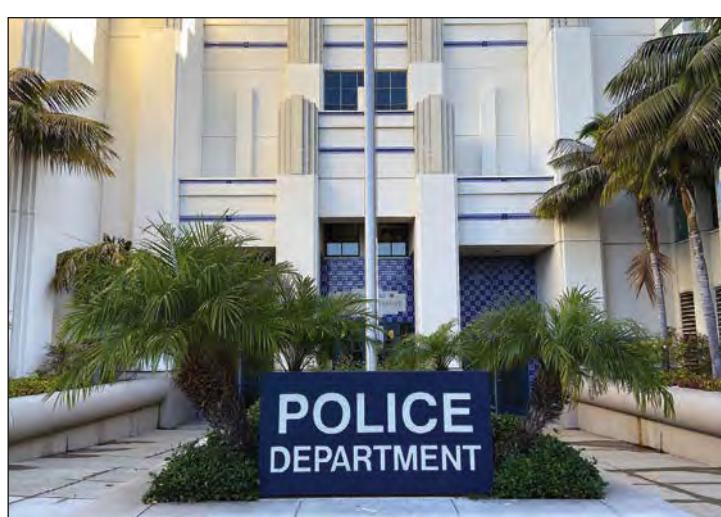


photo by Edwin Folven

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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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



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.

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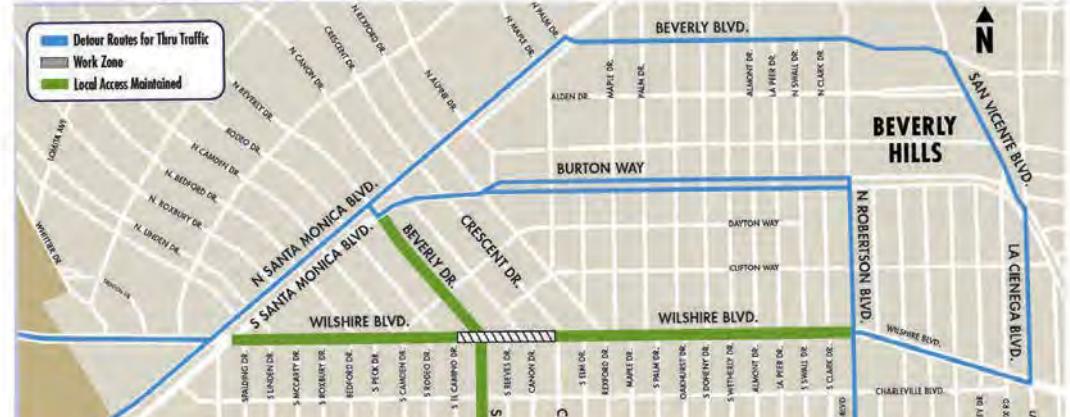
March Updates

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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Caruso

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 southeast 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



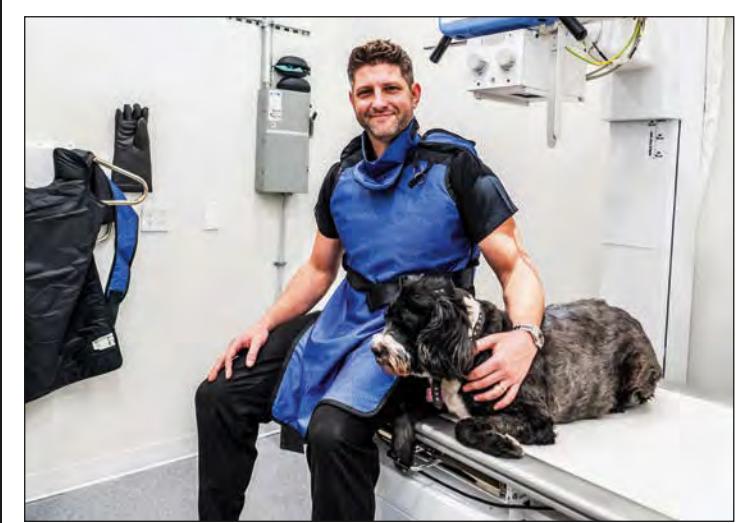
rendering courtesy of Kevin Tsai Architecture

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 denied 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, Boston Terriers, 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



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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 comple-



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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WeHo expands rebates for businesses

■ City adds free parking on Wednesdays to boost economy

BY RANCE COLLINS

The West Hollywood City Council passed a pair of ordinances on March 17 aimed at helping the business community. Under the city's municipal code, previously only large businesses – ones that employ at least 100 people and are at least 10,000 square feet – were eligible for rebates if they signed lease renewals for five or more years. Now, those restrictions have been reduced to just one employee and no minimum square footage, while a gross minimum remains at \$5 million.

"Expanding the business lease renewal rebate is a smart move for West Hollywood's economy," Councilman Danny Hang said. "Right now, a lot of small and mid-sized businesses are feeling the

pressure of high costs and an uncertain market. This rebate gives them an extra incentive to stay, renew their leases and keep contributing to our community. It's a win-win for the city. Fewer empty storefronts mean more energy in our business districts, which helps everyone – business owners, residents and visitors alike. It also keeps long-time businesses in West Hollywood, strengthening the sense of community and stability. And when businesses succeed, the city benefits too, with stronger tax revenues that help fund public services and programs."

"Our business community has been negatively impacted in a number of ways: the COVID shutdowns, the increase in wages and the recent fires," Vice Mayor John Heilman said. "Providing a rebate of business license taxes for businesses which renew their leases recognizes that without successful businesses, the city won't have the resources to provide services to our residents. Businesses which are

invested in the community and demonstrate their willingness to remain for five more years should be rewarded. Having a strong partnership between the city and our business community benefits all of us because it ensures there are jobs for our residents and revenue for community services."

West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce president and CEO Genevieve Morrill praised the move.

"I think it sends a message that the city wants them to stay," Morrill said. "Not many businesses feel it will make a dent financially for them as the rebates are fairly low in comparison to operational costs, but every little bit helps."

Additionally, the council has approved free parking at its parking meters, surface lots and parking structures every Wednesday in April from 4 p.m.-midnight. The initiative, proposed by the chamber under the title WeHappy, is meant to encourage and enhance the city's social scene and boost the local economy.

"Parking is a big hindrance in West Hollywood. Not just finding it but paying for it and/or running to feed a meter before a citation is given," Morrill said. "If you look at small cities across the country that provide complimentary parking, the businesses are usually doing fairly well. Providing a small window of comped parking time will allow us to promote a collective Happy Hour program for people to sip and save or dine and drive and patronize our businesses. We would also always encourage ride share options."



photo by Rance Collins

West Hollywood will offer free parking Wednesday evenings to help boost the local economy.

West Hollywood even more vibrant and giving our businesses the support they deserve."

"There has been a lot of energy invested in communicating that the L.A. region is open for business after the fires suppressed travel patterns and economic activity," Mayor Chelsea Byers said. "This effort will amplify the opportunities West Hollywood has to offer and catalyze more attention to our businesses during the midweek slowdown."

The initial April program will serve as a limited-time study for the city to determine whether the lifted parking restrictions have an impact on local businesses.

"At the end of the day, this is about keeping West Hollywood vibrant, supporting the businesses that make it special and making sure our commercial areas continue to thrive for years to come," Hang said.

Movietown complaints addressed at WeHo meeting

■ Council asks for answers on resident safety

BY RANCE COLLINS

On March 17 the West Hollywood City Council sought to address safety and accessibility concerns at Movietown Square, a residential and retail center at 7302 Santa Monica Blvd. redeveloped in 2017.

In addition to a Trader Joe's and the Miss Melbourne coffee shop, the building has 77 affordable housing units marked for older adults. Only a single elevator facilitates the 371 units in its six stories. While this is in line with the California Building Code, older residents have sometimes been forced to take the stairs or – in the case of wheelchair users – have been stranded in their units. Additionally, the building's stairwell, which accessible from the Trader Joe's parking garage, has caused alleged safety issues. Oftentimes, what city staff calls "unauthorized people" have been found inside the stairwell.

While the city has addressed many of these complaints in the

past, the City Council hopes that in instigating a study on potential long-term solutions, West Hollywood can also avoid such problems with other future developments.

"This assessment isn't just about fixing issues at Movietown Square – it's about making sure all affordable housing in West Hollywood is safe, accessible and built with residents' needs in mind," Councilman Danny Hang said. "Seniors and people with mobility challenges rely on things like working elevators and secure entryways. If we can solve these problems here, we can set a higher standard for future projects and improve other buildings facing similar issues. At the end of the day, everyone deserves to feel safe and supported in their home."

"Accessibility concerns are a priority issue under West Hollywood's Aging in Place program," Mayor Chelsea Byers said. "As buildings age and the need for accessibility evolves, it's critical we have a plan to ensure we can accommodate our community's various needs when it comes to housing."

Staff will return to the City Council with recommendations at a later date.

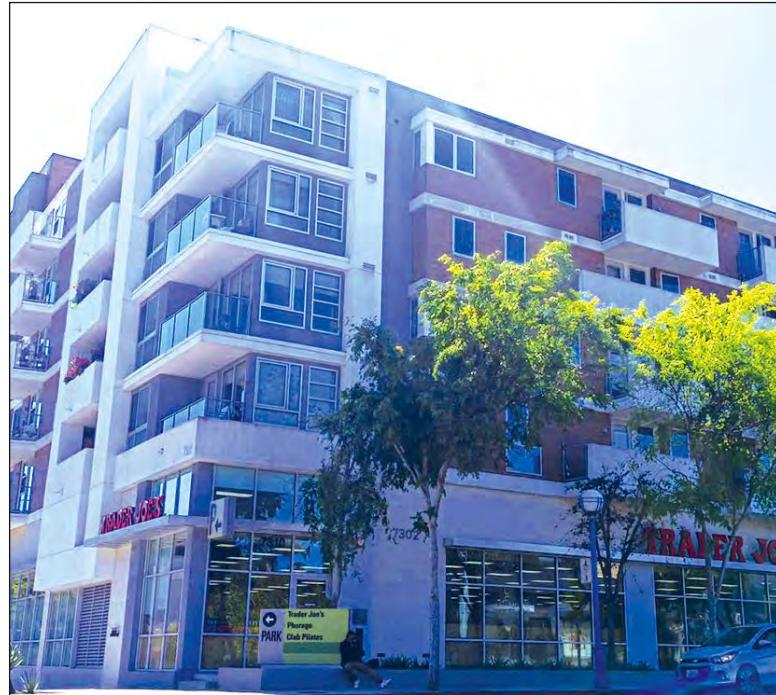


photo by Rance Collins

The Movietown complex has been the subject of safety and accessible concerns.

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SCAN TO LEARN MORE



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 protesters appeared outside the ceremony, vocally advocating each side of the issue.

Some protesters 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.

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



photo courtesy of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce

Gal Gadot received her star on March 18.

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HIGH HOLY DAYS Sept. 23 - 24 & Oct. 1 - 2

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Crayons, moonlight and other soothing stuff

Moonlight pours through the bedroom window, like whole milk into a cat bowl. It lights my virginal sheets so bright I have to blink away the pain. In a flash, I'm awake. It's 5 a.m.

I stumble for coffee. The furnace struggles to keep up. It's 58 degrees inside my slippers. Walking into my dark kitchen is like walking into a Turkish prison.

"Seize the day!" they urge, but I never assume they're talking to me.

Me, I prefer to sneak up on a day, quietly, like I'm late for a school play. I've made a life of slipping in the back door five minutes after something begins: college lectures, ballet recitals, memorial services, saloons.

I'm trying to do better, trying to be bolder, more timely and less timid.

"The acid of your fear could eat the world," noted the writer Gail Mazur, scolding us for being fearful.



by
Chris
Erskine

"I hate fear," noted Steve Searles, my co-author on the bear book, who calls fear our most-irrational emotion.

"Life's a box of crayons," said guitarist John Mayer.

I'd second all of those.

"You can lean into new things, or away," Rick Carter, the famed production designer, told me recently.

Know what I lean into? Libraries, the old ones, like the Central Library downtown. I get a buzz just from walking into one of its old reading rooms, amid those copper-kettle lampshades.

As you know, I get the warm-and-fuzzies from a good martini (so dirty it might have tadpoles).

I also get warm-and-fuzzies from baseball, as it re-emerges out of the cloud-folds of March. Obviously, baseball is blossoming once again. Like cherry trees. Like Longfellow.

More than most species, we need spiritual juju, we need our box of crayons. We lean into difficult moments, but we lean away from the rigors of the world, with movies, baseball, beef Wellington, shamrock shakes.

Best memory? Well, there's about a million, yet I will never forget mowing the lawn on sweaty summer days, then flopping on my parents' Herculon couch to watch Santo and the Cubs, iced tea dripping on my knee.

The world was a better place when kids mowed the lawn. Argue if you like, but it might be our truest fact. Like baseball, physical work connects you to something you didn't know you even needed.

See, like milky moonlight through a bedroom window, hard stuff keeps coming at us, keeps lighting up our path forward. To linger – to fret – is to stagnate and to rot.

Meanwhile, best wayward romance? Baseball.

Biggest regret? Not learning to sail when I was young, though I'd have probably gone to sea and never returned. Like Magellan, I'd have shacked up on some Polynesian island and taken a poison arrow. I mean, if you have to go, why not with a Mai-Tai in your hand, hollering at the guests?

Best inspiration: The "oh-wow" memorial service for my buddy Shupe, the most-generous man in



photo by Chris Erskine

The copper-kettle lamps at the Central Library give Erskine a buzz.

On difficult days, slather your soul with baseball and yellow mustard.



photo by Edwin Folven

The city of Beverly Hills is launching a search for a design of a future permanent Oct. 7 memorial.

Search begins for Oct. 7 memorial design

The city of Beverly Hills invites designers, artists and architects to take part in its search for a design concept that will be chosen as a permanent Oct. 7 memorial display to honor the lives lost in the tragic terror attack.

Those interested are encouraged to take part in the city's request for proposal process, submitting their conceptual ideas as well as additional information to support the design. Work will be chosen based on the design, project approach and prior experience. The RFP application will be open through May 16 and can be viewed at vendors.planetbids.com/portal/39493/bo/detail/127525.

To help facilitate the design process, the city is also actively

recruiting professional and technical advisors for an advisory committee that will work closely with city staff to present a chosen design to the City Council for approval. The public will also be given an opportunity to present feedback on designs.

The committee will consist of Mayor Lester Friedman, Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian, five council-appointed members and two to three technical and professional advisors. Committee appointments will be for a one-year term on a volunteer, non-paid basis.

To apply for the advisory committee before the April 4 deadline, visit beverlyhills.org/applyforacommission or call the city clerk's office at (310)285-2400.

town.

Our deepest condolences to the Shupper family, whose heartache stretches across Los Angeles. What a friend, what a dad, what a guy.

I vow to live more as he did – each day a thanksgiving.

Favorite hobby? Bouncing my grandkids on my knee. "If it's worth doing, it's worth overdoing," an old pal used to say. I apply that notion as you would sunscreen – to love, friendship, tadpoles, parenthood.

I was telling Suz the other day how much we struggle, as empty-nesters, to find a place to put our residual parental love. We hover over our kids in college, then do too much for them as they start out in the real world. One mom I know is flying this week to New York with her 21-year-old daughter, who's fearful of air travel, dropping her off, then jumping on a return flight.

By the time I was 21, my dad had forgotten my name.

But he left me full of memories. He loved old Irish sweaters and little seaside villages where they hang the fishing nets up to dry.

He loved a fat, stinky cigar while fishing for walleye.

And, oh-wow, did Dad love baseball, especially old libraries like Wrigley and Dodger Stadium, that reek of mustard and flop sweat, cotton candy and spilled beer.

Could you make a cologne of that? I'd apply it by the keg.

My advice on your difficult days: Slather your soul with baseball, or old libraries, or moonlight, or yellow mustard.

Slather. Rinse. Repeat.

The columnist posts to his website twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The site is free: ChrisErskineLA.com

All Saints' Beverly Hills
2025 Spring Concert

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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 recov-

ery 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. Cal-OES plans to include reports by local agencies in its report.

For information, visit 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.

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:

LOCATIONS: Citywide, West Hollywood, California

REQUEST: 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.

PERMIT(S): Zone Text Amendment, and any other required permits.

APPLICANT(S): City of West Hollywood

TIME/PLACE

OF HEARING: 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

ZONES: Citywide

ENVIRONMENTAL

STATUS: 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

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

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

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



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

photo by Edwin Folven

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. 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. 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-cafés 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 jin-sik, bibimbap and galbi jjim, as well as cinema-inspired craft cocktails.

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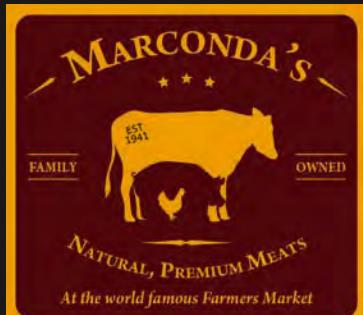
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GMCLA dons spurs and 'Rhinestones'

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 chart-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 Zabilski

"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, concert-masters 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; Anatol Mamalyga, principal arranger and former music director of the Ridni Naspyv Ensemble; Peter Rothe, balalaika performer; Tom Barnes, contra-bass

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

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.

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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.

With the deadline set for April 2, the Community Engagement for College Success Network – a coalition of nine community-based organizations including Alliance for a Better Community, BLU Educational Foundation, COFEM, Community Coalition, Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement, GO Public Schools Fresno, InnerCity Struggle, Reading and Beyond and Southern California College Access Network – urges students to carefully consider options and make informed decisions about which financial aid application best meets the needs of their families.

For information, visit csac.ca.gov.

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.

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

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 readiness.

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 Tatuma 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 pillowowy 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

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 fireplace, 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 appreciate the 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.

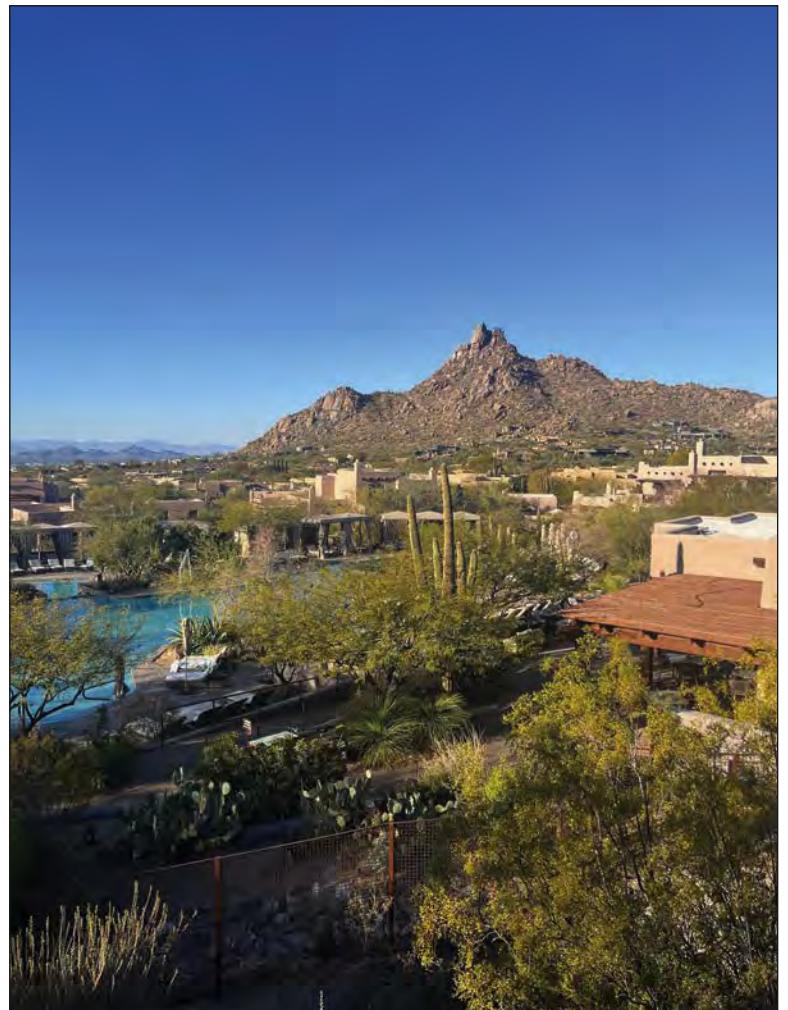
Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, 10600 E. Crescent Moon Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85262. For more information or reservations, call (480)515-5700 or visit <https://www.fourseasons.com/scottsdale/heart-of-the-desert>.

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

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.



photos by Karen Villalpando



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.



'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 or visit jewishla.org.

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.

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.



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.



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Phone participants: 310-285-1020

Contact: longrangeplanning@beverlyhills.org



Virtual Meeting Access

Zoom link: www.beverlyhills.org/mycommunity

Meeting ID: 880 146 2711



See more information at:
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 tee 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'

Edge of Now showcases the creativity and diversity of Southern California artists.

- ✓ 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

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 everyday 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.

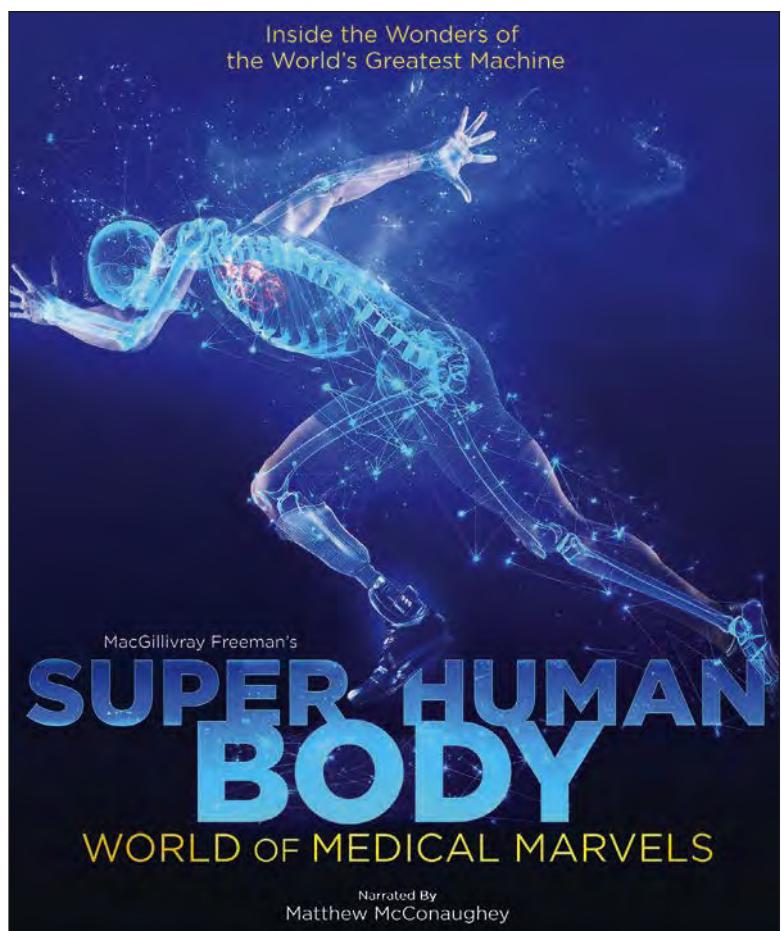
"Superhuman Body takes us for a tour inside the human body and shares compelling personal stories behind some of the most significant medical breakthroughs of the past decade," producer and co-director Shaun MacGillivray, President of MacGillivray Freeman Films, said. "We show how, when up against the 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.



Narrated By
Matthew McConaughey

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.

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.

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

photo by Jamie Pham

Egg-celent 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 block 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

"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

AB 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.

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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

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.

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:
DOCS Surgical Hospital, LLC
8436 W. Third St. Suite 900
Los Angeles, CA 90048
Tel. (310) 746-5918
Attn: Khawar Siddique, Co-CEO

This notice is provided in compliance with California law.



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 Chatiton.

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 kolyakovye.com and televisioncityla.com.

Caruso creates program to rebuild faster

From page 1

a fire in the region three weeks before that, so it wasn't a surprise that this is going to be a problem," Caruso said. "Bass completely mismanaged it. She wasn't prepared for it. It could have been prevented. But instead of being prevented you have thousands of homes that were lost, people have died and businesses were destroyed. It's all about bad management and incompetency, starting with the mayor on down."

Caruso, who ran against Bass for mayor in 2022, started Steadfast LA in the wake of the fires to help the communities rebuild. He is funding Steadfast LA entirely himself so the effort doesn't compete for resources, and is working with the public and private sectors to

kick the rebuilding process into high gear.

"With a disaster of this size, government alone just isn't equipped to do the job. We've seen this whether it's 9/11 or other large disasters that have happened. So a public-private partnership to solve problems, to be innovative, to have a sense of urgency is critical," Caruso said. "That's why I put together Steadfast as a nonprofit. We are leaning in on issues and rolling up our sleeves and starting to solve problems, and give those solutions to the city, county and state to get people back in their homes faster and safer. We are working in tandem and are there to support the city, county and state."

Steadfast LA is partnering with

California-based company Samara to donate high-quality prefabricated homes for people in the Palisades and Eaton fire zones, enabling residents to remain in their communities. The homes will be directed to low-income property owners who lack economic resources to rebuild and will be fully funded through the Steadfast LA Foundation, which will announce further details about the initiative in the coming weeks. In response to whether Steadfast LA could be a blueprint for solving other problems in the city, Caruso expressed confidence.

"The answer is absolutely yes. I think from a housing standpoint, homelessness – I think absolutely [it could be used]," Caruso said.

He also said the city should be doing more in the communities around The Grove, which is among the many properties Caruso owns and operates.

"In that part of town, we have a lot of problems with homelessness, we have a lot of encampments in that area, we continue to have a crime problem in that area. So I'd like to see the city get on top of that. I think the streets could be cleaner, the sidewalks could be cleaner," Caruso said. "It's an important part of Los Angeles, a vibrant part of Los Angeles, and I don't think enough is being done."

Caruso declined to go into detail about possible future plans to run for office and said he remains focused on helping L.A. rebuild after the fires.

"I'm not spending time on a campaign or thinking about a campaign right now. I have time to do that down the road. Right now, my

focus is on getting people back in their homes in Altadena, in the Palisades and Malibu. That's what I'm focused on," Caruso added.

He said despite the multitude of issues facing the city, he remains certain that Los Angeles has a bright future ahead.

"I'm optimistic. I think the Palisades, Altadena and Malibu are going to get rebuilt. They are going to be new. They will have new infrastructure, they are going to be beautiful communities. They were beautiful communities before the fires hit, and they are going to be even better," Caruso added. "I think L.A. is at an intersection.

That [people] want more responsive leadership, better leadership and leadership that is solving problems and not just giving excuses. Hopefully, we'll see some changes down the road and get better leaders to help this city along. So, I'm very optimistic."

Maddox fights for equity and inclusion

From page 1

help you resolve that with a real ordinance, with real responses and real money that most people don't even know they [have]," Simard said, going on to praise Maddox's leadership in the department.

"I chose to be in this department, because I feel like it's really a unique time in our history, and we never thought we missed the civil rights movement. But there's no single time in history, we're in it now, and it's never been easy and it's never been convenient. We're showing up every day and rising in service. I'm grateful that she gives [the] 40 of us in the department a chance to do that," Simard said.

"Los Angeles is an inclusive city," she said. "We are a city for all ... We are here to uplift marginalized communities and we are intentional [in supporting] communities. It may not be obvious these com-

munities are vulnerable."

In honor of Women's History Month, Maddox has hosted several events highlighting the contributions of women in the city. On March 14, the department partnered with the city for the Women of Impact Awards, which included Pacific Palisades Community Council president Sue Kohl and CEO of the L.A. Local News Initiative Michele Siqueiros. On March 17, a panel highlighted some of the women on the City Council, including Councilwomen Heather Hutt, 10th District, Ysabel Jurado, 14th District and Imelda Padilla, 6th District.

Maddox said that it is important during Women's History Month to remember that civil rights include women, too.

"Women have leaned in and been the steady hand long before Mayor

Bass was a leader of this city," she said. "Even when you think about women in education – most of our teachers are women – which means women are interconnected to all the good in society. When you think about the fact that the doctors, the lawyers, the engineers and entrepreneurs, they all learned most of what they know from their mother figures or their teachers ... Women are the ones who have traditionally stood up when there is a fight or challenge."

Maddox noted that L.A. Civil Rights is a majority women-led organization, and that "if you want something done, you need people to work hard and lots of hours," you need women in charge.

For information about the department and to find resources in combatting discrimination, visit civilrights.lacity.gov.

Statistics show decreases in crime throughout L.A.

From page 4

safety is my top priority, and the city of Los Angeles will continue to take bold steps to keep crime down and hold those who commit crime accountable."

Property crimes also decreased citywide. Nearly 2,000 fewer burglaries were reported, 1,963 fewer vehicle thefts occurred and 3,988 fewer car burglaries were recorded citywide in 2024 compared to 2023.

The decreases extended to the Wilshire and Hollywood divisions. The 2023-24 year-over-year numbers were not available by division, but crime statistics for the early part of 2025 show the downward trend continues in the local area. No homicides have occurred in the Hollywood or Wilshire divisions in 2025. The total number of person crimes decreased 25.7% in February compared to the previous month, and dropped from 207 in 2024 to 145 in 2025 in the Wilshire Division. In Hollywood, the total number of violent crimes decreased 17% in February compared to January, and decreased from 264 in 2024 to 211 in the first part of 2025.

McDonnell said a variety of

factors are contributing to the decreases. While high profile crimes often receive media attention, leading to a perception that crime is high, the statistics show a more complete picture of crime trends in the city.

"The 2024 crime data reflects the impact of our ongoing commitment to public safety and the strength of our partnerships with the community," McDonnell said. "A 14% reduction in homicides and a 19% drop in shooting victims are significant strides in our efforts to reduce crime. These improvements are a direct result of strategic policing, targeted enforcement and the invaluable collaboration with community organizations dedicated to violence prevention.

While we celebrate this progress, there is still work to be done and we realize if you were a crime victim these numbers may not carry weight. We hear you. The LAPD remains committed to ensuring every resident feels safe in their neighborhood. Together, we will continue driving these numbers in the right direction as we look ahead to the rest of 2025."

Activists support DuPont Clinic

From page 3

city did not terminate the lease or pressure the landlord to terminate the lease, we still continue to participate in good faith settlement negotiations. My colleagues and I have repeatedly stated and continue to believe in a woman's right to choose. The legal issues presented in the DuPont matter do not alter that position. We continue to seek a fair and reasonable resolution of the issues with the DuPont Clinic representatives and the landlord."

The statement, however, did not appear to dissuade the attendees from speaking up.

"Every single day that you are pursuing this case, it could be another woman, another young woman whose life could be torn apart from you guys keeping this legal case up and from stopping DuPont Clinic from getting to do their work that saves many lives, many careers and many people's educations," said

Fanny Freeland, a 15-year-old student at Immaculate Heart High School. "Think about what you're doing and how many people's lives you are affecting, how many young women's lives you are affecting, how many people like me you are affecting, how many people I know you're affecting."

Answers From Page 23

1	E	L	3	S	4	E	5	A	6	S	7	P	8	O	9	I	10	L
11	N	O	12	I	K	13	A	14	E	C	15	H	16					
17	Y	A	18	M	I	19	L	20	T	E	21	M	22	T	23	E	24	S
25	A	N	26	V	A	27	M	28	T	29	D	30	I	31	S	32	N	C
33	U	M	34	35	R	36	O	37	E	38	C	39	G	40	J	41	O	S
37	S	P	38	39	35	40	36	41	37	42	38	43	39	44	45	46	47	H
40	E	E	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	40	41	42	43	44	45	E
42	D	I	43	A	M	44	E	45	T	46	47	48	49	40	41	42	43	T
47	O	N	48	49	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	40	41	42	S
50	S	P	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	50	51	52	53	54	55	H
55	L	I	56	G	57	58	59	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	S
56	R	E	57	G	58	59	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	50	C
58	E	G	59	Y	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	50	51	52	H
59	S	S	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	D

Program provides incentives for BHPD referrals

From page 3

employees are eligible except executive level employees, police management association members and employees in recruitment or candidate evaluation roles.

Employees may refer an unlimited number of candidates. However, only one incentive payment will be awarded per successful candidate.

The program is estimated to cost the city approximately \$200,000 over three fiscal years.

According to Myers, the program is similar to incentive programs across agencies in Southern California including Los Angeles, Whittier and Laguna Beach.

The program was approved by the council in a unanimous vote.

"I'm supportive of the program," Mayor Lester Friedman said. "It's a good idea, it's just another outlet. No matter what, it does cost the city to do recruitment, one way or the other. This is just another way to have recruitments without necessarily paying for the operating cost but just paying for the actual result."

County plans to consolidate homelessness programs

related staff will be transferred to the new department by July 1, 2026. LAHSA will continue to administer programs for the Greater Los Angeles Continuum of Care. For information, visit lindseyhorvath.lacounty.gov.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District, submitted a motion on March 13 to make changes across the county's homeless services system. The proposal seeks to consolidate homeless service investments and accountability under the authority of one county department. The motion is scheduled to be heard by the board of supervisors on April 1.

The motion will merge the Housing for Health program in the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services with the Homeless Initiative in the Chief Executive Office by April 28. The two entities will serve as the foundation of a consolidated county department on homelessness that would begin operations on July 1. LAHSA funding and

Store still undergoing renovations

From page 2

Bolour announced last July that the property would first be transformed into a space that embraces the neighborhood's arts culture, and later housing. The site is close to museums along Wilshire Boulevard and three blocks away from the future Wilshire/Fairfax subway station on Metro's D Line Subway Extension.

"We are excited to transform

these buildings to commercial uses that align with the area's creative character and with the demand generated from immediate neighbors such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art," Bolour CEO Mark Bolour said in a statement. "Longer term, the site provides equally promising opportunities for much-needed multifamily units."

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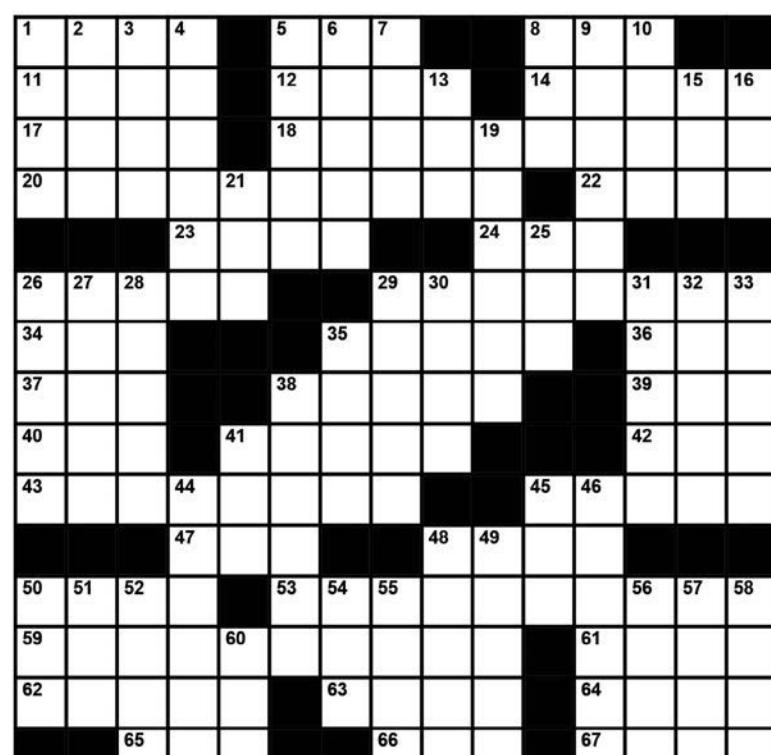
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Crossword Puzzle by Myles Mellor

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
62. Length
63. This has "a thousand eyes" in song
64. Tailed celestial body
65. Length
66. Length
67. Length



62. "King Lear" daughter
63. Designer Saint Laurent
64. Peak
65. Old J.F.K. sight
66. Wide spec.
67. Times Sq. patrollers
68. New Ager who often sings in Gaelic
69. Student aid
70. Class
71. Salad ingredient
72. Set one's sights on
73. Short stories
74. Trapper's prize
75. Original manufactured item
76. Summer cooler
77. Modern
78. Sierra Nevada, e.g.
79. Visit
80. Day divs.
81. Colored like a rainbow
82. More, in Madrid
83. Pennies, abbr.
84. Pondered
85. L'Enfant Plaza designer
86. Eric Clapton love song
87. DEA target
88. Footnote abbr.
89. This has "a thousand eyes" in song
90. Tailed celestial body
91. Curved letters
92. Mysterious letter
93. Precious
94. Highest rating score, often
95. Some coffee selections
96. Short while, abbr.
97. Mumbai native
98. Rampage
99. "The Glass Bead Game" writer
100. Certain camera, for short
101. Lemon meringue, e.g.
102. Cartonful, maybe
103. 180° turn, slangily
104. Soccer announcer's cry
105. Suffix with consist
106. Force whose motto is "Maintiens le droit", abbr.
107. Take off
108. Cable choice

answers on page 22

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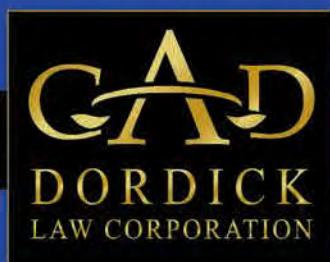
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