



Partly cloudy,
temps in the
low 70s

BEVERLY PRESS

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Volume 35 No. 1

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

January 2, 2025

Stars flock to Beverly Hills for annual Golden Globes

■ Awards ceremony is held at the Beverly Hilton

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Golden Globe Awards will return to the Beverly Hilton Hotel on Sunday Jan. 5, continuing a longtime tradition of the awards ceremony being held in Beverly Hills.

The ceremony began in 1944 as a way for the Hollywood Foreign Press Association to recognize and honor excellence in both film and television. The association, which included international journalists, wanted to provide recognition from

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photo courtesy of the Golden Globes

The 82nd annual awards ceremony will air live on CBS and stream on Paramount+ on Sunday, Jan. 5, at 5 p.m.

Jimmy Carter fondly remembered

■ Local leaders pay tribute to former president

BY TABOR BREWSTER

From humble beginnings as a peanut farmer to achieving the highest elected office in the country, 39th President of the United States Jimmy Carter is remembered for his steadfast commitment to improving the world around him. Carter died on Dec. 29 at the age of 100 at his home in Plains, Georgia.

Born James Earl Carter Jr. in Plains, Carter grew up on a family farm in the rural South. His early life was shaped by the Great Depression, a hardship that many scholars cite as a guiding light throughout his life. After excelling at Plains High School, Carter began his naval career at the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating in 1946 and serving as an officer in the aftermath of World War II. The same year, he married Rosalynn Smith – a marriage which would later become the longest in presidential history, at 77 years. After



photo courtesy of the office of Janice Hahn

Former President Jimmy Carter, joined in 2007 by then-L.A. City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, helped build houses for low-income families.

seven years in the Navy, Carter returned to his family's peanut farm where he worked before venturing into politics.

Carter's first foray into politics was a campaign for Georgia State Senate in 1962. Although unsuccessful, the campaign would lay

the foundation for his successful run for governor in 1970. Carter's term as Georgia's Democratic governor from 1971 to 1975 was defined by his focus on reform, modernization, environmental advocacy and civil rights for

See Carter page 21

Skyline may change at Sunset and Vine

■ Eight-story building planned near tower at intersection

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

A large mixed-use project may soon transform the southeast corner of Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street after it was approved by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission on Dec. 12.

The development by Sares Regis Group is planned on a site currently

occupied by a series of one-story buildings and a vacant duplex next to the Sunset Vine Tower Apartments. The plan calls for a new eight-story building with 170 residential units, including 34 units of affordable housing. The 201,134 square-foot building will have 16,680 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor and 284 new parking spaces in two above ground parking levels and two subterranean parking levels. The project will also have 4,997 square feet of open space.

The building is being designed by TCA Architects. The project will be located around the base of the 19-story Sunset Vine Tower Apartments. A hearing date for the project to be considered by the Los Angeles City Council has not been scheduled. Los Angeles City Councilman Hugo Soto-Martinez, 13th District, has not yet weighed in on the project, according to spokesman Nick Barnes Batista.

Requests for comment on the project from Sares Regis Group were not returned. The developer is seeking a density bonus to create a building larger than would normally be allowed under city codes by including affordable housing. Twenty-six units will be set aside for very low income households and eight units will be designated for low income households.

During public comment at the Dec. 12 hearing, representatives of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce expressed support for the project. One opponent objected to the development, claiming it violates the California Environmental Quality Act and its impacts on the community deserve more study. The project is among several mixed-use developments already under construction or planned on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

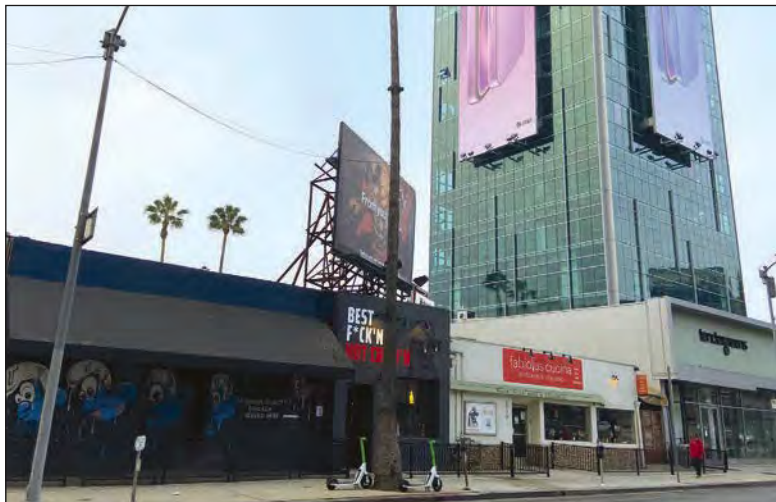


photo by Edwin Folven

A series of one-story buildings near Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street will be replaced by the proposed development.



photo by Jon Viscott

John Erickson was sworn in by his partner, former city poet laureate Brian Sonia-Wallace.

Erickson reflects on year as WeHo mayor

■ Council member looks ahead to a busy 2025

BY RANCE COLLINS

Mayor John Erickson will complete his turn leading the West Hollywood City Council on

Jan. 13, closing out a year that saw him re-elected by a substantial margin. He viewed this victory as assurance that his work was appreciated by the community.

"I think at the end of the day, the most important thing that we do as mayor is ensure that the city has a strong leader and is

See Erickson page 22

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CALENDAR

Deon Cole

Hollywood Improv welcomes comedian Deon Cole in “Does This Work?” for four shows from Thursday, Jan. 2, through Tuesday, Jan. 21. Cole, a comedian, actor, writer and producer, currently stars in the BET+ series “Average Joe.” He also appears in Amblin/Warner Bros.’ “The Color Purple” and Netflix’s “Charleen’s Boy.” Showtimes are at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 2, 7 p.m. on Jan. 5, and 9:30 p.m. on Jan. 6 and Jan. 21. General admission is \$24.19. Due to adult content, the shows are for guests 21 and older. 8162 Melrose Ave. improv.com/hollywood/event/deon+cole%3a+does+this+work%3f/14101093.



LA Phil classical concert

Join the LA Phil for Batiashvili Plays Beethoven on Friday, Jan. 3, and Saturday, Jan. 4, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 5, at 2 p.m. at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Sixteen years ago, violinist Lisa Batiashvili recorded a critically acclaimed rendition of Beethoven’s sole Violin Concerto. She revisits the concerto under the baton of London-born conductor Robin Ticciati, who also leads the LA Phil in Dvořák’s folk-inspired lyricism including his Prague Waltzes and



Eighth Symphony. Tickets start at \$59. 111 S. Grand Ave. laphil.org.

Schindler House

The MAK Center is holding “Ron Athey: Gifts of the Spirit” on Saturday, Jan. 4, from 6-7 p.m. at the Schindler House in West Hollywood. Athey has worked in esoteric forms since the early 1990s. The public performance follows a workshop bringing together 15 automatic writers, five ecstatic typists and two editors using Gysin/Burroughs cut-up technique to create a series of collectively authored texts. A collectively authored score will be performed by Athey at the conclusion of the workshop. The event is part of a series of artist-guided programs by Athey and Susan Cianciolo on dissolving barriers between artists and viewers and reformulating exhibitions as instruments of self-reflection. 835 N. Kings Road. makcenter.org.

‘A Night at the Roxbury’

Go back to the 1990s with an American Cinematheque screening of “A Night at the Roxbury” on Saturday, Jan. 4, at 10 p.m. at the Los Feliz Theatre. Will Ferrell and Chris Kattan bring their head-bobbing, club-hopping Butabi brothers to the big screen in the fall-down-funny comedy. It seems like Steve (Ferrell) and Doug Butabi (Kattan) will never be cool enough to make the Roxbury club’s guest list. That is, until they have a fender bender with their role model, club regular Richard Grieco. Eager to avoid litigation, Grieco befriends the starstruck pair and escorts them into a glittery world they once only dreamed about. General admission is \$15. 1822 N. Vermont Ave. americancinematheque.com.



Bach, Beethoven and Brahms

Enjoy a recital by pianist Igor Levit on Wednesday, Jan. 8, at 8 p.m. at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. The program is part of the Colburn Celebrity Recital series. With precision, Levit performs remarkable works for solo piano by classical music’s esteemed “Three Bs” – Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Tickets start at \$49. 111 S. Grand Ave. laphil.org.



‘Bereavement Days’

Open-Door Playhouse presents the short play “Bereavement Days” in an online podcast format beginning on Wednesday, Jan. 8. Kim Hlavac directs Goreti da Silva as Tara, a widow, and Kim Hlavac as Beth, her boss, in the play by Matthew Moore. Losing a loved one is an inevitable part of life. How much time off from work is fair and just? What happens when the law dictates allowable grieving time and what are one’s rights? It’s law vs. human emotion between an employee and her boss. Will sympathy prevail? The play is available on demand. Open-Door Playhouse is a nonprofit and donations are accepted. opendoorplayhouse.org.

Japanese architecture

Learn about Japanese architecture during a lecture on Thursday, Jan. 9, from 7-8:30 p.m. at Japan Foundation, Los Angeles. The talk is organized around five concepts unique to Japanese architecture. Scholars will speak about their ideas on architecture and their works. Hitoshi Abe will moderate a discussion with Ken Tadashi Oshima and Alicia Volk on the concept of HAI/KYO, which refers to ruins that embody the remnants of historical destruction caused by disasters, earthquakes, fires, floods and war. It also symbolizes themes of rebirth, recovery and the creation of new urban landscapes. Admission is free, registration is required. 5700 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 100. jflalc.org.

Marvin Gaye tribute

Music lovers will enjoy “Trouble Man: A Tribute to Marvin Gaye starring L. Young” on Thursday, Jan. 9, at 8:30 p.m. at the Catalina Bar & Grill. Join Young and pop artist Crystal Starr, as Tammi Terrell, for a Soul Train Party of epic proportions featuring more than 20 classic Marvin Gaye hits. Tickets are \$35.90. Dinner or two-drink minimum is also required. 6725 W. Sunset Blvd. catalinajazzclub.com.

BHHS Dance Company

The Beverly Hills High School Dance Company performs its annual dance concert on Wednesday, Jan. 15, and Thursday, Jan. 16, at 7 p.m. at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. The show features choreography by artistic director Dana Findley; guest choreographers Sam Allen, Victoria George, Billy Goodson, Neaz Kohani and Janet Roston; and student choreographers Cora Azevedo, Charlize Behroozan, Brooke Bronson, Sapir Hoffman, Shira Hoffman, Liana Jensen, Nikka Khoshbin, Amielle Mizrahi, Bradyn Prisdand, Haley Scholer, Hana Soloway, Bella Teixeira and Alexa Yeshoua. Tickets start at \$12. 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd. bhhs.bhusd.org/dance.

Freehand Gallery

Freehand Gallery is holding its annual winter sale starting on Saturday, Jan. 4. Everything in the store is 20% off, with a special selection at 50% off. Find something unique and handmade at a great price. Freehand Gallery is located at 8413 W. Third St. (323)655-2607, freehand.com.



Photography exhibition

The Artists Gallery Los Angeles is holding the “Black & White Captures of the World” exhibition from Wednesday, Jan. 8, through Friday, Jan. 24. The photography exhibition shows the diversity of place, and by the commonality of medium and human existence, reveals similarities. Fine art photographers and exhibition curators Eric Renard and Gig Chung examined more than 250 images from all genres of photography to assemble the exclusive exhibition. Photographs were submitted from Argentina, Belgium, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, Jan. 11 from 5-8 p.m. Admission is free. 5458 Wilshire Blvd. tagallery.net.



Beverly Press/Park Labrea News file photo

Film and television productions in Los Angeles received a boost in funding from the California Film Commission.

State tax credits to benefit 10 L.A.-based productions

Gov. Gavin Newsom’s Dec. 18 announcement that the California Film Commission has awarded \$108.6 million in tax credits to 10 film and television projects through California’s Film and Television Tax Credit Program and Soundstage Filming Tax Credit Program is expected to generate \$509 million in qualified California expenditures, support local businesses and create 3,583 cast and crew jobs.

This latest round of awards includes one relocating television series, one recurring television series, five new television series, one miniseries, and two non-independent feature films.

“California’s film and television industries are not only iconic pieces of our history but also continue to play an important role in California’s economic future. Our state’s tax credits help spur the ongoing success of these industries and create good-paying jobs for tens of thousands of Californians,” Newsom said.

This latest round of awards includes one relocating television series, one recurring television series, five new television series, one miniseries, and two non-independent feature films. Collectively, these projects will invest \$276 million in below-the-line wages, employing 1,666 cast members, 1,917 crew members, and 28,404 background performers, measured in days worked. The productions will also generate 835 filming days throughout California.

Nine out of the ten projects announced today received the credits through the Film and Television Tax Credit Program, with one project receiving credit through the Soundstage Filming Tax Credit Program. In September, Newsom announced his intent to expand the Film and Television Tax Credit Program to

\$750 million annually, a massive increase from the current \$330 million annual allocation in order to maintain California’s competitive edge against other states’ tax credit programs.

“We are working hard to keep productions filming in California,” said Colleen Bell, director of the California Film Commission. “These tax credits help us keep jobs here in our state and drive economic growth, but the impact goes beyond the entertainment industry – it supports families, local businesses and communities statewide.”

Among the highlights is “Imperfect Women” from 20th Television, a part of Disney Television Studios for Apple TV+, from Annie Weisman and starring and executive produced by Elisabeth Moss and Kerry Washington. Based on Araminta Hall’s dark novel, the series delves into the complex, decades-long friendship of three women who meet in college. The project will film for 85 days in California, spending more than \$61 million in qualified expenditures and employing over 375 cast and crew members.

“It’s a tremendous honor to be able to film Imperfect Women in Los Angeles thanks to the California Film Commission’s Tax Credit,” said lead actor and executive producer Kerry Washington. “It’s exciting to know that this invaluable program will allow us to keep production close to home while also supporting the talented artists and artisans here in L.A. that make storytelling possible.”

For more information on the awards, as well as upcoming application windows for the CFC’s tax credit programs, visit film.ca.gov/ten-film-and-television-projects-to-spend-509-million-in-california-boosting-job-creation-and-economic-growth.

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Council OKs two nearly identical housing projects

■ Opponents claim buildings will have adverse impacts

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

A pair of 30-unit apartment buildings on adjacent parcels fronting Berendo Street and Heliotrope Drive in East Hollywood were approved by the City Council in November.

The parcels are currently occupied by one-story single-family houses that will be razed to make way for two nearly identical five-story apartment buildings, each with 30 units. The sites are being developed by Yoav Atzmon at 1115 N. Berendo Street and 1114 N. Heliotrope Drive.

The apartment buildings will be constructed on land directly north of Linoleum City, a commercial and retail floor covering business that occupies the entire block between Berendo Street and Heliotrope Drive on the north side of Santa Monica Boulevard. Linoleum City was established in 1948 and moved to its present location in 2007.

Linoleum City owner Fred Stifter opposed the projects and filed appeals against them that were later dismissed by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission and the City Council. Stifter has retained attorney Jamie T. Hall, a specialist in land use and zoning, who plans to file litigation against the city seeking to block the projects.

Hall claims the city violated the California Environmental Quality Act when it approved the apartment buildings. CEQA is a state law that requires public agencies to identify and disclose potential

environmental impacts. Hall said the two projects should have been considered as one, as they are proposed by the same developer and are nearly identical. He also asserted that the noise and air pollution impact on the surrounding community were not adequately addressed.

Stifter said he is also concerned about parking, as the two projects were approved without parking requirements because they are near a transit hub. They are among several new buildings planned or already under construction near the Vermont/Santa Monica subway station.

“It destroys the neighborhood. Parking is such an issue in the city of Los Angeles. Where are they going to park their vehicles?” he added. “It seems like this is being shoved down our throat. It points to how frustrated people are in Los Angeles. It’s frustrating too because you feel like you have your hands tied.”

The developer is taking advantage of density bonuses allowed for properties near transit hubs – known as Transit Oriented Communities. Certain housing projects near public transportation are allowed under state law, Hall confirmed.

Others said the two apartment buildings are illustrative of a problem occurring throughout the city, where projects are approved and overwhelm neighborhoods.

“There is opposition in neighborhoods. These projects are coming in and upending the zoning laws,” said Doug Haines, a longtime advocate for neighborhood zoning protections. “These are streets that have for years have been quiet neighborhoods with single-family

homes, and now four- and five-story buildings are coming in, taking over properties. It is really shifting the dynamics of the neighborhoods. They don’t have any parking.”

Ben Rocca, a consultant for the developer, said the two apartment buildings will bring much-needed housing to the city.

“This is going to be an overall benefit to the community, helping folks who desperately need housing,” Rocca said. “We studied the market and understand the demands. We don’t feel they are going to have any impact.”



photo by Edwin Folven

The nearly identical apartment buildings will be built on two parcels just north of Santa Monica Boulevard, adjacent to Linoleum City.

Coalition updates California TV, film tax credit program

The California Production Coalition launched on Dec. 18, bringing 33 California film, television and streaming production businesses and associations together to improve the state’s outdated and underfunded production tax credit program.

California’s historic leadership in motion picture production faces increasingly stiff competition from rival jurisdictions that offer larger and more flexible tax incentives. While the Golden State’s unmatched workforce, experienced production community, first-class infrastructure, and rich mix of natural beauty and compelling locations remain a powerful draw for productions, the highly valuable incentives offered by other localities – which can be more than triple the amount available to a production in California – are challenging the landscape and undermining the business case for shooting in the state.

“We must not take California’s film industry for granted and expect to stay competitive in the global entertainment industry without a competitive tax credit program,” said Pam Elyea, owner of History for Hire. “Every part of the global information and entertainment industry has its roots firmly entrenched in California soil for over 110 years. The California Production Coalition was founded by a group of small business owners, studios, and professional orga-

nizations with strong roots in our local communities. Let’s give our California roots the fiscal nourishment to grow even stronger and larger.”

“At Camtec Motion Picture Camera Systems, we’ve proudly supported Hollywood filmmakers for over 35 years,” said Kavon Elhami, CEO of Camtec Motion Picture Camera Systems.

“We are witnessing firsthand the challenges facing our industry as California’s dominance in entertainment is tested by other states and countries. Thousands of businesses like ours flourish in a thriving production environment. It is essential that we come together now to ensure California remains the hub of the motion picture industry. That’s why we’re joining this coalition, united in our commitment to supporting film, television, and streaming production right here in our state.”

The Coalition marked its launch by releasing an independent poll of 1,500 registered California voters finding that 73% of voters support Gov. Gavin Newsom’s proposal to increase the state’s incentive program to \$750 million in tax credits a year.

The California Production Coalition poll and additional reports, data and studies documenting the economic benefits of production tax incentive programs are available at caproductioncoalition.com.



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photo by Edwin Folven

The suspect ignited a vehicle parked at the gas station at Santa Monica Boulevard and Vine Street.

Woman arrested for starting fire at Hollywood gas station

■ Incident appears to have been a random act

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

A female suspect was arrested on Dec. 27 after she lit a vehicle on fire in a gas station parking lot at the corner of Santa Monica Boulevard and Vine Street. The incident was captured on video and broadcast by television news outlets. “Officers responded around 4 a.m. after getting a call about an arson suspect. They located her in the general vicinity and she was arrested,” Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Charles Miller said. Authorities are not sure why the suspect started the fire, which damaged a Toyota Corolla

parked at the Mobil station at 6301 Santa Monica Blvd. The female suspect is believed to be homeless. In the video, she is seen walking up to the vehicle, spraying a flammable liquid from a bottle and lighting the fire. A gas station employee with a fire extinguisher doused the flames as the suspect walked away. Los Angeles Fire Department personnel arrived at the scene and made sure the fire was extinguished. Miller identified the suspect as Jelicia Smith, 32. She was booked at the LAPD’s Hollywood Division for arson and is being held on \$50,000 bail. Anyone with information is urged to call the LAPD’s Hollywood Division at (213)972-2971. During weekends and off-hours, call the LAPD’s 24-hour hotline at (877)LAPD247.

Former BHPD captain takes leadership role in Ventura

Former Beverly Hills Police Department captain and University of California, Los Angeles Police Department chief Tony Lee has been appointed interim chief of the Ventura Police Department. The Ventura City Council approved the appointment on Dec. 17. Lee brings more than 30 years of law enforcement experience to the department. He started in the position on Dec. 28 and will serve until a new police chief is hired. Lee most recently served as chief of police at the University of California, Los Angeles, leading the largest of the 10 University of California police departments for six years. The UCLA Police Department serves nearly 50,000 students, faculty and staff, comprising a daytime campus population exceeding 100,000. “Tony’s leadership at UCLA demonstrates his exceptional ability to manage complex operations while fostering community trust,” Ventura Mayor Dr. Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios said. “His experience overseeing high-profile events, nationally ranked hospitals and a celebrated athlet-

ics program will be a great asset to the city of Ventura during this transition.” Lee spent 26 years with the Beverly Hills Police Department. He oversaw Field Services, Investigations and Administrative Services, and occasionally served as acting chief of police. He oversaw the Intelligence Unit and managed high-profile events such as the Golden Globes, Los Angeles Marathon and Vanity Fair parties. Lee earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice and a master’s degree in public administration from California State University. He later completed executive-level training at the FBI National Academy, Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Senior Management Institute for Police and the Los Angeles Police Department’s West Point Leadership Program. For information, visit cityof-ventura.ca.gov/police.



VPD Interim Chief Tony Lee

Pair released after convictions are overturned

■ Defendants were accused of 2007 Hollywood murder

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan Hochman announced on Dec. 23 that a judge has overturned the convictions of two individuals who were convicted of committing a 2007 murder in Hollywood. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge William C. Ryan vacated the convictions of Charlotte Pleytez and Lombardo Palacios, who were released from custody. Pleytez and Palacios spent more than 17 years in prison.

“Our justice system must be both fair and accurate, and this case highlights the critical importance of never resting until justice is done, reviewing even past cases with the utmost care to ensure that the right and just result is reached,” Hochman said. The homicide occurred on March 28, 2007, in a strip mall parking lot in the 5200 block of Sunset Boulevard, just east of Western Avenue. The strip mall housed a 99 Cents Only Store, a nightclub and a banquet hall at the time, as well as several small storefronts. The victim, Hector Luis Flores, was shot around 10:20 p.m. after a verbal altercation with two people in the parking lot, authorities said. In an April 5, 2007, issue of the Beverly Press and Park Labrea News, detectives with the Los Angeles Police Department’s Hollywood Division said they were unsure of the motive but believed the murder was possibly gang related. Based on eyewitness identification and circumstantial evidence, Pleytez and Palacios were identified as the suspects responsible for the homicide. On Oct. 6, 2009, a jury convicted both defendants of first-degree murder and each was sentenced to 50 years to life in prison. The convictions and sentences were later upheld by an appeals court. The process that led to the convictions being overturned and Pleytez and Palacios being released began winding its way through the legal system in 2022, when Palacios’ attorney Nicolas Tomas submitted a request to the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office’s Conviction Review Unit. Staff from then-District Attorney George Gascón’s office worked with lead public defense attorney



photo by Edwin Folven

The homicide occurred in a parking lot on Sunset Boulevard that formerly housed a nightclub and banquet hall.

Ellen Eggers, Pleytez’s attorney Matt Lombard, Tomas and California Innocence Advocates on a review of the cases, ultimately leading to them being vacated by Judge Ryan. “We are reluctant to say justice has been done, because the injustices our clients have suffered for nearly two decades are unfathomable, but this is definitely a cause for celebration,” Lombard said. “Charlotte, Lombardo, their families and the entire legal team are profoundly thankful to the Conviction Review Unit for having provided a platform to present this case and for working collaboratively to uncover the truths which ultimately set our clients free,” Tomas said. Tomas began working on Pleytez’s and Palacios’ case while in law school. Attorney Rob Scroggie and private investigator John Brown also investigated the case at the request of Pleytez’s mother. Tomas, Brown, Lombard and Eggers came together with Megan Baca, of California Innocence Advocates, and their collective investigation uncovered evidence that showed Pleytez and Palacios were not involved in the murder, authorities said. The Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office’s Conviction Review Unit, with Pleytez’s and Palacios’ attorneys, filed a joint petition in 2022 to vacate the convictions and find Pleytez and Palacios factually innocent. Judge Ryan vacated the convictions and granted their release on Dec. 20. The Los Angeles County District

Attorney’s Office sent a letter to the court stating its position. “The D.A.’s Office asserts that, following a detailed review and analysis of the investigation and prosecution of the 2009 convictions, there is no evidence to suggest that any of the investigating officers, responding officers, or prosecutors involved in the case acted inappropriately, unethically or illegally in performing their duties in the investigation and prosecution of this case given the applicable case law and state of the evidence at that time,” Hochman said in the letter. “The request for relief in this case was based entirely on new evidence uncovered by the joint CRU and defense investigation.” Hochman provided no further details about the new evidence. He commended the attorneys who represented the defendants. “The lawyers for Pleytez and Palacios were professional, persistent and painstaking in their work to bring new evidence forward. They are to be commended for their tremendous efforts as they have exhibited the finest qualities of the legal profession,” Hochman said. “I want to extend my deepest apologies to Ms. Pleytez and Mr. Palacios for the years of hardship they endured due to these wrongful convictions. I also want to recognize the tragic loss of Hector Luis Flores and share my heartfelt condolences with his family. His death is a painful reminder of the heavy responsibility we bear to ensure justice not only holds the right people accountable but also honors the lives of victims and their families.”

Authorities crack down on theft during holidays

In the final days of the holiday season, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that the California Highway Patrol, in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, conducted a statewide enforcement operation targeting organized retail crime. The partnership included the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and the Los Angeles Police Department. On Friday, Dec. 20, the CHP and local police departments carried out Operation Holiday Watch – resulting in 117 arrests, the recovery of more than \$38,000 in stolen merchandise, the seizure of two illegal firearms and the recovery of three stolen vehicles. The suspects face theft charges involving organized retail crime. “The state stands committed to protecting consumers, especially as

they go about the final shopping sprint before the holiday season. I’m proud of the efforts of CHP and local law enforcement to protect consumers and businesses throughout California,” Newsom said. The operation involved enhanced collaboration among law enforcement agencies and 56 retail companies to improve in-store security, as well as increased law enforcement visibility in shopping areas. “Through proactive enforcement operations and strong partnerships with local law enforcement and retailers, we were able to protect the state’s businesses and consumers during one of the busiest times of the year,” said CHP Commissioner Sean Durjee. “Our efforts send a clear message that retail theft in California will not be tolerated.” As the holiday season winds

down, the CHP will continue working with businesses and communities to prevent retail theft. Since the Organized Retail Crime Task Force’s inception in 2019, the CHP has been involved in over 3,200 investigations, leading to the arrest of more than 3,500 suspects and the recovery of nearly 1.3 million stolen goods valued at \$51.3 million. Last summer, Newsom signed into law bipartisan legislation to crack down on property crime. It included Assembly Bill 2943 by Assemblyman Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood), who serves as chair of the Select Committee on Retail Theft. The legislation provides stricter new penalties for repeat offenders, additional tools for felony prosecutions and support for targeting serial shoplifters, retail thieves and auto burglars.



A LETTER TO

The Beverly Fairfax Community

To our Neighbors and Friends:

We wanted to share an update on the Television City project.

First and foremost, thank you to everyone who took the time and effort to attend the LA City Council Planning and Land Use Management Committee hearing on December 3, 2024. Your presence and thoughtful comments on downsizing and improving the project demonstrated our community's commitment to responsible development.

Unfortunately, despite our collective efforts, Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky and the PLUM Committee voted to recommend the project. The next step is a City Council vote in early January 2025.

The real news was Councilmember Yaroslavsky's last-minute condition of approval which punctured the illusion of a "studio expansion," as the developer touted.

Of the 1.7 million square feet, Yaroslavsky's new condition requires as little as 150,000 square feet to be designated for sound stage, production support, and production offices combined. Television City currently has nearly 600,000 square feet for studio production, so the new zoning allows the developer to reduce the production capacity by 74 percent.

Calling this a studio expansion is downright Orwellian.

We have said from day one that this project was bogus, a blank check to the developer, with just a small fraction of the new square footage for production.

Alarming, the project is twice the size of Crypto.com Arena (formerly Staples Center) – wildly out of scale and character with surrounding neighborhoods. Traffic will only become worse. And with a 20-year construction timeline, the new Television City will give us two decades of disruption.

Over the last two years, thousands of community members raised serious concerns about the project and the process. Nine appeals – perhaps a record number – laid out substantial, well-supported arguments against approval.

The full Council vote is coming up in early January. We will provide more information on [**www.FixTVC.org**](http://www.FixTVC.org) when the exact date is known, so you can make your views heard.

Thank you for standing with us to help protect our community. And, we wish you and your family a happy new year!

Neighbors for Responsible TVC Development

To learn more and get involved, visit: www.fixtvc.org

Panozzo puts the spotlight on emerging artists

BY RANCE COLLINS

James Panozzo truly launched something special. His program, LAUNCH LA, and its annual Tarfest is helping to shine a light on emerging artists in a city known for creatives – many of whom struggle to get their work seen. The festival began in 2003, providing a festival in the Miracle Mile that spotlights work ranging from visual art to music.

Tarfest represents a lifelong dream for art aficionado Panozzo, who just “wanted to be part of it.” With a lot of hard work and determination, along with a little bit of luck, he now brings new talent to the forefront.

A Cleveland, Ohio, transplant, the athletic Panozzo developed a fascination with California growing up, which he credits to the annual Rose Bowl game and Hollywood’s prolific place in popular culture.

“I had an interest in competing in triathlons in those early days. I wanted to go out west and to the promised land of California,” he

said. “I had one or two good friends here, but I just felt like the overall spirit of the city was very welcoming and open ... a really unique combination of beautiful climate, outdoor lifestyle and a large metropolitan city with arts, culture, architecture and urban spaces.”

At first, he pursued acting, which he said was instrumental to who he became, though it did briefly lead him away from L.A.

“I had a couple opportunities to travel through acting, and my last trip was to New York City. I moved there for a year and a half and was able to do some work and live there. I studied there. I got a couple jobs. I did print work. I did television – some soap opera work. Living in New York filled me with a certain degree of confidence,” he said.

When he moved back to Los Angeles, Panozzo had a mission. He wanted to create an avenue for local talent to be showcased.

“I was this aspiring actor, and I had friends that were artists and musicians. I wanted to create something in the cultural core of the

city,” he said.

Panozzo had befriended Steve Kramer, president of the Miracle Mile Chamber of Commerce, and with the chamber’s support, along with former Councilman Tom LaBonge and friend Micah Guller, Tarfest began.

“We were just young enough and dumb enough to think we could do anything,” Panozzo said.

The first Tarfest was held on the roof of the old May Company building, now the Academy Museum.

“We just wanted to have all genres of art presented as best we could. So, we’d have a short film program, fine art and music,” he explained.

Panozzo was able to enlist the help of many local organizations, including the Korean Cultural Center and the Japan Foundation.

“Most of the people that are here in L.A. have a great understanding of creativity ... There are so many of the brightest creative minds in the world here, whether it’s Hollywood or it’s the music indus-



photo courtesy of James Panozzo

James Panozzo, left, was joined by LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director Michael Govan at the annual Tarfest luncheon.

try or the fine art industry,” he said. “As you start your own discovery journey, and you meet more people, visit museums and galleries and talk to these administrators and artists, you see how serious and talented they are. I think it was probably naive of me that I would even have the gumption to go talk to these people. But I was genuinely

curious. I was genuinely passionate about it. It was really like a new discovery for me – the fine art world.” Tarfest’s annual festival was held in June and will return next summer. For information, visit tarfest.com. LAUNCH LA operates a gallery, located at 170 S. La Brea Ave. For information, visit launch-la.org.

Naftali shares stories on plight of Israeli hostages

Podcaster, political influencer and philanthropist Liz Hirsh Naftali visited Los Angeles Jewish Health on Dec. 18 to discuss her role in securing the release of her great-niece from Hamas captivity following the attack on Oct. 7, 2023.

Naftali also outlined her continued commitment to freeing remaining hostages during the appearance at LAJH’s Fountainview at Eisenberg Village in Reseda, where she spoke to LAJH residents and

members of SAYVA, a collaborative network focused on community, positive aging, and wisdom.

Naftali, a lifelong Angeleno, recounted arriving in Israel to celebrate the holiday of Simchat Torah on Oct. 6, 2023. After an evening of dancing and celebration, she was awakened the next morning by the sound of alarms blaring, signaling that Hamas had breached the Israeli-Gaza border.

“I have family who lived along

the border, in Kibbutz Kfar Aza,” Naftali said. “I called my sister-in-law that morning and discovered that my niece and nephew had been murdered by terrorists there, and that their three-year-old daughter, Abigail, had been kidnapped.”

Fueled by a long history of activism, Naftali returned to the United States and shared Abigail’s story as widely as possible with the media and political leaders on Capitol Hill.

“I met with Democrats and Republicans. I believe hostages should be apolitical, and we received incredibly beautiful support from people on both sides of the aisle,” she said. “I was driven to keep talking to people and refused to take no for an answer because when you’re in a situation like this, and someone you love is being held against their will, you cannot rest or even take a breath until you see their face again.”

Naftali’s efforts ultimately contributed to the release of some of the hostages. After 51 days in captivity, Abigail was freed along with 104 other hostages during a truce between Israel and Hamas.

Inspired to preserve a record of Abigail’s story, Naftali wrote “Saving Abigail: The True Story of the Abduction and Rescue of a Three-Year-Old Hostage,” a book about the

tragedy of Oct. 7, 2023, Abigail’s abduction and the rescue efforts “As humans, we need to elevate these stories, to tell the truth about Oct. 7 so people can start to heal,” Naftali said. “I also wrote this book so people would understand they have the power to influence events. There are still hostages who haven’t been able to come home, and people might feel like nothing they do can have any impact, but my experience shows that’s not true. I think

we can each play a role, in our own ways, in bringing the rest of the hostages back, stopping the fighting and allowing Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace.” Los Angeles Jewish Health, founded in 1912, is the largest non-profit, single-source provider of comprehensive senior health care services in the Los Angeles area, serving nearly 4,000 people each year. For information, visit lajhealth.org.



photo courtesy of Los Angeles Jewish Health

Liz Hirsh Naftali discussed her work in securing the release of her great-niece and others taken hostage by Hamas on Oct. 7, 2023.

Notable Quotes

“Our people have come to understand that unfamiliar names like Sinai, Aqaba, Sharm el Sheikh, Ras en Naqb, Gaza, the West Bank of Jordan, can have a direct and immediate bearing on our own wellbeing as a nation and our hope for a peaceful world. That is why we in the United States cannot afford to be idle bystanders and why we have been full partners in the search for peace and why it is so vital to our nation that these meetings at Camp David have been a success.”

Jimmy Carter (1924-2024)

Carter served as the 39th President of the United States from 1977-1981. His brokering of the Camp David Accords – agreements which paved the way for an Egypt-Israel peace treaty – is widely considered his greatest achievement in office. Carter continued to be an advocate for peace well into his post-presidential life, founding the Carter Center in 1982 and receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his humanitarian work.

*source: The American Presidency Project

L.A.'s Oldest Party Store

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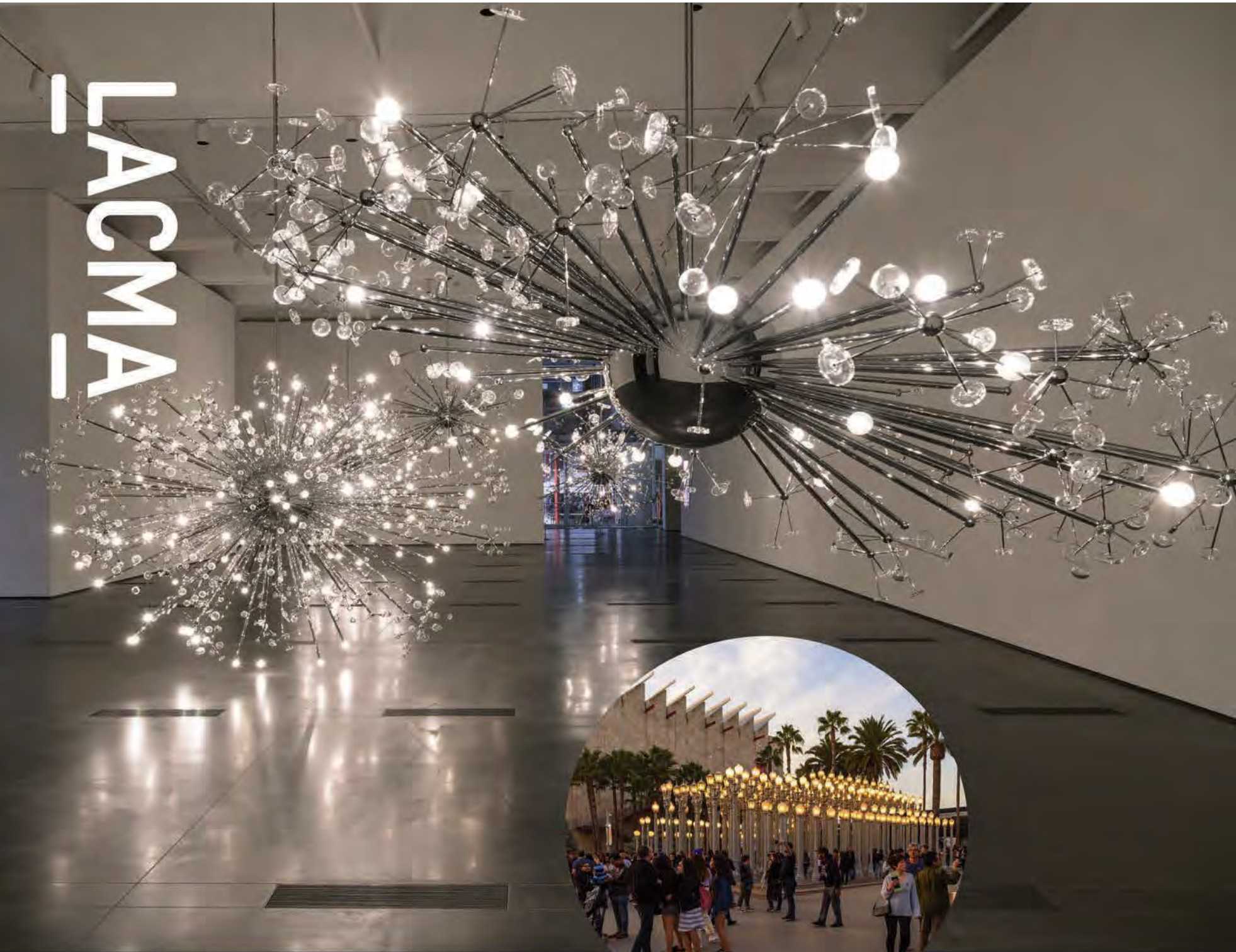
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A STARRY HOLIDAY

Create your own holiday story under the stars at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where a new exhibition looks to the heavens for inspiration and insight. All galleries are open and filled with stellar moments—from a room filled with Picassos to 1,000 toy cars speeding through an imaginary city. Make LACMA your place to gather in wonder with friends and family.

The museum is open New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1!

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART
5905 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, NEAR FAIRFAX
LACMA.ORG | 323 857-6010

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AND LOS ANGELES COUNTY
YOUTH 17 AND UNDER

Images: Josiah McElheny, *Island Universe*, 2008, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, purchased with funds provided by an anonymous donor, © Josiah McElheny, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA; Visitors with Chris Burden's *Urban Light* (2008) at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2020, art © Chris Burden/licensed by The Chris Burden Estate and Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA; *Metropolis II* image by John Rice, ©Museum Associates

The \$700 scratch that united a neighborhood

BY MICHAEL KRIKORIAN

An upper-middle class Los Angeles neighborhood, whose residents didn’t know who lives two doors down let alone the distant land across the street, ended up being, well, a neighborhood recently because a car got scratched.

Now, this was not just any car. This was the 2023 Porsche 911S of beloved chef Nancy Silverton, who happens to be my girlfriend for the last 22 years.

Several Fridays ago, she noticed her chalk-colored car had a three-inch-by-one-inch black scrape on the fender just behind the driver’s side rear tire. She had parked her car on Highland Avenue, 30 yards south of Melrose Avenue and immediately past the entrance to the valet station of her Mozza restaurants. Knowing it’s eligible for a parking ticket after 6 p.m., she had someone move the car around 5:30 p.m. and put it in the alley behind Mozza. It was here, hours later, she noticed the scratch.

A cursory check of Mozza’s and Valet Girls Parking’s cameras revealed nothing. What upset Nancy most was whoever scratched the car did not leave a note. Scratch a car, dent a car, leave a note. If one scratches a car and doesn’t leave a note, it’s generally thought the driver loses points on the Universal Good Person meter.

That next day, I got on the case. My first interrogation was across the street at the Valvoline oil change shop. There, I talked with manager Kevin Martinez. This guy couldn’t have been more accommodating. In his cramped office, after giving him the date and approximate time, we started watching a 12-inch monitor. At 1:42 p.m., on a Friday, Nancy pulls up in her car and gets out. For the next almost three hours, Kevin and I watch a screen of fuzzy quality. Since the camera is across the street from Mozza, the angle is not good.

But a big break in the case comes

at 4:32 p.m. of that fateful day. A woman, a blonde, walking up Highland Avenue, stops at the curb and looks at the Porsche. Then, as Kevin and I watch in near disbelief, she walks to the street side, and as cars streak by, squats down and stares right where the scratch is. After a few seconds, she walks away. About 10 seconds later, she reappears on camera holding a towel or rag, and get this, she starts rubbing the scratched area. No lie. Kevin and I stare at each other. After another 10 seconds of rubbing, she gives up, and runs, yeah, runs southbound on Highland Avenue and out of view.

We have a major suspect. I leave the Valvoline shop, only to return 30 minutes later with four pizzas for the staff. The neighborhood has begun to unite.

Then a Mozza manager, aware now that 4:32 p.m. is a key time, relooks at the pizzeria’s camera and gets another view of the female suspect. She is “blonde and 30ish,” he says, and wearing a long black dress.

My next move is to the LAPD, who have been at Mozza at least a dozen times over the years for a variety of offenses including assaults, vehicles thefts and accidents. Investigative journalist Michael Hastings died in a fiery 2013 crash 150 feet from where Nancy’s car was parked.

I called a robbery detective, a burglary detective and a sergeant I know from LAPD’s Wilshire Division, which handles Mozza’s neighborhood. But my ace was to call an old friend I knew from my days at the Times covering Watts – homicide detective Sam Marullo, now at West Bureau Homicide. I knew he and his wife had been badly injured when an errant driver smashed into their car nearly three years ago and I know his disgust with bad drivers is unrivaled. He said he would get West Bureau Traffic on it. I sent him the tape of the blonde lady and his advice was,

“Connect this woman to a car with a license plate.”

It’s back to Valvoline to review the tape. A few cars are possible suspects. One of them is a black Toyota SUV that looks like one parked five houses south of Mozza. Longshot, but I went and took a photo of it. Later, Nancy, bold as she is, walks onto their driveway and examines the SUV. She reports there’s no damage on the front right side of this SUV.

Then I walked the neighborhood in search of folks who had security cameras. Three neighbors answer, all pleasant, even intrigued by my tale, especially when I mention whose car I’m talking about. But they don’t have the view I need.

As she does every day, Nancy asks, “Any progress in the investigation?”

“No, but I’m meeting nice neighbors.”

The next day, a neighbor, Stefanie, comes out to walk her big dog. I tell her the story. “My husband and I love Mozza. And we are going tonight. I’ll tell him to check our security tapes,” she said.

That night, Caleb Marker, a managing partner in Zimmerman Reed law firm, and Stefanie came to Osteria Mozza and ate at the bar. They get free appetizers and desserts and Nancy and I get a view of their security footage around the time of the incident. Nothing. But we get to know two more neighbors.

The next day, more door knocks and more pleasant neighbors. One is Shahnaz, three doors down from Mozza, who is from Bahrain and London, drives a Maserati SUV and has a 13-year-old daughter whose favorite restaurant on Earth is Osteria Mozza. When she asks me if I work at Mozza, I tell her, “No, in my real life, I’m a crime reporter.” She is speechless. She loves crime reporters.

“I’ll help you. I’ll start asking around,” she said.

Our little ‘hood is growing. That evening, Nancy’s director of



photo by Edwin Folven

A minor collision in the alley behind Mozza brought the neighborhood together in unexpected ways.

operations Kate and I go to the upstairs office to fiddle with a security camera there. It wasn’t wired properly, so Kate calls the security camera installer and the next day he fixes it. Nancy and I had gone to Ojai when Kate calls with breaking news. The camera guy fixed the screen and the view of the alley was now available. She sent stunning footage. A black Toyota SUV exiting the alley makes a right turn and clearly scrapes the Porsche.

This is the Zapruder film.

Wait. A black Toyota SUV. I send Kate the photo of the license plate of the black Toyota SUV I took, the one Nancy examined. It’s a match. Bam! Book ‘em, Danno.

I tell Kate not to go to that house alone. I’ll go when I get back on Monday. But she said the security camera guy, who is Jewish, wants to go with her. They knock and the homeowner, Moshe, with a long beard, answers the door. The security guy blurts out an icebreaker, “Shalom.”

Kate reports Moshe readily admits his daughter did the deed. Kate tells him Nancy’s guy will be by Monday.

Two days later, I knock on the door. Moshe answers. He was expecting me, and he seems, surprisingly, kind of pleasant. I sure wouldn’t be pleasant if someone knocked on my door accusing me of anything. In a minute, his wife, Esther, comes to the front door and she is not kind of pleasant – she’s straight out pleasant with a nice warm smile. Then their daughter

comes to the door. She is that “30ish woman” we saw on the security video. She’s 17 and feels bad about the scratch. I tell her Nancy and I just wanted a note. “My dad and I went back later, but the car wasn’t there,” she said. Her Universal Good Person points come back.

I tell them my old friend Vic, my body and paint man, saw a photo of the scratch and guesstimated between \$600-\$800 to fix it. Knowing Vic, this means it a \$1,200-\$1,500 ding elsewhere.

The man hesitates, but Esther says, “Have Vic take care of it and we will pay you.”

The girl smiles shyly and apologizes. I’m taken by their kindness and offer them a pizza. They decline the offer, adding they only eat kosher food.

A week later, I come back with a receipt from Vic. It was \$700. Esther, with a smile, writes me a \$700 check made out to “cash.”

I tell the other neighbors the case is solved. They are glad to hear it.

Nancy and I are out of town for a few weeks, but when we get back, maybe our new neighbors – Caleb, Stefanie, Esther, Moshe, Shahnaz, Kevin and others, plus detective Marullo – should have a block party. If we do, I’ll get the cake from a bakery nearby on Beverly Boulevard near La Brea Avenue called Mensch that I hear good things about. Plus, Moshe will approve. After all, it’s kosher.

Padilla named to Senate leadership position

U.S. Senator Alex Padilla released a statement after he was elected to serve as the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

“I am honored to serve as Ranking Member of the Rules and Administration Committee,” Padilla said. “As California’s former Secretary of State, I recognize the importance of protecting and defending free and fair elections. And whether it’s in the Capitol, the Library of Congress, or the Smithsonian museums, I will work to ensure that our government institutions serve the American people more effectively, efficiently, and equitably.

As the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, Padilla said that he is focused on strengthening our democracy and ensuring that every eligible citizen is able to freely, fairly and fully participate in our elections. He will also conduct oversight over Capitol operations.

Padilla had also stated that he believes that democracy is strongest when every eligible American participates, and he has spent his career fighting to expand and preserve voting rights. While serving as California’s secretary of state, Padilla implemented automatic and same-day voter registra-

tion, expanded vote-by-mail, and launched early vote centers. These key reforms led to record voter registration and participation in California and have become a model for the rest of the nation. In the U.S. Senate, Padilla is a champion for stronger voting rights, bipartisan election administration reforms, and increased funding to modernize and secure our elections.

Padilla recently introduced legislation to address the significant impact that election administration-related disinformation, made more pervasive with the use of artificial intelligence, has on communities of color. He is a staunch supporter of the Freedom to Vote Act, legislation he and Senate Democrats introduced to improve access to the ballot for Americans, advance commonsense federal election standards and campaign finance reforms and protect our democracy. Padilla also introduced the Protecting Election Administration from Interference Act to expand protections against election interference during the ballot counting and certification processes, and the Support our Election Workers Act to help recruit and retain election workers and keep them safe from threats and harassment. Additionally, Padilla introduced the bicameral Freedom from

Intimidation in Elections Act to protect voters and election workers from intimidation and threats of violence at the ballot box.



10 Reasons Why I Don’t Want An Estate Plan

1. I want large sums of my hard-earned money to go to a law firm.
2. I want the government to decide who gets my life savings.
3. What for? My house is only worth a half-million dollars.
4. I really don’t care who raises our children.
5. I want a total stranger to go through all of my personal papers and financial affairs.
6. I like family fights – especially unnecessary ones.
7. I don’t care who inherits my hard earned money.
8. I’ve been messy in life; I’ll be messy in death.
9. They say you can’t take it with you, but what if you can?
10. Probate. Must be fun.

If you don’t do it for yourself, please do it for those you care about.

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Los Angeles Jewish Health honors supporters at Reflections Gala

Longtime community leaders Izzy and Marilyn Freeman were recently honored by Los Angeles Jewish Health at its annual Reflections Gala at the Skirball Cultural Center. The award recognized the Freemans’ decades of philanthropic work on behalf of the seniors at LAJH and in the Los Angeles community.

The Freeman family attended the gala with LAJH volunteer leadership, staff and residents, as well as friends and fellow community leaders. Dale Surowitz, CEO and president of Los Angeles Jewish Health, expressed admiration and gratitude for the Freemans’ many contribu-

tions to LAJH. “Marilyn and Izzy are tireless, dedicated volunteer leaders and philanthropists,” Surowitz said. Throughout their busy and successful careers, Izzy and Marilyn have always found time to give of their time and talent. Among their involvement, Izzy is a past president of the Guardians (a support group of LAJH) and a past chair of the LAJH Board of Governors. Marilyn has been very active with LAJH and the Guardians, serving as co-chair for the Guardians 75th Gala, and serving for many years as the co-chair for the Marilyn and Monty Hall Statesman’s Society

giving circle. Marilyn spearheaded a tremendously successful special event titled ‘1938’ raising thousands of dollars to benefit the programs of LAJH. She has also offered expertise and advice in event planning.

The evening included a special video tribute with heartfelt wishes for the Freemans from loved ones and community leaders, including philanthropist Richard Ziman.

“The Freemans lead by example as they demonstrate to their children and grandchildren the impor-

tance of giving back,” Surowitz said. “For their remarkable commitment to community and their tireless efforts on behalf of the seniors in our care, they have our sincere thanks.”

Surowitz also discussed LAJH’s ambitious plans to expand the organization’s footprint, ensuring it will have the capacity to meet the needs of a rapidly growing senior population. Surowitz said LAJH’s goal is to double the number of seniors it serves from 4,000 to 8,000. The plan calls for a \$130 million capital

campaign raising funds to build additional low- and middle-income assisted living housing units, particularly for frail seniors without the physical, mental and financial means to care for themselves. Funds from the campaign will also be used to refurbish existing facilities and invest in new PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) adult daycare facilities.

Proceeds from the gala exceeded \$500,000 and will fund LAJH’s programs and services. For information, visit lajhealth.org.



photo courtesy of Los Angeles Jewish Health
Marilyn and Izzy Freeman were recognized for their philanthropic work.

Mid City West, Pink’s and Cedars-Sinai host first blood drive of new year

Pink’s Hot Dogs and Mid City West Neighborhood Council are partnering with Cedars-Sinai Medical Center’s Community Blood Program to host the first blood drive of 2025 on Saturday, Jan. 4, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Cedars-Sinai Bloodmobile will be at Pink’s Hot Dogs, 709 N. La Brea Ave. The first 50 donors will receive a \$20 gift certificate for Pink’s.

January is designated as National Blood Donor Month. Due to holiday celebrations, bad weather and cold and flu season, the winter months are often a time of reduced donations and increased risk for blood shortages, organizers said. A single blood donation, which takes

about 10 minutes, can save the lives of up to two people. Each year, Cedars-Sinai patients require transfusions of more than 30,000 units of red blood cells, 7,000 units of platelets and 11,000 units of plasma.

Donors must be at least 17 years old (or 16 years old with a signed parental consent hospital form), weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be in good overall health. Taking common daily medications does not preclude donation (cholesterol, blood pressure, birth control, antidepressants, thyroid, diabetes medication and insulin).

To RSVP, visit donateblood-cedars.org/index.cfm?group=op&expand=9191&zc=90038.



photo courtesy of the Mid City West Neighborhood Council
Donate blood on Jan. 4 at the Cedars-Sinai Bloodmobile, which will be parked at Pink’s Hot Dogs on La Brea Avenue.

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:	West Hollywood, California
REQUEST:	The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and provide a recommendation to the City Council on a Council-initiated zone text amendment to amend the West Hollywood Municipal Code (WHMC) to require an additional neighborhood meeting and increase public hearing noticing requirements for new projects seeking development agreements (including stand-alone billboards).
PERMIT(S):	Zone Text Amendment, and any other required permits.
APPLICANT(S):	City of West Hollywood
TIME/PLACE OF HEARING:	Thursday, January 16, 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, January 9, 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 Paige Portwood, Associate Planner at (323) 848-6401, pportwood@weho.org or Rohan Sharma, Long Range and Mobility Planning Intern via email at: rsharma@weho.org

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

Мы сообщаем вам об обсуждении проекта. Для дополнительной информацииR4B ффи на русском языке звоните: 323-848-6826.

Fresh Hope, Old Stadiums and a Great New Year

Love these wintry SoCal mornings, the breath of heaven filling the canyons, drifts and white, like department store snow.

They say this is the season for renewal and re-purpose, though I have this leggy accomplice (Suzanne) who believes that January should be a month of recovery and relaxation. We end each year at full throttle, she notes, completing projects, over-shopping, throwing complicated parties. By tradition, we run ourselves ragged during the holidays, then in January, we punish ourselves with fresh resolve.

I see an alluring puritanism in that, the way it sparks our marvelous ethos, rejuvenates a necessary and productive sense of guilt.

Yet, on a more human level, it seems punitive and cruel. I agree with Suz: Let January breathe. Use the month to rest up, take long walks, read, recover. Leave those resolutions to others. Bounce back in February, better than ever before.

By the way, if you never hear from me again, it's because I went to the Rose Bowl on Wednesday to celebrate winter and the Oregon Ducks. The Ducks may be the



most-fierce fighting force in college football but, like Santa, they arrive in a padded costume, with a mascot that seems right out of a Marx Brothers comedy.

"Puddles," they call this mascot, though technically he is just "The Duck." And always good for a few laughs.

Winter is "when you feel the bone structure of the landscape," as Andrew Wyeth noted, and that's what we intended to do at the Rose Bowl on Wednesday, snuggled with Mother Earth under the oak trees of the arroyo, the Camelot of American sports.

To me, the Rowl Bowl is honey on a spoon.

Look, I love loose dungarees, icy martinis, old stadiums, vintage dames. I am the last person on the planet who should be advising any-

one on renewal and re-purpose. I always put off till next week what I could do right now.

No excuses. It's just that I'm often paralyzed by my own sense of wonder.

While many plan, I ponder. Deep stuff, like Dawn Wells' dimples, or Grace Kelly's blue dress in "To Catch a Thief." And the way Patrick Mahomes snaps his passes. And Cakes, her goofy grandpa kisses.

Or, this chatty tribe of Oregon Duck fans in their puffer jackets and big country smiles.

Sports is so sinister these days, so full of crooks and cons and corruptive TV money. Trust me, it's worse than journalism.

Yet, somehow the Oregon Ducks have found success in a more mirthful and enlightened approach. Let Buckeye fans and Laker fans stew in their own juices. I prefer a certain cool. It's much more American, really. Lewis and Clark. Butch and Sundance. Redford. Bittner. Suzanne.

Also, my new goal – though I generally detest goals – is to grow old without growing angry. Which is quite tricky, given the way good things change so much.

It's tricky, given that phone upgrades are usually downgrades, that my card was hacked again a week before Christmas, that the UCLA Bruins just hired an offensive master mind from Indiana of all places. Genius.

Point is, it can be difficult to stay ahead of the random disappointments of modern life. But that's my February resolution: "Don't die before you're dead," as Virginia Woolf put it.

Now, I don't know how the Ducks performed last evening, this fine paper went to press before we could provide the score. But I do know that in the important ways, the Ducks won. They have a fan



The legendary Rose Bowl, the Camelot of American sports.



photo courtesy of Chris Erskine

So much to ponder: Mahomes' passes, Grace Kelly's dress in "To Catch a Thief."

base that doesn't go nuclear over non-nuclear events. They have an impressive young coach, destined for the NFL, who stood by his wife – day in, day out – during a hideous bout with cancer.

They have, in this day and age, the right stuff.

Obviously, college football has never been more troubling and more wonderful all at once. It blends our Jeffersonian ideals, mar-

ries them to endearing territorial clashes, and – disturbing economics aside – still puts out the most-fetiching product in American sports.

That's a lot to chew on. That's a lot to love.

As my buddy Miller says, "My life is built on hope just to get to tomorrow."

I really love that as well. Like honey on a spoon.

Los Angeles County launches medical debt relief program

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health launched the Los Angeles County Medical Debt Relief Program, an initiative designed by the Medical Debt Coalition, which is working together to address the growing crisis of medical debt that disproportionately affects vulnerable communities across the county.

The Medical Debt Relief Program will initially eliminate \$500 million in debt by leveraging a \$5 million investment from a motion introduced by Supervisors Janice Hahn, 4th District, and Holly Mitchell, 2nd District, approved by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, to purchase medical

debt for pennies on the dollar for low-income residents.

The Medical Debt Coalition, a multi-sector group, seeks to reach the goal of eliminating \$2 billion in medical debt for Los Angeles County residents with continued contributions from philanthropic partners, hospitals and health plans. L.A. Care Health Plan is supporting this effort with a \$2 million contribution for debt relief and critically, its prevention, by expanding the availability of tools to improve financial assistance programs. The Los Angeles County Medical Association has also contributed funds to relieve another \$1 million of medical debt.

Initial participating hospitals include MLK Community Hospital and Adventist Health White Memorial Hospital, which will work with the national nonprofit organization Undue Medical Debt to retire qualifying medical debt and close accounts. Qualifying medical debts are past due medical bills owed by Los Angeles County residents who earn up to 400% of the federal poverty level. Residents with past due medical bills do not need to apply and will receive a letter from Los Angeles County and Undue Medical Debt notifying them that their debt has been fully canceled.

"There are thousands of people in



photo courtesy of Freepik

The initiative will eliminate \$500 million in debt for Los Angeles County residents.

Alexandra's Law goes into effect

After seven attempts in the state legislature, Alexandra's Law has become a reality, passing overwhelmingly by a vote of the people through Prop 36. On Dec. 18, following certification of the election results by the California Secretary of State, the groundbreaking legislation went into effect, marking a pivotal moment in the fight against the fentanyl crisis.

This milestone comes five years to the week after the tragic death of 20-year-old Alexandra Capelouto, whose life was claimed by a counterfeit pill containing a lethal dose of fentanyl two days before Christmas in 2019.

This is the nation's first drug dealer admonishment law. Under Alexandra's Law, individuals convicted of a drug-related offense will receive a formal legal admonishment, ensuring they are fully aware of the potential life-ending consequences of their actions if they continue dealing drugs.

"This law aims to prevent a drug dealer from becoming a death dealer and save lives," Alexandra's father Matt Capelouto said. "However, if a death tragically occurs as a result of their actions, this law provides prosecutors the necessary tools to pursue murder charges, ensuring justice for vic-

tims and accountability for offenders. We hope this will serve as a model for other states and begin to turn the tide in this devastating epidemic."

Alexandra's Law faced seven legislative hearings before reaching the voters, demonstrating the persistence of advocates and lawmakers to see it through. First introduced in the legislature by former Sen. Melissa Melendez (R-Riverside) and later championed by Sen. Tom Umberg (D-Orange County), the law gained traction through bipartisan efforts, grassroots advocacy and public support.

For information, visit leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCod e=HSC§ionNum=11369.

our communities who could work for the rest of their lives and never get out from under the debt they incurred from seeking the care they needed. It's absolutely crushing them. This opportunity to relieve that burden is county government at its best," Hahn said. "I'm thankful to our partners on this program. Together we're going to help transform lives for some of our most vulnerable residents."

"The launch of this program is a critical step forward in ensuring that those receiving critical medical services do not find themselves experiencing financial harm associated with not being able to afford care," said Dr. Barbara Ferrer, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. "We

are deeply grateful to our many partners who share our commitment to tackling the devastating damage of medical debt. Together, we are working to ensure that every resident has a fair and just opportunity to achieve and maintain good health."

Medical debt not only undermines financial stability but also exacerbates physical and mental health challenges by delaying or preventing necessary medical care. Even insured residents are vulnerable, as high out-of-pocket costs can accumulate rapidly.

Residents that receive a medical bill they can't pay or did not expect can visit publichealth.lacounty.gov/hccp/medicaldebt.

Street closures planned in January along subway project

Work on Metro’s D Line subway extension project is ongoing in 2025, including construction in the underground stations and tunnels and at street level along Wilshire Boulevard.

To share details about the project, Metro is holding a webinar on Jan. 8 with updates on all three segments of the subway line extension from Wilshire/Western to the Westwood/VA Hospital station. To join the webinar, visit zoom.us/j/96626476708, and use the webinar ID: 966 2647 6708. To participate by phone, call (213)338-8477.

Along the first segment from Wilshire/Western to Wilshire/La Cienega, crews are conducting street restoration work on Wilshire Boulevard. K-Rail work zones are in place at the intersections of Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire/Fairfax and Wilshire/La Cienega, where crews are restoring sidewalks,

curbs and street lanes. Motorists are advised of lane closures near the subway station work sites.

Through Sunday, Jan. 12, La Brea Avenue will be intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Sixth and Eighth streets. The lane closures support ongoing street restoration at the Wilshire/La Brea intersection. Through March, a K-rail work zone will be in place in the middle of Wilshire Boulevard between Courtyard Place and Masselin Avenue in the Miracle Mile for construction in the tunnels below Wilshire Boulevard.

At Wilshire/Fairfax, a K-rail work zone remains on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard in front of the Academy Museum, where street restoration is ongoing. A K-rail work zone is also in place on the west side of the Wilshire/La Jolla intersection through March for work on a tunnel cross passage.

Wilshire Boulevard is reduced to two lanes in each direction at the intersection.

Work continues in 2025 at Wilshire/La Cienega. Wilshire Boulevard is reduced to two lanes in each direction between San Vicente and La Cienega boulevards. A K-rail work zone remains in place along the north side of Wilshire Boulevard. The right lane on northbound La Cienega Boulevard will be closed intermittently just north of Wilshire Boulevard

At the Wilshire/Rodeo station, deck removal and street restoration work is expected to start as early as Jan 24, requiring up to 18 full weekend street closures of Wilshire Boulevard between Crescent and El Camino drives from 8 p.m. on Friday through 7 a.m. the following Monday. Beverly Drive will also be closed at Wilshire Boulevard when work takes place. Detour routes will be implemented for eastbound and westbound traffic on Wilshire Boulevard.

Station construction is also ongoing at the Century City/Constellation station. Partial lane closures are in place on



photo by Edwin Folven

Deck removal and street restoration work is expected to start as early as Jan 24, requiring up to 18 full weekend street closures of Wilshire Boulevard between Crescent and El Camino drives.

Constellation Boulevard to support daytime station construction and material deliveries. Storm drain construction and work on the station are ongoing. Vehicle access on Constellation Boulevard is maintained between Century Park West

and Century Park East. For questions and concerns about the D Line Extension project, call the 24-hour project hotline at (213)922-6934, email the project team at purplelineext@metro.net, or visit metro.net.

Cedars-Sinai builds community partners to address health equity

Cedars-Sinai is expanding its long-standing commitment to local nonprofits through grantmaking and shared learning opportunities, as a way to promote greater health equity in the areas of homelessness and housing, access to care and other community response categories.

Each year, Cedars-Sinai provides

grant funding – \$27.2 million during the last fiscal year – as part of its community outreach initiatives supporting dozens of nonprofit organizations across Los Angeles. The medical center was recognized as the largest non-foundation grant-maker to L.A. County charities in 2023, as part of the Los Angeles Business Journal’s annual



photo courtesy of Cedars-Sinai

Participants listened to presentations at Cedars-Sinai’s Health Equity Grant Program.

Corporate Philanthropy rankings.

In the latest sign of its commitment, Cedars-Sinai recently convened more than 80 nonprofit grant recipients to culminate a multi-year Health Equity Grant Program. The gathering featured groups including L.A. Family Housing, the Venice Family Clinic and Homeboy Industries –nonprofits working to improve the lives and opportunities of Angelenos.

“All of these organizations represent a crucial part of the picture of services offered in our L.A. communities and are deeply committed to equitable health outcomes in partnership with Cedars-Sinai,” said Arthur J. Ochoa, senior vice president of advancement and chief advancement officer for Cedars-Sinai.

The grant program and its capacity-building efforts address health equity by examining the changing landscapes of Cedars-Sinai’s community partners, including those centered on recruitment and retainment of a diverse workforce, data intelligence to inform equity outcomes and adherence to healthcare policies to provide high-quality services. The recent convening of nonprofits underscored this shared mis-

sion.

“Gathering to celebrate the work of these nonprofits and troubleshoot issues impacting them provides invaluable insights for identifying actionable solutions that make a difference across the health and social service sectors,” said Erin Jackson-Ward, executive director of grantmaking and social impact for Cedars-Sinai.

Moving the needle toward greater equitability in care is also a credit to alliances formed across the Cedars-Sinai Health System, which is expanding its health equity efforts across the L.A. region and beyond.

In 2022, Cedars-Sinai launched a Black Birth Equity program, providing grants to local, community-based organizations focused on reducing inequities in Black maternal and infant health. A groundbreaking hypertension study led by Cedars-Sinai’s Smidt Heart Institute, starting in 2015, also was the first to scientifically prove the effectiveness of bringing medical treatment directly to patrons of Black barbershops.

“The medical center is working to galvanize partnerships across the

community to ensure that we are delivering inclusive care and addressing structural disparities,” said Dr. Christina Harris, vice president and chief health equity officer for Cedars-Sinai.

For information, visit cedars-sinai.org.

State makes major investment in EV chargers

Thousands more electric vehicle chargers are coming to California after the California Energy Commission approved a \$1.4 billion investment plan on Dec. 11 that accelerates progress on the state’s EV charging and hydrogen refueling goals. The investments will help deploy infrastructure for light, medium and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles across California, expanding the most extensive charging and hydrogen refueling network in the country.

The plan details how the CEC’s Clean Transportation Program will spend \$1.4 billion in state funding over the next four years, with at least 50% targeted to benefit lower-income and disadvantaged communities. The funding is part of Gov. Gavin Newsom’s California Climate Commitment, which includes more than \$10 billion for zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure. The state has also received billions from the Biden-Harris administration for clean transportation.

Building zero-emission vehicles infrastructure is critical in creating infrastructure upgrades across the state.

“An important part of achieving our clean car future is building chargers in every corner of California, especially in neighborhoods historically left behind,” Newsom said.

The funds will result in nearly 17,000 new chargers for passenger vehicles statewide. More than 152,000 public and shared private chargers are already installed in the

state. Combined with previous investment plans, funding from the federal government, electric utilities and other programs, the state expects to reach 250,000 chargers in the next few years. In addition to the public network, state officials estimate that more than 500,000 private home chargers are installed statewide.

The funds will become available over the next four years and distributed to projects through competitive grants. Projects include direct incentive and rebate programs for businesses, nonprofits and public agencies.

For information, visit gov.ca.gov and build.ca.gov.

Letters to the Editor

Getting to the bottom of the Mai Tai

Re ‘The return of Trader Vic’s,’ Dec. 26 issue

There are some factual errors in the Trader Vic’s article. I’ll forgive the “doubt” on who invented the Mai Tai as indeed there were some claims during the past decades about Donn Beach’s role in creating a “Mai Tai” cock-

tail. Though, none of these were backed up by tangible evidence, and meanwhile, there is a great deal of it on the Trader Vic’s side. The Mai Tai became popular when it was introduced in Hawaii in 1953 by Trader Vic (noteworthy: that early Hawaiian Mai Tai didn’t have pineapple juice).

As of 2024, there are currently three Trader Vic’s locations in the United States: Emeryville, Atlanta and San Jose Airport. Plus, the Bamboo Room by

Trader Vic in Miami.

Kevin Crossman
ultimatemaitai.com

Housing should not be built at expense of current residents

Re “Oakhurst Drive project gets green light in Beverly Hills,” Dec.

18 issue

Unless the 12 residences actually situated in Beverly Hills are the affordable ones, I don’t see how this would benefit the city. It is unconscionable that tenants in their 80s and 90s are being forced out for this, and I don’t care if the ghost of Frank Lloyd Wright himself designed it.

Thomas Pease
West Hollywood

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.

RESTAURANT NEWS

Mocktails debut at Playa Provisions

Celebrity chef Brooke Williamson’s beachside Playa Provisions in Los Angeles’s Playa del Rey just launched new mocktail creations from bar manager Liam Odien, made with Ritual Zero Proof “spirits,” with selections including: Golden Slumbers – Ritual “Tequila,” lime, grapefruit, passion fruit, fresno chili and soda; Switchel – Ritual “Gin,” spicy watermelon shrub; Amalfi Highball – Ritual “Whiskey,” coconut, San Pellegrino Limonata; and Please Please Me – Ritual “Whiskey,” Oleo Saccharum, “bitters.”

Playa Provisions, which just celebrated its 10-year-anniversary earlier this year, is a unique, neighborhood dining destination comprised of four distinct culinary concepts: Dockside, a laid-back, indoor-outdoor restaurant dedicated to seafood; Grain, an intimate, hidden whiskey bar; King Beach, a market counter serving

seasonal salads, sandwiches, coffee and breakfast items; and Small Batch, an artisanal ice cream shop.

For information, visit playaprovisions.com. Playa Provisions is located at 119 Culver Blvd., Playa Del Rey.

Prohibition-era Georgian adds sober options

Santa Monica’s Art Deco hotel, The Georgian, first opened in 1933, the same year prohibition was abolished in the United States. Historically, the hotel was an excellent place to rendezvous for a martini, but as the Hollywood crowd opts for a sober lifestyle, The Georgian now offers non-alcoholic options that still give that movie star glow. At Sirena, the ground floor California Italian eatery, guests can lounge in the pink accented dining room with an Early Shirley, a take on the beloved

Shirley Temple with a strawberry basil twist.

For information, visit thegeorgian.com. The Georgian Hotel is located at 1415 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica.

Per L’Ora brings flavor to Downtown L.A.

Located on the lobby level, Ristorante Per L’Ora is a neighborhood classic, serving simple yet elevated Italian fare influenced by flavor profiles of Los Angeles. With spirited, easy-going Italian light bites and dishes, Per L’Ora offers an inviting space to dine or hang out, evoking the comforting familiarity of feeling at home, while anchored in restaurant traditions of an old-school lobby, rendered with a modern twist, Per L’Ora pays tribute to the rich history of the Giannini with the main dining room sitting underneath the stunning golden coffered Italianate 20- foot ceiling blended with a contemporary design and

See page 15



photo by Michael Mundy

Enjoy the aesthetic of classic Hollywood at Bar Lis.

Dry January keeps Bar Lis cool

Bar Lis, the French Riviera-inspired lounge in Hollywood, blends South of France charm with Southern California ease. Guests can enjoy Jazz Eclectic LA on Tuesdays or DJ sets on weekends. The lounge now offers four non-alcoholic drinks for guests to pair with light bites or sipping while listening to smooth jazz sounds: Bandi de la Mer, a spiced espresso and sweet

Free Spirits Vermouth blend topped with ginger beer; Four Fourths, a smooth mix of Free Spirits Milano aperitif, oat milk, maple syrup and cinnamon; La Fleur d’Elise, featuring Free Spirits Tequila and passionfruit purée; and Bandiera Rossa, combining Free Spirits Gin with ancho chile and cacao. For information, visit barlisla.com. Bar Lis is located at 1541 Wilcox Ave.

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Joan delivers ‘home’ on Third

BY RANCE COLLINS

Long before she opened the Joan’s on Third storefront, Joan McNamara knew that Third Street was a crossroad for Los Angeles culture.

When people would ask the culinary savant where she’d like to have a business, she’d always reply, “Someplace on Third Street between La Cienega and Fairfax.”

“I feel most at home here, because there’s everyone here of every ethnicity and color and religion and age and everything. It’s all here. And I think that’s the only thing I know how to create,” McNamara said.

Before McNamara opened Joan’s on Third in 1998, she had become known among friends as the chef de jour, often having large dinner parties that were perfectly presented and catered.

A New Jersey native who spent many years working in New York City, she once operated a restaurant called The Egg Basket with her culinary mentor, Dione Lucas (the omelets at her restaurant are sec-

ond-to-none). Lucas is also the author of the most spine-worn, post-it-laden book on McNamara’s expansive cookbook shelf, which takes up an entire wall of her office.

“This book never made me feel that I should order it and see if I can find one that’s brand new, because then we wouldn’t understand each other. This book knows who I am,” she explained.

Knowledge is intrinsic to McNamara’s being. Since she was a young girl, she’s been slow-cooking her culinary wisdom, adding new ingredients and spices along the way. From her mother’s apron to the bustling Joan’s on Third kitchen, the education is ongoing.

“A recipe can pop up on my computer, [that has] nothing to do with anything that we sell or do, and I look at it, and I run in the kitchen say, ‘Let’s make this,’” she said.

Once, when the first of her two daughters – Carol and Susie – was a baby, she saw a recipe in Time Life magazine for salmon in a puff pastry. She spent over a day completing the concoction, rushing between the baby, the store and the kitchen, and

by the time it was finally ready, the “pretty” dish produced enough to feed 10 people.

“My husband said, ‘Who is that for?’ And I said, ‘Yeah, I don’t even really like salmon,’” she laughed. “I just wanted to see what it looked like and see what it felt like to make it ... Now, I do like salmon.”

The menu at Joan’s on Third is dependable, yet shifts with McNamara’s discoveries. Nothing, however, makes it to the menu until it’s perfect.

“If we just say it’s good, then we don’t use it,” she said.

Even after the point they determine the dish is “great,” McNamara said they’ll keep correcting it and correcting it. Even then, if she doesn’t deem it “fabulous,” it doesn’t go to the marketplace.

“[Only] if I’m – or my family or people that work with me – are going to take it home, that makes it great,” she said.

Even when she travels, she’s still on the job. At heart, McNamara’s a researcher, and she’s always looking for that extra bit of spice.

“I very rarely eat in a five-star restaurant. Basically, I love street food,” she said.

She said even in Los Angeles, she



photo courtesy of Joan’s on Third

Joan McNamara is the driving force behind the Joan’s on Third.

eats out two or three times a week. She never asks how something is made, but she’ll note the taste, snap a picture, and then try to replicate dishes on her own.

The menu is full of the favorites one might expect from a space as homey as Joan’s on Third. The atmosphere is familial, further emphasized by the casual black-and-white tile floors, cookbook merchandise, communal seating options, cheese counter and bakery.

All-day breakfast items include an English muffin breakfast sandwich, a smoked salmon bagel and a breakfast burrito. Her famed Chinese chicken salad and sandwich staples like the turkey club, tuna melt and short rib melt keep loyalists coming back. Her bakery includes delicious offerings like Nutella slices and apricot bars, and patrons can also enjoy refreshments from the coffee bar, as well as teas,

See page 15

The secret ingredient
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TRADITIONAL BENEDICT Toasted English muffin, sugared ham, poached eggs, topped with Hollandaise. **19.25**

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CRABCAKE BENEDICT Toasted English muffin, two crab cakes, poached eggs, topped with Hollandaise. **23.95**

AVOCADO & TURKEY BENEDICT Toasted English muffin, hand-carved turkey, avocado, poached eggs, topped with Hollandaise. **23.95**

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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 Dec. 22 and Dec. 28. 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

Dec. 22

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 200 block of N. Rodeo at 3:50 p.m.

At 5 p.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 100 block of S. Maple.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 900 block of Oxford at 7:35 p.m.

Dec. 23

At 1:38 a.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 100 block of N. Le Doux.

At 12:02 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Beverly.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 9700 block of Wilshire at 4:07 p.m.

At 11:41 p.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs in the 200 block of S. Camden.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 300 block of N. Rodeo at 8 p.m.

Dec. 24

At 12:29 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a commercial theft in the 9600 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 200 block of S. Crescent at 4:30 p.m.

At 4:38 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 9700 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 300 block of S. Rexford at 9 p.m.

Dec. 25

An unknown suspect burglarized a construction site in the 500 block of Doheny Road at 2:32 p.m.

At 5:23 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 400 block of N. Rodeo.

Dec. 26

A vandalism was reported in the 300 block of S. Rexford at 3:08 a.m.

At 12:58 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 500 block of Doheny Road.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Cañon at 1:18 p.m.

At 3 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 700 block of Trenton.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 400 block of N. Camden at 8:07 p.m.

At 11:35 p.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs near Elevado and Elm.

Dec. 27

At 2:20 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 100 block of S. Swall.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 8400 block of Gregory at 6:11 p.m.

At 6:15 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 300 block of N. Beverly.

Dec. 28

At 11:57 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Beverly.

West Hollywood Sheriff’s Station

Dec. 22

At 2:20 a.m., an unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1200 block of N. La Brea at 11 p.m.

At midnight, an unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

Dec. 23

An assault occurred in the 9200 block of Sunset at 12:15 a.m.

At 4:52 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1100 block of N. La Brea.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 1000 block of N. La Brea at 8:17 p.m.

At 8:35 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1200 block of N. Fairfax.

Dec. 25

At 8:30 a.m., an unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 7100 block of Santa Monica.

Dec. 26

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1200 block of N. Harper at 4:38 a.m.

At 11:15 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 7900 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1200 block of Havenhurst at noon.

Dec. 27

At 1:14 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 600 block of N. Robertson.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 800 block of N. San Vicente at 7:45 a.m.

At 8 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 9000 block of Sunset.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 900 block of N. Kings at 8 a.m.

At 11 p.m., a suspect assaulted a

victim during a domestic violence incident near Gardner and Norton.

Dec. 28

At 6:51 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 7600 block of Hampton.

Los Angeles Police Department

Dec. 21

At 12:30 a.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 7100 block of Sunset.

An unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 1600 block of N. Cahuenga at 1 a.m.

At 2 a.m., a petty theft occurred in the 8400 block of Blackburn.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 500 block of N. Spaulding at 5:55 a.m.

At 12:21 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 5200 block of Wilshire.

A petty theft occurred in the 6600 block of Sunset at 6 p.m.

At 10 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked near Wilshire and Spaulding.

An unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 6000 block of Hollywood at 11 p.m.

At 11:20 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 5500 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 400 block of N. Western at 11:30 p.m.

Dec. 22

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 1300 block of N. Mansfield at 12:01 a.m.

At 12:01 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 1600 block of N. Las Palmas.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 6100 block of Hollywood at 7 a.m.

At 9:05 a.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 200 block of S. Western.

An unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 100 block of The Grove at 8:40 p.m.

At 9 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 8500 block of Beverly.

Dec. 23

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 100 block of The Grove at 10:43 a.m.

At 4:15 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 900 block of Crenshaw.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 1300 block of N. McCadden at 8:40 p.m.

At 11 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 400 block of S. Orange Grove.

Dec. 24

At 3:05 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1400 block of N. Western.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 1700 block of Canyon at 9:30 p.m.

At 10:15 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 6100 block of Hollywood.

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: 649 N. Huntley Drive,
West Hollywood, California

REQUEST: The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding a request for a tentative tract map for the subdivision of a three-unit residential building into a common interest development.

PERMIT(S): Subdivision, and any other required permits.

APPLICANT(S): Hayk Martirosian

TIME/PLACE OF HEARING: Thursday, January 16, 2025
at 6:30 p.m.
West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers
625 N. San Vicente Boulevard
West Hollywood, CA 90069

ZONES: R2 (Residential, Low Density)

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS: Categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Regulations pursuant to CEQA Section §15301 (Existing Facilities)

Complete digital agenda packets will be available on Thursday, January 9, 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 Roger Rath, Associate Planner at (323) 848-6425, or via email at: rrath@weho.org

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

Мы сообщаем вам об обсуждении проекта. Для дополнительной информацииR4B ffi на русском языке звоните: 323-848-6826.

Breakfast club hosts eclectic January lineup

The Los Angeles Breakfast Club, a 99-year old organization based in Los Angeles has announced a fresh lineup of breakfast events to start out the new year. The month of programming kicks off with “The Boy Who Loved Batman” Michael Uslan, on Wednesday, Jan. 8.

Uslan, producer of countless “Batman” projects, will share his journey from a comics-obsessed kid to transforming comic book characters into serious cinematic art, and bringing the Dark Knight to the silver screen.

On Jan. 15, Joan Renner, author of “Deranged L.A. Crimes,” will take the audience back to the infamous case of Elizabeth Short’s tragic death and how it redefined Hollywood and captivated the nation on its 78th anniversary.

On Jan. 22, archives director Emily Sulzer and assistant archivist Sam Ceja of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics will share lessons and inspiration from the protest poster, historically an indispensable tool for political organizing.

On Jan. 29, artist Josh Agle, known as Shag – a favorite among tiki and Disney enthusiasts – will give a look into his colorful and humorous art and how Los Angeles has inspired the distinctive themes of his iconic work. From his early gallery shows at La Luz de Jesus Gallery in Hollywood to his inclusion in the permanent collection of LACMA, the city of L.A. has been a major part of Shag’s career as an artist.

“Start the year off right at The

Los Angeles Breakfast Club,” club president Mickey Corcoran said. “History, culture, art and more – it’s all here on Wednesday mornings.”

All programming will take place at Friendship Auditorium in Griffith Park, located at 3201 Riverside Drive, where the club has held weekly breakfast meetings since 1965. Friendship Auditorium, named as a nod to the club’s tagline “The Shrine of Friendship,” was dedicated in a ceremony on Nov. 3, 1965 after being built with club funds and donated to the city of Los Angeles.

Breakfast meetings are open to the public and begin at 7 a.m.; Tickets are \$28, include breakfast and can be purchased at labreakfastclub.com/events.



photo courtesy of National Theatre Live

See National Theatre Live’s “War Horse” during a special screening at The Wallis.

National Theater Live’s ‘War Horse’ gallops into The Wallis

The Wallis Annenberg Center of the Performing Arts has announced that tickets are available for a screening of “National Theatre Live: Warhorse” on Friday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m.

Filmed at the National Theatre in London, the unforgettable war epic features astonishing life-size puppets that bring galloping and charging horses to life on stage. At the outbreak of World War I, Albert’s beloved horse, Joey, is sold to the cavalry and shipped to France. Though still not old enough to enlist, Albert embarks on a treacherous mission to find Joey and bring his horse home. The National

Theatre Live recording of “War Horse” makes audiences feel like they are in the thick of the action.

Prior to the screening, a brief introduction will be held featuring The Wallis’ executive director and CEO Robert van Leer, National Theatre outgoing artistic director Rufus Norris and National Theatre incoming artistic director Indhu Rubasingham, with a special live appearance by Joey, star of “War Horse.”

Tickets start at \$27.50. The Wallis Annenberg Center of the Performing Arts is located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd. For information, visit thewallis.org.

Festival celebrates the art of 30-minute storytelling



photo courtesy of 30 Minutes or Less

“For You” with Melissa Lugo will be a part of the 30 Minutes or Less Festival.

Combined Artform and Theatre Asylum have announced Diversity Entertainment as a sponsor for the upcoming 30 Minutes or Less Festival, running Jan. 15–26, at the Stephanie Feury Studio Theatre.

The festival celebrates the art of storytelling and live performance within a 30-minute format, inviting artists from all genres to showcase their work. As part of its sponsorship, Diversity Entertainment will provide an invaluable Spotlight Mentorship, valued at \$6,000. This mentorship will award one standout artist the opportunity to adapt their live show into a professionally produced short film.

The Spotlight Mentorship includes guidance in screenplay adaptation, production planning and festival distribution, offering participants a unique chance to transition their work from stage to screen. Diversity Entertainment, known for its commitment to inclusive storytelling for all generations, continues to champion diverse voices through this program. For information on Diversity Entertainment visit diversitypictures.org.

The festival will be held daily from 7-10 p.m. at Stephanie Feury Studio Theatre, located at 5636 Melrose Ave. For information, visit 30minutesorlessfestival.com.

From page 13

wines and beers. For dessert, there’s the popular soft-serve ice cream, which has a lemon-flavored variety of which she’s particularly proud.

“We make lemon curd. So, you put in vanilla, and then you put the lemon curd then more chopped vanilla, the chopped lemon bark edges,” she described.

But surviving in the highly competitive world of L.A. eateries is about far more than just crafting perfect dishes – it’s about creating an atmosphere that is welcoming ... something that feels like home.

From page 12

light color palate, offering a modern take on classic table side services.

For information, visit hotelperla.com/ristoranteperlora. Ristorante Per L’Ora is located at 649 S. Olive Street, inside the Hotel Per La.

Rokusho offers up non-alcoholic beverages

As the first U.S. location of a Tokyo-originated cocktail destination, Rokusho in Hollywood specializes in vintage tequilas and Japanese spirits. However, the thoughtful balancing of flavors extends into its non-alcoholic beverages with their Homemade Yuzu Soda. Notes of esoteric citrus, vegetal sweetness and light bubbly minerality create this superbly refreshing drink to be enjoyed while cozying up to the new Japanese restaurant’s sleek concrete bartop.

For information, visit rokushola.com or call (323)493-3461. Rokusho is located at 6630 Sunset Blvd.

“Even though we’re called a restaurant, we’re not really a restaurant necessarily – where you have to make a reservation come at a certain time,” McNamara said.

The hours, 8 a.m.-8 p.m., even gives employees an “opportunity to have family life,” something unusual in the industry, she noted. Pictures of her staff, both on Third Street and at the second Studio City location, line McNamara’s office right alongside pictures of her daughters – who now help manage the business – and her four grandchildren.

“Being a family business, our

employees are also our family,” she said.

The ultimate goal for McNamara is to reflect the cultural melting pot of Los Angeles, bringing residents something warm and familiar.

“I think it’s such a diverse community,” she said. “I love speaking to the customers. That’s my reward. If people say, ‘I feel like I’ve come home,’ or ‘I’m home,’ ... that’s what I want you to feel,” she said.

Joan’s on Third is located at 8350 W. Third St. For information or catering inquiries, call (323)655-2285 or visiting joansonthird.com.



photo courtesy of Pinse Chezaray Photography

Authentic Italian cuisine is served up at Cesare Ristortante.

Italian-inspired Cesare brings culture

Cesare Ristorante is owned by chef and restaurateur Cesare Vietina, who grew up working at his family’s Michelin-starred restaurant in Forte Dei Marmi, Italy, then in L.A. helped open Giorgio Baldi and co-owned the legendary Madeo for nearly three decades.

Cesare and his wife Pamela channel their deep love of Italian culture, hospitality and cuisine into this restaurant, where every

guest feels like family. Guests can snag a leather booth in the charming, dimly-lit dining room to swirl family-recipe pastas, share grilled-to-perfection meat & fish, and sip fine wine. It’s romantic, delicious, inviting and set to be one of L.A.’s best Italian restaurants.

For information, visit cesareristorante.com or call (310)273-3605. Ceasre Ristorante is located at 8636 W. Third St.

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Movie stars meet TV at Hollywood Heritage Museum

As television began to compete for the public’s attention in the early 1950s, a new generation of movie stars rivaled those who had ruled Hollywood in the first half of the 20th century. Just as stage actors had been wary of the legitimacy of movies, big screen actors didn’t immediately embrace television. When everyone from Tallulah Bankhead to Harpo Marx guest starred on “I Love Lucy,” worlds

collided and many actors gave the small screen a go, enjoying extended careers thanks to television.

Hollywood Heritage’s “Broadcast From Hollywood: When Movie Stars Met Television” exhibit, opening Jan. 4, explores the intersection of movies and television through the talent that transitioned from one to the other.

Screen worn costumes and memorabilia related to the careers of

actors Lucille Ball, Shirley Jones, David Cassidy, Lana Turner, Luise Rainer, Jack Cassidy and Agnes Moorehead will be on display alongside costumes, set designs, scripts, technical equipment such as cameras and an RCA iconoscope, plus materials used in live commercials (a Bob Baker marionette), telops (cards advertising upcoming programs) and other elements of production that demonstrate how television shows were created.

Hollywood is synonymous with the movies, but it was also where early television was made. The networks – ABC, CBS and NBC – were clustered on or around Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street in Moderne buildings - along with Hollywood based independent studios like Mutual Don Lee Broadcast System (now the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences’ Pickford Center) and Desilu on Cahuenga. Nightclub Moulin Rouge (formerly the elegant Earl Carroll) was co-opted for television production and even the museum building, during its time on the Paramount lot, appeared on the long-running Western, “Bonanza.”

On Jan. 12, Ryan Cassidy, son of Shirley Jones and Jack Cassidy, will be in the gallery with his “James Cagney Was My Babysitter” co-author Johnny Ray Miller to talk about what he learned from his father’s friend and growing up as a Cassidy. Members are free, but RSVP is required at hollywoodheritage.org/event-details/broadcast-from-hollywood-when-movie-stars-met-television-2025-01-04-11-00. Membership will be verified.

The Hollywood Heritage Museum is located at 2100 Highland Ave.



photo courtesy of Hollywood Heritage Musuem

Costumes worn by Lucille Ball will be on display at the Hollywood Heritage Museum starting Jan. 4.

Foundation celebrates success at Dream Big Gala

The “I Have A Dream” Foundation-Los Angeles held its Dream Big Gala on Dec. 12 at the Skirball Cultural Center.

The organization’s premier fundraising event united community leaders, philanthropists, advocates and sponsors in support of educational equity and youth empowerment. The Gala’s theme “Dream Big” was a heartfelt celebration of the achievements of IHADLA’s Dreamer Scholars and the organization’s unwavering commitment to transforming the lives of youth in under-resourced communities.

“The Dream Big Gala celebrates the remarkable accomplishments of our students and honors the inspiring community leaders who encourage them to reach for the stars,” “I Have a Dream” Foundation executive director Chaznae N. Walker said.

The evening featured emotional moments, including a heartfelt tribute by Walker to the late Dreamer Scholar alumni Raejonette Morgan. Having been with IHADLA since the first grade in 2017, Morgan’s legacy lives on, and her mother’s



photo courtesy of the “I Have A Dream” Foundation

The “I Have A Dream” Foundation-Los Angeles provides programs to enrich the lives of youth.

praise for the organization emphasized the IHADLA’s holistic, family-centered approach.

“Seeing all the Dreamer Scholars dressed up in their suits and dresses was beautiful,” IHADLA mentor and volunteer coordinator Tamika Jeanty said.

The gala recognized local leaders and staff for their dedication to inspiring the next generation, including alumni and operations

manager Kelly Trivino, who has been with the organization for 21 years. Juan Alfonso, who came to the Inglewood Program 20 after-school program as a Dream Speaker, was also honored.

Funds raised will directly support IHADLA’s programs including academic mentoring, parent engagement and career readiness initiatives for young people.

For information, visit ihadla.org.

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:	723 N. Huntley Drive, West Hollywood, California
REQUEST:	The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding a request for a tentative tract map for the subdivision of a three-unit residential building into a common interest development.
PERMIT(S):	Subdivision, and any other required permits.
APPLICANT(S):	Hayk Martirosian
TIME/PLACE OF HEARING:	Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard West Hollywood, CA 90069
ZONES:	R2 (Residential, Low Density)
ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:	Categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Regulations pursuant to CEQA Section §15301 (Existing Facilities)

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For further information regarding this item, contact Roger Rath, Associate Planner at (323) 848-6425, or via email at: rrath@weho.org

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

Мы сообщаем вам об обсуждении проекта. Для дополнительной информацииR4B ffi на русском языке звоните: 323-848-6826.



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‘Better Man’ is the best film about an unknown pop star

When “Avengers: Infinity War” premiered, one review presented an entirely original angle: the reviewer had seen none of the films leading up to it. This seems the opposite of what should occur, but it sure made for a good read. Sometimes you go into a film without any foreknowledge. It’s a true test of the story’s value for the uninitiated.

I start here for a simple reason. Like most Americans, I have no idea who Robbie Williams is. And for “Better Man,” a film entirely about this Williams, I conducted no research before or after viewing it. Perhaps one of his many songs – all re-recorded to match the film’s ambitions – sounded vaguely familiar, but I remain a blank slate. Should I feel bad for joining the ranks of so many stateside who are unaware of someone so renowned he holds a Guinness record in ticket sales in a single day (1.6 million)?



photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

“Better Man” is a refreshing take on often-tedious biopics.

Perhaps, but I don’t. Luckily “Better Man” passes the test. It works incredibly well regardless of what folks know about Robbie Williams. It’s a combo pop star biopic and a musical with a unique hook.

Normally, you see one biopic you seen ‘em all. But this one cares even less about realism, and proudly so. For one thing, we never see Robbie Williams himself. Instead, we hear the actual Williams narrate, while a CGI chimpanzee visually portrays him throughout the film, thanks to motion-capture work by Jonno Davies.

Shouldn’t a biographical work be more interested in historical truth? Well, this is the sophomore release director Michael Gracey, who previously shirked history in “The Greatest Showman,” a period musical that whitewashed P.T. Barnum’s vile legacy.

ON SCREEN

WITH
TIM POSADA

Then again, historical accuracy has never been the goal of most musician biopics. From “Ray” and “Walk the Line” to “Straight Outta Compton” and “Bohemian Rhapsody,” timelines are skewed and entire scenes are fabricated to represent a life’s accomplishments. Robbie Williams as a CGI chimp is just more overt about how the entire genre operates.

But unlike other biopics, “Better Man” also feels like a musical. Instead of reserving musical numbers for an audition, studio session or stage performance, chimp Robbie breaks into song at key moments in his life: recalling a peppered past with his father Peter (Steve Pemberton), encounters with ex-fiancée and All Saints member Nicole Appleton (Raechelle Banno) and his fight with addiction, both substances and celebrity.

Williams’ music ain’t my jam. Then again, my affinity for early 2000s emo and hardcore makes me a relic. American viewers will likely perceive Williams the same way. As an homage to his life and times, “Better Man” is a miss, perhaps even deeming Williams the “mon-



photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

“Better Man,” about English singer and songwriter Robbie Williams, portrays him as a CGI chimp.

key guy” for the next year. A few songs that feel like direct descendants of Elvis won’t win him any younger fans either.

But as a musical, his songs and story find new life. The re-recordings and original composition by Batu Sener are splendid. If “Better Man” was entirely fiction, it would work. Consider it a conceptual relative of Pharrell’s “Piece by Piece,” entirely done in Lego-style animation. Please do more of this. At the very least unique presentation can mask how structurally similar biopics are.

The computer animation is far from perfect but never distracts from the story. And it affords surrealist moments as Williams visual-

izes his enemies and how to confront them in epic, maybe even violent ways.

Williams isn’t a heroic figure. He makes poor choices in most scenes. Props to Williams for his direct involvement in something so personal that doesn’t soften his story or seek to blame others. That’s more than other films, often produced by those they portray, are willing to do.

“Better Man” is refreshing, even if it features someone I have no interest in learning more about. That doesn’t have to be a dig – so praise the direction and Robbie Williams for a film that might not win at the box office but is definitely a great ride for those few who will seek it out.

See Craft in America Center’s paper art exhibits through Jan. 4

The Craft in America Center is offering a last chance to see “Erik and Martin Demaine: Puzzling with Paper,” which is on view through Saturday, Jan. 4.

Father-and-son Martin and Erik Demaine are featured in the upcoming Craft in America episode, “SCIENCE.” The duo has a stimulating generative prac-



photo courtesy of the Craft in America Center

Intricate works by Erik and Martin Demaine are on view in the Craft in America Center exhibit.

tice that blends disciplines from math to zoology.

They fold pieces of paper by hand along geometrically derived lines and transform flat sheets into intricately curved constructions while also proving math theorems. They plot out the pattern of a sunflower, improvise pathways of hot glass on paper, extract Shakespeare’s words and write programs that generate three-dimensional and animated fonts.

The Craft in America Center is concurrently holding “Lorraine Bubar: Papercut Perspectives” through Jan. 4. Bubar creates imagery reflecting the hierarchy and intricate patterns of nature through cutting and layering fine Asian colored papers.

Episodes of “Craft in America” can be viewed on PBS and by visiting pbs.org/craftinamerica.

The Craft in America Center is located at 8415 W. Third St. For information, call (323)951-0610, or visit craftinamerica.org/center.

‘Moana 2’ makes return voyage

The global animated hit returns as “Moana 2” sails back to the El Capitan Theatre Jan. 10. Before the movie, guests can take a picture with the Moana and Maui statue photo ops. Specialty concession items will be available for purchase for ticketed guests, while supplies last.

Daily showtimes for Disney’s

“Moana 2” are 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for guests of all ages.

Tickets are on sale now at elcapitantheatre.com and fandango.com/el-capitan-theatre-aacon/theater-page. The El Capitan Theatre is located at 6838 Hollywood Blvd.



photo courtesy of Disney

Moana will screen at the El Capitan Jan. 10.

LACMA maps the ‘Infinite’

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s expansive exhibiton “Mapping the Infinite: Cosmologies Across Cultures,” brings together nearly 120 works

from around the world to explore how humans have endeavored to explain the universe’s origins, mechanics and meaning over 12 millennia.



photo courtesy of LACMA

“Mercury, from The Seven Planets,” circa 1585, is part of LACMA’s “Mapping the Infinite” exhibit.

Throughout the course of human history, narratives have been devised to explain the universe’s significance and processes, often looking to the heavens as a mirror for concepts of time and space. Over time, these cosmologies, whether created within the realms of myth, philosophy, religion or science, have been regularly superseded by newer narratives. Spanning from the Stone Age to the present, “Mapping the Infinite” considers layered histories of cosmology through the prism of art, architecture, and design across Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, South and Southeast Asia, East Asia, the Islamic Middle East, the Indigenous Americas and Northern Europe.

“Mapping the Infinite” is presented as part of PST ART: Art & Science Collide, a landmark regional event exploring the intersections of art and science, both past and present. Developed in collaboration with scholars at the Carnegie Observatories and the Griffith Observatory, LACMA’s show nods to the centennial anniversary of cosmologist Edwin Hubble’s monumental discovery, at Mount Wilson in Los Angeles County, of other galaxies beyond the Milky Way.

For information, visit lacma.org. LACMA is located at 5905 Wilshire Blvd.



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Saldaña to be honored at CDGA



photo courtesy of the Cosumer Designers Guild
Zoe Saldaña can currently be seen in Netflix’s “Emilia Pérez.”

The Costume Designers Guild will honor award-winning actress Zoe Saldaña with the Spotlight Award at the 27th Costume Designers Guild Awards. The Spotlight Award celebrates an actor whose talent and career personify an enduring commitment to excellence, including a special appreciation of the importance of costume design. Past recipients include Angela Bassett, Andrew Garfield, Charlize Theron, Glenn Close, Kerry Washington, Cate Blanchett, Naomi Watts, Amy Adams, Anne Hathaway, Halle Berry and most recently Annette Bening. Widely known for powerful roles which captivate audiences, Saldaña can inhabit a costume and make the character come alive no matter how elaborate or otherworldly. From Neytiri in the “Avatar” films and Gamora in the “Guardians of the Galaxy” franchise, Saldaña

embraces being immersed in her costumes. For those respective roles, Saldaña worked with 2023 CDGA Career Achievement Award honoree Deborah L. Scott and 2017 Excellence in Fantasy Film winner Alexandra Byrne and 2013 CDGA Career Achievement Award honoree Judianna Makovsky. The Costume Designers Guild revealed the official nominees in nine categories for the 27th CDGA, on Friday, Dec. 13. The annual awards ceremony will take place live on Thursday, Feb. 6 at The Ebell of Los Angeles, located at 743 S. Lucerne Blvd. The CDGA is the one night a year when the attention of the world turns to costume design. Actors, filmmakers, costume designers and artists come together to celebrate. Western Costume returns as a premiere sponsor of the 27th CDGA. The host, presenters and additional sponsors and honorees will be announced in the coming weeks. For information, visit costumedesignersguild.com.

‘Dog Man’ book signing at ‘Cat Man’ performance

Center Theatre Group, TheaterWorksUSA and Dav Pilkey have joined together to offer a special book giveaway of the latest installment of the “Dog Man” series, “Dog Man: Big Jim Begins,” at the Jan. 4 and 5 performances of TheaterWorksUSA’s “Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical,” currently playing at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. The book giveaway, a gift from author and illustrator Dav Pilkey, is for the evening performances – 7 p.m. on Jan. 4 and 5 p.m. on Jan. 5 – with a surprise appearance by a special guest on both evenings. “Dog Man: Big Jim Begins” is the latest unforgettable book in the

#1 worldwide bestselling series from Pilkey, the acclaimed graphic novelist and award-winning illustrator. With Pilkey’s trademark humor and heart, the “Dog Man” series celebrates creativity and imagination and explores universally positive messages including the importance of doing good and striving to become a better version of one’s self. Since the series launched to critical acclaim in August 2016, there are more than 60 million copies of the “Dog Man” books in print, making it one of the best-selling graphic novel series of all time. Tickets and information are available at centertheatregroup.org

for this opportunity, and for continuing performances of “Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical,” a hilarious musical adaptation of Dav Pilkey’s “Dog Man” spin-off series, “Cat Kid Comic Club,” written by Kevin Del Aguila and Brad Alexander – the team that created “Dog Man: The Musical.” Tickets for “Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical” are available through centertheatregroup.org, Audience Services at (213)972-4400, or in person at the Center Theatre Group Box Office at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Ave. or at the Kirk Douglas Theatre (open 2 hours prior to curtain) at 9820 Washington Blvd., Culver City.

MOCA spotlights upcoming exhibits

The Museum of Contemporary Art is announcing its scheduling of upcoming exhibitions. The highlights of the 2025 season include the much-anticipated “MONUMENTS,” which juxtaposes decommissioned Confederate statues with contemporary artworks; and “MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi,” the artist’s first solo museum show in Los Angeles. Additional highlights include “Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds,” an exhibition exploring how artists construct imaginative and personal networks; “Tracing Performance, Fictions of Display,” showcasing collection works that consider the relationship between objects, theater, and performance; and the U.S. debut of Wael Shawky’s acclaimed “Drama 1882.” For information, visit moca.org/exhibitions#exhibitions-upcoming. MOCA is located at 250 South Grand Ave.



photo courtesy of MOCA
“MONUMENTS” juxtaposes decommissioned Confederate statues with contemporary artworks.

Free admission every Tuesday, Wednesday to Autry



photo courtesy of The Autry Museum
Enjoy free admission to The Autry Museum twice weekly.

The Autry has expanded its free admission programs to include free hours at the Autry Museum and Bank of America’s Museum On Us. Free hours at the Autry are every Tuesday and Wednesday from 1-4 p.m. Bank of America’s Museums On Us includes free individual admission to Bank of America, Merrill or Bank of America Private Bank cardholders and employees the first full weekend of each month. For information, visit theautry.org/events/free-admission-days. The Autry Museum is located at 4700 Western Heritage Way.

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:	1011 N. Ogden Drive, West Hollywood, California
REQUEST:	The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing regarding a request for a tentative tract map for the subdivision of a five-unit residential building into a common interest development.
PERMIT(S):	Subdivision, and any other required permits.
APPLICANT(S):	Mike Obogeanu
TIME/PLACE OF HEARING:	Thursday, January 16, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. West Hollywood Park Public Meeting Room – Council Chambers 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard West Hollywood, CA 90069
ZONES:	R3B (Residential, Multi-Family Medium Density
ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS:	Categorically exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Regulations pursuant to CEQA Section §15332 (In-Fill Development Projects)

Complete digital agenda packets will be available on Thursday, January 9, 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 Roger Rath, Associate Planner at (323) 848-6425, or via email at: rrath@weho.org

Melissa Crowder, City Clerk

Мы сообщаем вам об обсуждении проекта. Для дополнительной информацииR4B ffi на русском языке звоните: 323-848-6826.

Inner City Youth Orchestra showcases diversity and talent

The Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles announces its highly anticipated 2024-25 Concert Season Schedule, showcasing the extraordinary talent of young musicians from underserved communities across Los Angeles. ICYOLA's 17th season will be a transformative journey filled with performances, innovative programming and community engagement.

The largest orchestra of color in the country starts the new year with a heartfelt tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Saturday, Jan. 11, at 7 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd. The orchestra's 2025 season also includes a performance on March 2 at Walt Disney Concert Hall in collaboration with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for "Mahlerthon,"

celebrating the music and arrangements of Gustav Mahler. Each concert during the season celebrates the richness of classical music while highlighting the importance of representation of Black and Latinx people in orchestral music, fostering a diverse and inclusive environment. "This season [is] one to remember, featuring performances at some of Los Angeles' most prestigious venues," said Charles Dickerson, founder and conductor of ICYOLA. "This season represents not only the incredible talent of our young musicians but also our commitment to nurture creativity and open doors for our youth, particularly in our Black and Latinx communities." ICYOLA has achieved a remarkable level of professionalism, showcasing the extraordinary talent of its young musicians through a diverse range of performances and community engagements. Recently, the orchestra launched a capital campaign to secure funds to renovate a newly purchased building, which will serve as a dedicated space for rehearsals, performances and educational programs. The initiative reflects ICYOLA's commitment to fostering artistic excellence and providing essential resources for members, and underscores the orchestra's role in empowering underserved youth through the transformative power of music. For information, visit icyola.org.



The Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles will perform a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 11 at the Skirball Cultural Center.

Paltrow lights Hanukkah candles with Tishby

Academy Award-winning actress Gwyneth Paltrow joined Israeli actress and activist Noa Tishby to light the candles for the first night of Hanukkah, kicking off a surprise star-studded celebration of the Jewish holiday where various celebrities join Tishby to light the menorah for all eight nights of Hanukkah. The special guests include a supermodel, a journalist, comedians, and television and movie stars, and while not all of the celebrities are Jewish, they are all committed to platforming Jewish joy during a time when antisemitism is at an all-time high. Paltrow joined Tishby to light a menorah and share personal stories about their Jewish heritage, reflecting on the meaning of the Festival of Lights. "We always light the menorah," Paltrow said. "We always gather together, and after we light the candles, it's very sweet, actually. We

all hug and we bring in the light, and ever since they were little, so they'll sit on the floor and close their eyes, and then I'll give them their presents." **"Hanukkah is the perfect holiday to bring on the light, literally."** *Activist Noa Tishby* Paltrow spoke about the traditions she grew up with celebrating Hanukkah on Long Island and how her family continues those customs, while Tishby shared her experiences celebrating Hanukkah growing up in Israel. Together they discussed their shared values and bonded over commonalities. "We need to show the world that

it's cool to be Jewish as we celebrate the customs we've carried on for thousands of years," Tishby said. "Hanukkah is the perfect holiday to bring on the light, literally. From lighting candles to eating fried foods to spinning dreidels, these eight nights are all about being together with family and friends, Jewish and non-Jewish, and laughing and singing and dancing. It's important that we carry on these traditions and retell the story of Hanukkah and Jewish resilience every year, and that includes publicly and proudly displaying your menorah whether that's in your living room window or on social media." All Hanukkah, a new reel was posted showcasing another celebrity. Jews and non-Jews alike were encouraged to participate by lighting their own Hanukkah menorah and sharing it to social media with the hashtag #BringOnTheLight.

Historical society hosts festive holiday party



Members of Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society enjoyed a luncheon at the historic San Antonio Winery.

The Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society held its annual holiday party on Dec. 22 at San Antonio Winery. Members enjoyed a detailed history of wineries in Los Angeles from Steve Riboli, of the family that owns the San Antonio Winery. After an elaborate luncheon, the group toured the winery. The holiday event benefitted Toys for Tots, and two U.S. Marines accepted boxes of toys donated by the historical society. The Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society is led by President Richard Battaglia. The nonprofit was founded in 1976 to preserve the rich and illustrious history of the area and its architectural landmarks and homes. For information, visit windsorsquarehancockpark.com.



Jean-Michel Basquiat's "Gold Griot" (1984) and "Horn Players" (1983) are part of an exhibit at The Broad on his work.

Broad honors Jean-Michel Basquiat's birthday

Honor Jean-Michel Basquiat's legacy on what would have been his 64th birthday by experiencing his groundbreaking works up close at The Broad. The museum's expansive presentation showcases the visionary artist's work, informed by diverse references – from jazz improvisational compositions to the history of the Roman Empire – often critiquing injustices and hypocrisies in the art world and the broader cultural climate of the 1980s. Explore two galleries of iconic works, including "Untitled" (1981), "Gold Griot" (1984) and "Obnoxious Liberals" (1982),

together tracing the full arc of Basquiat's career. Admission to The Broad's collection – including Basquiat's works – is always free. Don't miss this chance to connect with the legacy of one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. If one is looking for more things Basquiat, visit the Broad Digital to learn about his musical influences and how they appear in his work. For information, visit thebroad.org/online-programs/time-decorated-musical-influences-jean-michel-basquiat-part-1. The Broad is located at 221 S. Grand Ave.

Santa visits Cedars-Sinai Guerin Children's

'Twas the days before Christmas and a singing Santa Claus made the rounds at Cedars-Sinai Guerin Children's. Santa wheeled a wagon through the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center campus as he brought toys to young patients and their siblings. Santa also sang holiday songs while cuddling the tiny babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. And he gifted parents with keepsake ornaments decorated with their baby's name and footprints. "It feels fantastic," said Christine Silverman, whose one-week-old son, Murray, was in the NICU after being born prematurely. NICU social worker Alva

Gregorio, said parents were grateful for the opportunity to take a photo of their babies with Santa during their first Christmas, something many were afraid they would miss while being in the hospital. "It brings a sense of normalcy to the families who have to be in the hospital during the holidays," said one of the NICU social workers, who dressed as an elf and helped Santa deliver toys as part of the annual holiday tradition. "Some children worry Santa won't find them because they are in the hospital, so seeing him here handing out gifts brings them great joy." For information, visit cedars-sinai.org.



A merry Santa Claus brought joy to patients at Cedars-Sinai Guerin Children's before Christmas.

Cedars-Sinai to receive \$6 million for eye research

Cedars-Sinai is participating in a major national research and surgical effort aimed at curing total blindness through whole eye transplantation, a pioneering approach to restoring vision. The organization has been selected to receive up to \$6 million from the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health Transplantation of Human Eye Allografts program.

Cedars-Sinai, part of a national multicenter consortium, will be responsible for developing protocols for the procurement and preservation of donor tissue as well as the eye transplant surgeries themselves. The Cedars-Sinai effort is being led by Dr. Curtis L. Cetrulo Jr., vice chair of Research in the Jim and Eleanor Randall Department of Surgery and director of the Division of Plastic Surgery at Cedars-Sinai.

“Vision loss affects over seven million Americans and this award represents an opportunity to really move the needle in our treatment of blindness. With this funding, I’m confident we can make progress toward eye transplantation,” Cetrulo

said. “As the only clinically active vascularized composite allotransplantation program approved for face and eye transplantation on the West Coast, we are in a unique position to design the protocols that will allow for successful optic nerve connection and regeneration. We will also be addressing preservation of the donor eye tissue in transit to safeguard the optic nerve and retina, which are very sensitive to periods of decreased blood flow.”

Cedars-Sinai joins several partners, including the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, the effort’s primary award recipient. The other partners are Johns Hopkins University, University of Wisconsin, Indiana University, University of Southern California, the National Eye Institute and the Foundation for Fighting Blindness. The ARPA-H funding for the project totals up to \$46 million, with up to \$6 million dedicated to Cedars-Sinai’s clinical surgical efforts.

ARPA-H is a federal agency established to advance high-poten-

tial, high-impact biomedical and health research that cannot be readily accomplished through traditional research or commercial activity.

In its clinical transplantation practice, Cedars-Sinai will employ the robotic Symani Surgical System, which was recently acquired by the hospital. Currently, Cedars-Sinai is the only institution on the West Coast utilizing this new and highly specialized robotic microsurgery technology, which scales down the surgeon’s movements significantly for extreme precision.

“This is just another example of how the Department of Surgery at Cedars-Sinai strives to be at the forefront of the most innovative and life-changing procedures,” said Dr. Cristina Ferrone, chair of the Department of Surgery at Cedars-Sinai and the Linda and Jim Lippman Chair in Surgical Oncology. “The work our team is doing on this project has the potential to transform clinical practice and impact the lives of millions of people around the globe.”

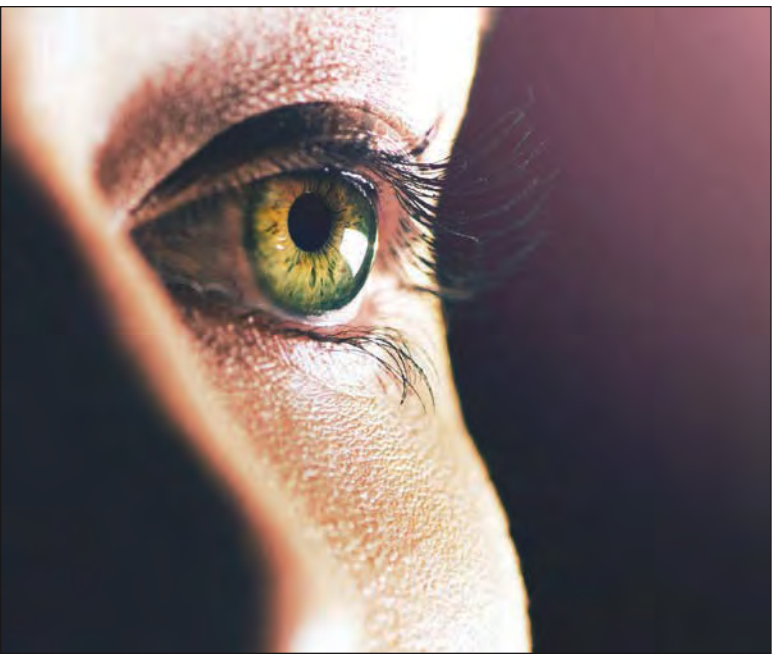


photo courtesy of Cedars-Sinai

The funding will support the development of groundbreaking eye care.

Cedars-Sinai is a leader in treating eye disease with novel approaches. Previously, Clive Svendsen, professor of Biomedical Sciences and Medicine and executive director of the Cedars-Sinai Board of Governors Regenerative Medicine Institute, received a \$10.5

million grant from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine to launch a clinical trial testing treatments for retinitis pigmentosa, an inherited eye disease with no known cure.

For information, visit cedars-sinai.org.

Senate congratulates L.A. Galaxy soccer team

U.S. Senators Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) and Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) announced that the Senate unanimously passed their resolution congratulating the Los Angeles Galaxy for winning the 2024 Major League Soccer Cup. The resolution recognizes the achievements and contributions of the entire organization to the Galaxy’s 2-1 finals victory over the New York Red Bulls, marking their league-leading sixth MLS Cup and their 10th overall finals appearance.

Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-Calif.-44) introduced a similar resolution in the House of Representatives.

“The Galaxy proved once again that Los Angeles is a city of champions,” Padilla said. “This record-setting title further cements the Galaxy as the most dominant franchise in MLS history and gives diehard fans countless memories to cherish for years to come.”

“Congratulations to the L.A. Galaxy on being the first to six – and once again proving why California is the soccer capital of the country. You’ve made our state proud, and it’s clear this is only the beginning,” Schiff said.

“The L.A. Galaxy brought joy back to Carson this season with a

fast-paced and exciting brand of soccer. Our fans, and the communities throughout Los Angeles that support the Galaxy, have waited a long time to return to the top. Now, the MLS Cup is back home with the winningest club in league history,” Barragán said. “I’m proud to introduce this resolution with Sen. Padilla to celebrate the Galaxy and their championship season. ¡Soy Galaxian!”

The Galaxy went undefeated at home at Dignity Health Sports Park throughout the entire 2024 MLS season and playoff run, scoring a record 18 goals throughout the playoffs. The team was led by players including Gabriel Pec, Joseph Paintsil and Dejan Joveljić, who each scored two goals against Minnesota United FC on Nov. 24, marking the first time in MLS postseason history that three

teammates scored a pair of goals in the same match.

For information, visit

padilla.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/LA-Galaxy-Senate-Text-12.19.24-FINAL.pdf.



photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Galaxy

The Los Angeles Galaxy won the 2024 Major League Soccer Cup in a 2-1 victory over the New York Red Bulls.

VINTAGE PARKLABREA NEWS

Iconic recording studio closes in WeHo



Dave DuBrow, owner of the former Signet Sound Studios at 7317 Romaine St. in West Hollywood, was shown in the Jan. 4, 2007, issue of the Beverly Press and Park Labrea News, shortly before the venerable studio permanently closed on Dec. 31 that year. Many iconic artists recorded at the studio during its illustrious history including Bruce Springsteen, Whitney Houston, Quincy Jones, Phil Collins, Randy Newman and Alanis Morissette. It was also used to record many film scores including “Toy Story,” “Cars,” “Finding Nemo” and “American Dream.” The studio building was sold to make way for a new development amid a downsizing in the music industry due to improved technology and accessibility to personal digital recording devices, DuBrow said in the accompanying article.

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Carter was inspirational to local leaders

From page 1

African Americans.

Many of those issues carried over into 1976, when he chose to run for president on a campaign of restoring trust while the country was still grappling with the Watergate scandal. His slogan, “I will never lie to you,” summarized the campaign that brought him to the White House, defeating incumbent President Gerald Ford.

As president, his greatest achievements were his brokering of the Camp David Accords, the creation of the Department of Energy and an unwavering commitment to global human rights. Despite his ambitious goals, Carter faced many challenges, including a stagnant economy and a failed rescue mission during the Iran Hostage Crisis. He lost his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan in 1980, becoming just one of 11 one-term presidents in U.S. history.

Although he only served as president for four years, Carter continued his humanitarian and peace efforts well beyond his time in the White House, becoming perhaps the most active former president in history. In 1982, he founded the Carter Center, a nonprofit focused on advancing human rights throughout the world. Throughout his 44 years as a former president, Carter worked tirelessly to protect democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of religion. His work also sought to eradicate diseases such as Guinea worm disease, malaria, river blindness and trachoma, while also advocating for HIV/AIDS awareness. He was an early environmentalist – supporting renewable energy and sustainability.

Through his work with Habitat for Humanity, Carter personally built homes for impoverished people around the world. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his post-presidential work.

As people across the country and the world mourned the passing of Carter, leaders from Los Angeles and California reflected on his leadership and achievements.

“Jimmy Carter’s extraordinary public service didn’t end when his presidency did. For decades he has remained an icon of kindness and humility, and a champion of peace,” L.A. County Supervisor Janice Hahn, 4th District, said. “I was lucky to have had the opportunity to build houses alongside him for low income families in San Pedro with Habitat for Humanity back in 2007 when I was on the Los Angeles City Council. His legacy will live on for generations to come not only here but around the world. May he rest in peace.”

“I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of former President Jimmy Carter. His time both in the White House and outside left an indelible mark on our country and the lives of Americans. President Carter emphasized human rights and environmental justice throughout his lifetime, demonstrated through his time building affordable housing for those in need, establishing the Department of Education, calling for bilingual education and pursuing solar panel technology well ahead of his time. He also dedicated the Carter Center to combat health issues in Atlanta, Georgia,” L.A. County Board of Supervisors Chair Pro Tem Hilda

Solis, 1st District, said. “I had the honor of working in the White House Office of Hispanic Affairs during the Carter administration as editor-in-chief and later meeting President Carter during my time as Secretary of Labor for President Obama. I am grateful to him for his dedication to improving the lives of those in this country, and for the lasting impact he made early in my own career.”

“It’s a sad day as the country mourns the loss of President Jimmy Carter – a leader who exemplified the importance of service and care during his presidency and beyond,” Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said. “While in the White House, President Carter established the idea of human rights as a core tenet of American foreign policy and created a path towards a clean energy future, among other important achievements. After his term, he continued to lead. The international legacy he leaves behind lives on in the Carter Center as an active and powerful defense of freedom and democracy around the globe. Domestically, his inspiring work through Habitat for Humanity showed generations of Americans that there are no limits to community service and helping others.”

“President Carter was a man of rare character – whose beliefs ran true and ran deep, whose moral compass never wavered. He saw the common humanity in all of us, building bridges between people of different faiths and factions abroad while working to meet the needs of those at home. Despite daunting challenges and trying times, his bright energy and spirit never fal-



photo courtesy of the Carter Center

39th President of the United States Jimmy Carter, pictured in 2014, is remembered for dedicating his life to humanitarian causes.

tered,” Gov. Gavin Newsom said. “Service was more than a career for President Carter, it was a way of life. After leaving the White House, the Carters made it their mission to advance global peace and health through the Carter Center, improving countless lives over four decades of humanitarian efforts. President Carter’s candor and compassion, moral leadership and sense of duty set a standard we all should aspire to. His enduring example reminds us that we can still find common ground despite our differences.”

“Jimmy Carter was a clean energy champion, a staunch defender of democracy and a fundamentally decent person. His lifelong commitment to service led us through turbulent moments, and he leaves behind a shining example of how to better treat one another,” U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) said. “From his establishment of the Department of Energy and installing solar pan-

els at the White House, to his pioneering environmental conservation and sustainability efforts, President Carter was an early voice in the fight to develop renewable energy and combat the climate crisis. His legacy of service extends far beyond his time in the Oval Office. His organization’s extensive non-partisan election observation helped the United States live up to our commitment to promote peace and democracy around the world. And long after he left public office, the fact that you could wander into Sunday School taught by the former president or find yourself building homes with Habitat for Humanity alongside a 95-year-old Jimmy Carter is a testament to his selflessness and his deep faith. Carter’s example has inspired countless people to make a difference in their own communities, and his legacy of compassion, promoting peace and advocating for the most vulnerable will not be forgotten.”

City prepares for Golden Globes ceremony

From page 1

a more global lens as compared to the Academy Awards. The event was also one of the first to include television, which was growing in popularity and becoming a more important part of visual media.

The awards also have a long history of being held in the city of Beverly Hills. The second annual ceremony in 1945 was held at the Beverly Hills Hotel, a glamorous venue at a time when Beverly Hills was becoming more synonymous with Hollywood A-listers and filmmakers. Attendees at the first ceremony held in Beverly Hills included Ingrid Bergman – who won Best Actress in a Drama that year for “The Bells of St. Mary’s” – and Bing Crosby – who won Best Actor in a Comedy or Musical, also for “The Bells of St. Mary’s.”

In 1961 – in need of a larger ballroom – the event moved about a mile

away to the nearby Beverly Hilton, which has been the primary venue ever since.

The show is produced by Dick Clark Productions, a Beverly Hills-based production company which also produces the Academy of Country Music Awards, the Billboard Music Awards and “Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve.”

“Being in Beverly Hills and having that glamor attached to it is something that the show thrives on,” said Barry Edelman, executive vice president of television with Dick Clark Productions, in a City Council meeting on Oct. 10.

This year, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association will again present the awards ranging from “Best Motion Picture” to “Best Performance in Stand-Up Comedy on Television.” Nominees include familiar faces – including Denzel Washington and

Angelina Jolie – along with first-time hopefuls – such as Ariana Grande and Glen Powell. The 82nd annual Golden Globes will be hosted by comedian Nikki Glaser, who is also a nominee for her recent Netflix comedy special. The ceremony will air live on CBS and stream on Paramount+ on Sunday, Jan. 5 at 5 p.m. The awards show will serve as the unofficial kickoff to awards season, as it will be followed by many other awards events, including the Grammy Awards on Feb. 2 and the Academy Awards on March 2.

“We love having [the Golden Globes] here,” Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian said in the City Council meeting on Oct. 10. “It’s a huge celebration and it celebrates the history of our city and the partnership that entertainment and Beverly Hills have had for so many years.”

Partial lane and full street closures will take place in the city of Beverly Hills on Wilshire Boulevard and North Santa Monica Boulevard. Residents are advised to use alternate east-west routes such as South Santa Monica, Olympic, Pico and Sunset boulevards.

Residential streets surrounding the venue will be posted with no-parking signs. For information and the complete list of closures, visit beverlyhills.org/goldenglobes.

For questions and concerns before the day of the event, call the askBH customer service line at (310)285-1000 from 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and the after-hours Golden Globes hotline that will be active on Sunday, Jan. 5, from 2-8 p.m. at (310)550-4680.



photo courtesy of the LA Phil

Pianist Yuja Wang will join the LA Philharmonic for a special one-night performance on Feb. 1.

Yuja Wang joins LA Phil at Walt Disney Concert Hall

The LA Phil announced that on Feb. 1, renowned pianist Yuja Wang will join the Los Angeles Philharmonic and conductor Michael Tilson Thomas for a program titled “Celebrating MTT with Yuja Wang” at Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Michael Tilson Thomas has been part of the LA Phil family for more than five decades and in honor of his 80th birthday, the orchestra celebrates its former principal guest conductor with selections of his music and other classic gems alongside the world-renowned pianist, whose collaborations in concert with Tilson Thomas have spanned two

decades.

Kicking off the evening with what Tilson Thomas calls “alternately elegant and goofball percussion entrances,” he conducts his jubilant Agnogram, followed by an impression of Spain in Debussy’s Ibéria.

Wang joins Tilson Thomas at the piano for Poulenc’s devilishly witty “Sonata for Four Hands.” The duo will then perform the original jazz band version of Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” and Tilson Thomas’ “You Come Here Often?”

The Walt Disney Concert Hall is located at 111 S. Grand Ave. For information, visit laphil.org.



photo courtesy of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association

The Golden Globe Awards will be held on Jan. 5 at the Beverly Hilton.

Erickson reflects on year as WeHo’s mayor

From page 1

strong on the issues that are critical to the city,” Erickson said. “It’s always great to have the reassurance of the voters for what seems to be a very resounding look at the progress of the city, and that is one that includes forward thinking policies on housing, transportation, public safety and responsiveness to the public.”

Erickson was particularly proud of the issues the council emphasized throughout his tenure.

“When I think about some of the major accomplishments, it was just that it was prioritizing building affordable housing. It was prioritizing ensuring our streets are better through new and improved streetscape plans that are coming forward. It was ensuring that our minimum wage and our historic hotel worker protections continued to be the law of the land for what seems to be forever more,” he said. “And I think then nuts and bolts of running good and efficient meetings, and making sure that we got done on time, that the public business got done efficiently.”

Erickson said he believes the city

is in the best position it has been in years.

“I just see the thriving LGBTQ community here in a way that we haven’t in a few years,” he added.

The term was not without its contentious debates, as the discussion over street safety and especially the streetscape of Fountain Avenue drove the conversation for the November election. The city residents ultimately elected Erickson and his running mate Councilman Danny Hang, both of whom are in favor of bike lanes being added to Fountain Avenue.

Erickson expressed disappointment in the campaign tactics used by his fellow candidates.

“It was really a few bad actors that were trying to drive wedges in between our community,” he said. “You had our Republican Chamber of Commerce out there trying to draw horrible comparisons to the two individuals that ended up winning. You saw big business interests try to buy the city, specifically their donations to the West Hollywood Chamber PAC, which are really critical to point out. You had two

hotels spend over \$100,000 to try to defeat workers in the city of West Hollywood, and they lost.”

Erickson said his connection with the community was key to his success.

“Tell me a council member in West Hollywood history that has sat there for 41-plus events in Plummer Park just to talk to the community,” he said.

As he begins his second term on the council, issues like homelessness and building more housing remain top of mind for Erickson.

“We need to drastically look at how we are building affordable housing to address our housing crisis,” he said. “At the beginning of the year, I’m bringing forth a fairly comprehensive set of changes that will allow us to cut a lot of bureaucratic red tape [to build housing].”

He expressed full confidence in Vice Mayor Chelsea Byers, who will succeed him as mayor.

“She is a forward thinking leader who looks to community driven solutions and truly just wants to make the community a better place,” Erickson said.



photo by Jon Viscott

John Erickson, right, was joined by newly-elected Councilman Danny Hang at the Dec. 16 City Council meeting.

He also previewed a new role in his professional life. In December, Erickson left his position in public affairs, communications and marketing at Planned Parenthood for a new role as chief of staff at the Alliance for a Better Community.

“It is a leading Latino rights organization here in Los Angeles County that deals with immigration, health, education and civic engagement. It’s really incredible,” he said.

In his personal life, Erickson credited his partner, former city poet laureate Brian Sonia-Wallace, with providing the support he needed to carry through.

“I truly base all of what I’m able to do back in my family and with my friends and my partner. That’s their strength, and it’s their confidence and it’s their guidance. Because I couldn’t be where I am without them,” he said.

Federal programs expand to reduce homelessness

A series of federal measures to address homelessness were announced on Dec. 27, reaffirming a commitment to ensuring all Americans have access to safe and stable housing.

The measures include updated regulations to streamline the repurposing of surplus federal properties for affordable housing and homelessness services, making resources available under the second cohort of the Housing and Services Partnership Accelerator with the Department of Health and Human Services and awarding approximately \$39.8 million to support veterans through the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program.

“These announcements reflect HUD’s unwavering commitment to addressing the root causes of homelessness and advancing innovative solutions,” HUD acting secretary Adrienne Todman said. “By expanding partnerships, repurposing federal properties and investing in programs like HUD-VASH, we are making meaningful progress toward our shared goal of ending homelessness and building stronger, more equitable communities.”

HUD announced an opportunity for states to apply to participate in a second cohort of the Housing and Services Partnership Accelerator. The program will provide individualized technical assistance to reduce homelessness by addressing health-related social needs, such as services that connect older adults and people with disabilities to affordable housing. The accelerator will facilitate collaboration and coordination across the housing and health care sectors to optimize resources and close resource gaps.

“Homeless people need more than temporary shelter. They must have access to a comprehensive set of services that connects them to housing they can afford and maintain over the long term. Title V will allow the federal government to use empty federal properties to house homeless people and provide these vital services. The Housing and Services Partnership Accelerator will help local program administrators better serve older adults and people with disabilities by providing technical assistance and sharing lessons learned across sectors,” HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra said.

For information, visit hud.gov.



photo by Edwin Folven

The funds will be used to create housing to address the homelessness crisis.

County secures more funding for homeless housing

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on Dec. 17 unanimously approved a motion introduced by Board Chair Kathryn Barger, 5th District, to prepare Los Angeles County so it can successfully draw down millions of funds from the state’s Homekey+ program once its application portal opens in January.

Los Angeles County will be allocated \$599 million, with \$277 million earmarked for veterans and \$321 million for general population homeless housing projects.

“This program is a golden opportunity to expand access to sustainable housing for those who need it most, including veterans and individuals with mental health challenges who have nowhere else to go and need support to stay housed,” Barger said. “I’m excited about this next round of funding. The state is an important partner in our local work to help our homeless off the streets and Los Angeles

County needs to be ready. We need to maximize every cent.”

The county will soon embark on its fourth round of applying for Homekey funds. The program originated as Project Roomkey early in the COVID-19 pandemic. All Homekey+ project proposals must be filed by May 30. Once awarded, housing projects must be completed within 24 months. The funds support the acquisition and occupancy of hotels, motels and other properties to house people experiencing housing.

Barger’s motion directs several county departments to assess their collective readiness and develop a clear plan to leverage the next round of Homekey funding effectively. This includes proposing specific goals for creating housing units and identifying the target populations that will be served.

In Barger’s district, there are several Homekey projects that are either completed or in progress.

In Lancaster, Los Angeles County and its nonprofit partner Hope the Mission converted the Sands and Tropic motels into The Sierra’s – a site offering interim housing for families experiencing homelessness. The same partnership was used to purchase the Knights Inn in Palmdale and the Americas Best Value, Bon Aire, Sahara and T-Bird motels in Lancaster, which are all being renovated into interim or permanent housing.

As of December 2024, Los Angeles County has used Homekey funds to acquire 32 properties and offer over 2,000 units of interim or permanent supporting housing for people experiencing homelessness.

For information, visit hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/homekey?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=.

New California parking law goes into effect

The city of West Hollywood is informing community members about a California State Law, Assembly Bill 413, to prohibit parking a vehicle within 20 feet of any marked or unmarked crosswalk or within 15 feet of bulb-out curb-crossings. Citation enforcement was mandated to begin on Jan. 1.

AB 413, also known as the Daylighting to Save Lives Bill or “Daylighting Law,” was signed into state law in October 2023 and went into effect on January 1, 2024, with a one-year grace period. The law aims to increase visibility for both pedestrians and oncoming vehicular traffic, with the goal of reducing pedestrian injuries and deaths by adding more time for drivers and people walking to see one another better. Due to their height, children are particularly vulnerable because they are more likely to be invisible behind a parked car. The term “daylighting” refers to the practice of keeping a clear zone of a specified distance on the vehicle approach side of a crosswalk. Daylighting is

considered a best practice and is a frequently used tool in cities across the nation. The full text of Assembly Bill 413 can be found on the California Legislature’s website.

Now, drivers in communities across the state of California, including West Hollywood, will be subject to citations for stopping, standing or parking within 20 feet of any marked or unmarked crosswalk or 15 feet of any crosswalk with a curb extension (commonly referred to as a bulb-out), including T-intersections. All intersections on all approaches in California are considered to have a legal unmarked or marked crosswalk, unless marked with signage for no pedestrian crossings.

West Hollywood’s Department of Public Works is working to get the word out about AB 413 to residents, businesses, and community members with city information. The city’s engineering division is in the process of evaluating intersections throughout West Hollywood

to identify locations that warrant modifications to be consistent with the new law and some curbs will be painted red to provide clear indication for no parking zones. Still, drivers are advised that parking in a “daylighted” curb area in close proximity to a crosswalk or curb-crossings, whether painted red or not, is a violation subject to citation.

For information, email jjilmour@weho.org.

Answers From Page 23

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	L	M	A	K	A	N	T	E	R	E	
M	O	A	N	S	E	G	O	S	T	H	A
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Crossword Puzzle

by Myles Mellor

- Across
1. Heroine of Tennessee Williams's "Summer and Smoke"
5. German philosopher
9. To be, at the Louvre
13. Grumbles
15. Braggarts have big ones
16. Jones of jazz
17. Dracula, for one
18. Expose
19. Like Death Valley
20. Feign disinterest
23. High ball
24. Adorable
25. Compensate for
29. Having no cost, in Cologne
31. Landed (on)
32. Popular fashion magazine
34. Mentioned
39. Dungeons and Dragons, for example
42. 1965 march site
43. Chinese prefix
44. Big name in household humor
45. It's a long story
47. Mischievous one
49. Uninteresting
52. Programming language
53. Practise for Macbeth
59. "It's Impossible" singer
60. Rancho hand
61. Upset
63. R&B offshoot
64. Potato of the tropics
65. "Keep ___ to the ground"
66. Hungarian patriot Nagy
67. Reach across
68. Word on monuments
- Down
1. Onetime Jeep mfr.
2. Roller coaster feature
3. Large hammer
4. Dancer Pavlova
5. Meat on a stick
6. Thickener
7. N, on a French map
8. Fearsome fly
9. French story
10. The ___ Degrees (Motown group)
11. Country singer, Bonnie
12. Reds great Roush
14. Sauveness
21. The Ritz, for one
22. Beholden to
25. Sculls
26. Ice sheet
27. Plug
28. Hinder
29. Actor Errol
30. Chiefs' coach
33. Refuge
35. A long time
36. Grape residue
37. Actress Watson of the "Harry

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63					64					65				
66					67						68			

- Potter" movies
38. Card game start
40. "Major ___" (1995 Damon Wayans film)
41. Actress Shearer
46. Makes fit for a new purpose
48. Beginning
49. Sweep
50. Monkey
51. Stuck, after "in"
52. Gas used in tubes
54. Bring in
55. Short-billed rail
56. Russian river
57. Rate ___ (be perfect)
58. Chinese money
59. Evidence collectors
62. Old hand
- answers on page 22

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

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