



Daylight Saving Time begins March 9

# BEVERLY PRESS

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March 6, 2025

## Council denies fire chief's appeal to get her job back

■ 13-2 vote follows criticism over Palisades fire response

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

The Los Angeles City Council stood with Mayor Karen Bass on March 4, voting 13-2 to deny an appeal by former Fire Chief Kristin Crowley that sought to overturn the mayor's decision to fire her on Feb. 21.

Bass terminated Crowley over her handling of the devastating Palisades fire, which destroyed more than 6,800 structures in the Pacific Palisades and Malibu. The mayor said Crowley sent home 1,000 firefighters on Jan. 7 before the fire erupted despite the danger

See **Fire chief** page 25



photo by Tabor Brewster

Fire Chief Kristin Crowley was terminated over the preparedness and response to the Palisades fire, which destroyed more than 6,800 structures.

## BHUSD begins search for superintendent

■ District hires crisis communications firm

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Beverly Hills Unified School District Board of Education on March 4 began the search for a new superintendent following Dr. Michael Bregy's resignation. The board also approved funding for an agreement with Corder Creative LLC to provide crisis communications amid controversies facing the school district.

"In BHUSD, we are unwavering in our commitment to educational excellence and innovation," Board President Rachelle Marcus said in a statement. "We have high expectations for our next superintendent to not only uphold our proud legacy of academic achievement and integrity, but also to inspire new levels of student success and forward-thinking educational practices. Our vision is clear: we will find a leader who can confidently steer our district to even greater heights while ensuring every student has the opportunity to realize their full



photo by Tabor Brewster

BHUSD Board of Education President Rachelle Marcus, center, said the district is in a "crisis."

potential."

The board formally began the search for a superintendent in a closed session immediately after it approved funding for crisis communications in an open session.

The need for a crisis communications firm was suggested to the board by acting superintendent Dr. Jason Hasty.

According to the proposal by Corder Creative, the firm will "provide BHUSD with a focused crisis communications response,

ensuring transparency, stakeholder trust and strategic messaging during the appointment of the new acting superintendent."

The board did not hear proposals from other communications firms.

"We need some form or someone who can handle the communications right now because we are up a creek without a paddle as far as I'm concerned," Marcus said in the meeting. "I would love to be

See **BHUSD** page 26

## Zbur, Allen seek expanded L.A. film production

■ Tax incentives would increase to \$750 million

BY RANCE COLLINS

While the March 2 Academy Awards ceremony opened with a montage celebrating Los Angeles'

intrinsic relationship to the film industry, not a single film nominated for Best Picture was shot in the city.

While Hollywood has long been the motion picture capital, tax incentives from other states and countries have driven many productions to other locations – even

some that are set in Hollywood. "The Substance," for instance, was shot in France, despite being partially financed by U.S.-based companies.

Since 2009, the California Film and Television Tax Credit Program has sought to incentivize production to move back to L.A. Senate Bill 630 and Assembly Bill 1138 are now working through the state legislature to strengthen that program further. The bills were introduced by Assemblyman Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood), Assemblyman Issac Bryan (D-Culver City) and Sen. Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica).

The legislation would expand tax incentives for productions from \$300 million to \$750 million annually. In October, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the initiative, and the legislation was introduced on Feb. 26.

"I want to thank Assemblymembers Zbur and Bryan, Sen. Allen, and other legislative leaders for taking action to expand this important program and fighting back to keep our signature industry in Los Angeles and in California," Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said. "Our city was

See **Tax credits** page 25



photo by Rance Collins

Studio lots such as Paramount have seen decreased production due to competitive tax credits from other states and countries.

## Instructor Romeo Carey says he is reinstated by BHUSD

■ KBEV director has been on paid leave since Dec. 1

BY TABOR BREWSTER

Beverly Hills High School journalism teacher Romeo Carey said he signed an agreement on March 5 with the Beverly Hills Unified School District to return to the school following three months of administrative leave. Carey was placed on paid leave on Dec. 1 for reasons that were not disclosed by the school district. However, community members characterized it as an act of retaliation and censorship.

The BHUSD has not confirmed Carey's reinstatement.

"I am deeply grateful and humbled to the BHUSD Board for stepping in and restoring order to the chaos in district leadership. Most of all, I want to thank the incredible KBEV army led by former student parent Robbie Curtis, my media students past and present, their par-

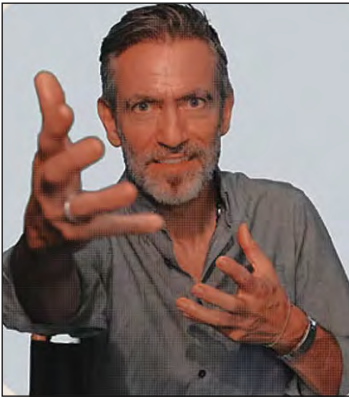


photo courtesy of KBEV

Carey said he reached an agreement with the district on March 5 to return to Beverly Hills High School as the school's journalism instructor.

ents and the community for their unwavering support," Carey said. "Your voices, your dedication and your relentless advocacy have made all the difference in restoring my rightful place in the KBEV studio, where I belong. I also extend my heartfelt thanks

See **Instructor** page 26

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CALENDAR

Art of Dorothy Rice

7811 Gallery presents “To Los Angeles with Love,” a new solo exhibition of works by the late artist Dorothy Rice on view from Thursday, March 6, through Thursday, May 1. Rice, a multi-talented painter, sculptor, model and actor, had an illustrious career as a top fashion model in the 1940s and ‘50s before becoming an exhibiting artist and exploring the human experience. An opening reception will be held on March 6 from 6-8 p.m. 7811 Melrose Ave. 7811gallery.com.

LA Phil

Join the LA Phil for “Mahler’s Fifth with Dudamel” from Thursday, March 6, through Sunday, March 9, at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. LA Phil Music and Artistic Director Gustavo Dudamel leads the orchestra and mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke in a performance of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony and Alma’s Five Songs. The concert is part of the Mahler Grooves Festival. Showtimes are at 8 p.m., March 6-8; 2 p.m., March 9. 111 S. Grand Ave. laphil.com.



First Fridays at MOCA Geffen

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA is holding “Musical Projections by Colburn School Musicians” on Friday, March 7, from 5-8 p.m. The special presentation of works by John Cage, Alvin Lucier, György Kurtág,

Luciano Berio and J.S. Bach will be held in the galleries featuring the exhibition “Olafur Eliasson: OPEN.” Colburn School students Rebecca Beato, Dawid Kasprczak, Tom Mantel and Serge Kalinovsky will perform. The program is part of First Fridays at MOCA Geffen, offering special programming and free admission to special exhibitions from 5-8 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. 152 N. Central Ave. moca.org/program/first-friday-musical-projects-colburn-musicians.

‘Archy and Mehitabel’

“Archy and Mehitabel,” a musical based on the book by comic legend Mel Brooks and featuring lyrics by Joe Darion, comes to the Broadwater Black Box Theater in Hollywood from Friday, March 7, through Sunday, March 16. In a deserted office, a cockroach dives headfirst onto the keys of a typewriter, pouring out the ruminations of his soul. It’s Archy, a poet, philosopher, moralist and futile worshipper of Mehitabel, an alley cat. The original musical takes audiences into the streets of the big city as Archy tries hopelessly to bring Mehitabel off the back fence and into a respectable home. Showtimes are at 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday; 3:30 p.m., Sunday. Tickets are \$35. 6322 Santa Monica Blvd. onstage411.com/newsite/show/play\_info.asp?show\_id=7185.



Culinary history

The Culinary Historians of Southern California is holding “A Taste of Novruz: Food, Tradition and Symbolism” with Feride Buyuran on Saturday, March 8, at 10:30 a.m. in the Los Angeles Central Library’s Mark Taper Auditorium. Buyuran explores the rich culinary traditions of Novruz, also spelled Nowruz, which is one of the oldest and most vibrant festivals in the world. Celebrated across many cultures, it marks the arrival of spring and is associated with special foods and traditions that symbolize renewal, prosperity and hope. Buyuran will focus on the festive foods of Azerbaijan – from sweet pastries to savory dishes – and uncover their cultural and symbolic meanings. The event is followed by a themed reception. Admission is free. 630 W. Fifth St. chsocial.org.



‘FEAST.’

Leonix Movement Theatre, in association with Immersive Art Collective, presents the West Coast premiere of “FEAST.” a vivid reimagining of “Beowulf” as a cautionary tale, from Saturday, March 8, through Sunday, April 6, at The Count’s Den in Downtown Los Angeles. True to the ancient myth, Grendel, a monstrous creature described as mankind’s enemy, is killed by Beowulf, but that’s where “FEAST.” diverges. In the immersive and visceral theater experience, Grendel’s mother throws a dinner party to seek justice for her son’s murder, only to confront her own guilt and rage. The fantasy production coincides with the contemporary political landscape, asking the audience to contemplate climate change, income inequality and rising authoritarianism. Showtimes are 7 p.m., Saturday; 5 p.m., Sunday. Tickets start at \$45. 1039 S. Olive St. leonixtheatre.org.

‘Ancestors’ Voices’ workshop

Explore trauma and how it manifests in the body through guided movement exercises, writing, drawing and sharing in “Ancestors’ Voices: A Community Workshop” on Sunday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center. The participatory workshop is centered on healing in the aftermath of the devastating wildfires. Admission is free but reservations are required. 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd. skirball.org.

Holocaust poetry

Holocaust Museum L.A. is holding “Bearing Witness: Exploring Poetry of the Holocaust,” an online program on Tuesdays, March 11, 18 and 25 at 4 p.m., via Zoom. The three-session course by Dr. Holli Levitsky will introduce audiences to poetry of the Holocaust. Levitsky explores how poets used language to grapple with unimaginable suffering, bear witness to atrocities and preserve memory. Admission is free but reservations are required. holocaustmuseumla.org.

Palaver Strings

Palaver Strings presents “Songbook,” a collaborative program with vocalist Vuyo Sotashe and Grammy-nominated jazz pianist Chris Patishall on Wednesday, March 12, from 8-9:30 p.m. at 2220 Arts. “Songbook” celebrates the musical diversity of Sotashe’s home country South Africa and explores connections between American jazz, South African folk traditions and European classical music. The performance includes traditional folk songs in Zulu, Sepedi and Xhosa; classical works by Bongani Ndodana-Breen, Michale Moreane and Bheki Mseleku; and originals by Sotashe. Tickets are \$20. 2220 Beverly Blvd. palaverstrings.org/events/songbook-losangeles.

Ruskin Art Club lecture

Brazilian architect and scholar Claudio Silveira Amaral will present the Ada Louise Huxtable Lecture on Architecture on Thursday, March 13, from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Wende Museum in Culver City. The annual lecture, named after the distinguished American architectural critic, is sponsored by the Ruskin Art Club, L.A.’s oldest cultural association. British art and social critic Ruskin’s influence on Brazilian arts education, vernacular architecture and labor relations in the 19th and 20th centuries is the subject of Amaral’s pioneering research, books and articles on Ruskin, Rui Barbosa and Sergio Ferro. The event is free. A reception follows the lecture. The program will also be livestreamed on the Ruskin Art Club’s YouTube channel. 10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City. ruskinart-club.org.



Midori

Enjoy a performance by Midori as part of the LA Phil’s Colburn Celebrity Recital series on Thursday, March 13, at 8 p.m. at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. The legendary violinist performs music by Brahms, Poulenc, Ravel and Che Buford. She is joined by longtime recital partner pianist Özgür Aydin for a program of musical reflections on suffering and loss, inspired by the Spanish writer Federico García Lorca’s poem “Casida of the Lament.” 111 S. Grand Ave. laphil.com.



photo by Tabor Brewster

Plans for the store on Rodeo Drive were first approved in 2018, but were delayed several times.

BH Planning commission OKs new Cartier building

■ New Rodeo Drive location will be luxury brand’s ‘temple’

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Beverly Hills Planning Commission approved a development plan review for a three-story building at 370 N. Rodeo Drive, the site of the next Cartier store in Beverly Hills.

The development – designed by Foster and Partners – will be 45 feet tall, with three levels devoted to retail for the luxury jeweler. It will also include a basement and an outdoor terrace along the perimeter of the third floor – a “limited use lounge for VIP customers,” according to a city staff report. The store will not include parking or a valet service.

Fernando Beauchamp, architect and head of store planning for Cartier North America, presented the project to the planning commission during the meeting. He said the new store will be among the luxury brand’s most important locations.

“This location for us means everything,” Beauchamp said. “Beyond the Cartier structure and segmentation, it’s what we

call a Cartier ‘temple’ ... That explains the importance and the magnitude of what it means for the international network as well.”

According to the Cartier website, additional “temples” include its locations in Paris, London and New York City.

The Planning Commission did not receive any public comments in support or opposition to the project.

While the planning commission lauded the project’s overall design, some commissioners expressed concerns over the lack of parking included in the plans.

The project is not required to include parking under Assembly Bill 2097, which prohibits a public agency from imposing parking requirements on any development located within a half-mile of a public transit stop. The future Cartier store will be a few blocks away from the Wilshire/Rodeo Metro Subway station, which is under construction and expected to open in 2026 at the southwest corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Reeves Drive.

“I was a little concerned about where are your employees going to park, and where are those people

See Cartier page 26

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# Beverly Hills council denies builder's remedy appeal

■ Action may prompt new housing lawsuit against city

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The Beverly Hills City Council on March 4 denied an appeal for a builder's remedy project at 140 S. Camden Drive.

The project – a 15-story, 194-foot building with 27 residential units and four levels of underground parking – had been submitted by developers who hoped to make use of the state's builder's remedy provision. Six of the 27 units were reserved for low-income housing.

The housing law provision allows buildings to exceed local code restrictions such as height and density if the project contains a certain amount of affordable housing units. The builder's remedy takes effect when a municipality's housing element – effectively a zoning plan for affordable housing – is out of compliance with state requirements. The city of Beverly Hills housing element was out of compliance for three years between 2021-24, and received approval from the state's Department of Housing and Community Development on May 1, 2024.

Developers Wilshire Camden, LLC filed a preliminary application for the project on March 15, 2024 – three days before the city adopted its certified housing element which was approved by the state later that year. Under state law, a develop-

ment project has vested rights in accordance with ordinances, policies and standards in effect on the preliminary application filing date.

After submitting a preliminary application, a developer has 180 days to submit a formal application. After the formal application is submitted, the city has 30 days to respond. If the city does not respond within 30 days, the application is deemed complete by operation of law.

City staff deemed the application incomplete on Oct. 3, citing missing architectural details and missing environmental and technical studies as the basis for the incomplete determination.

However, the applicant argued that its application was deemed complete by operation of law because it sent a formal application on Friday, Aug. 30, which the city did not deem incomplete until Oct. 3. This would exceed the 30 days allowed for a city to respond to a formal application. However, the city argued that the formal application was technically submitted on Tuesday, Sept. 3, because fees were not paid for the formal application until after 5:30 p.m. on Aug. 30. The applicant sent the documents for the formal application at 12:32 p.m. on Aug. 30 and paid the fees after 5:30 p.m. According to a staff report, the city's position is that "applications submitted (including payment) after City Hall business hours are considered submitted the next business day."

In this case, due to Labor Day on

Monday, Sept. 2, the next business day was Sept. 3.

The city sent its incomplete letter to the applicant at 4:59 p.m. on Oct. 3. However, a follow-up letter with a correction was sent at 7:03 p.m.

As a result, the developers filed an appeal for the city's incomplete determination. The applicant cited the time frame discrepancy and noted that neither a general plan amendment nor zoning amendment is required for a builder's remedy project – a law that Beverly Hills did not recognize until January 2025. Additionally, developers argued the formal development application did not substantially deviate from the preliminary application, which would maintain its vested rights as a builder's remedy project.

The city also argued that the project had substantially changed from its initial application. In the preliminary application, the development was 175 feet tall with 26 units, while in the formal application it was 194 feet with 27 units.

However, housing law states that a project's preliminary application retains vested rights unless the project's overall residential units or square footage changes by 20% or more, which the project at 140 S. Camden Drive did not.

Ryan Leaderman, an attorney for the developers, presented the appeal to the City Council on March 4. Most of the argument centered around the date of the submission. He maintained that the applicant submitted the formal application on



photo by Tabor Brewster

The project would replace an existing two-story apartment building at 140 S. Camden Drive.

Aug. 30, and that the city's rules on business hours do not exist anywhere in writing. Additionally, he argued that the city did not follow its own rules on business hours, as the city sent a follow-up to the incomplete determination on Oct. 3 at 7:03 p.m.

Leaderman also pointed to lawsuits that have arisen in local municipalities that have denied projects under similar circumstances.

"It could be quite dangerous if the city continues to violate the Housing Accountability Act," Leaderman said.

After extensive back and forth discussion, including questions about the timeline of the application, the City Council upheld the city staff's incomplete determination.

"No one's disputing that there's a housing shortage and we need to do what we can to have more housing

and affordable housing," Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian said. "We want to work with developers, but we need to abide by rules and regulations. The application was incomplete ... I too hope that we can revisit this with the project and reapply in a way that abides by the city rules."

"As an attorney I am well aware of time limitations and certainly in the courts that I practice in, if I don't get things in by 5 o'clock, I get a notation [that] this is considered to be filed whatever day it is – usually electronically they'll tell me it's the next day ... I think it's something that we're all really as attorneys familiar with – that an act with the court is not complete until all those requirements are made," Mayor Lester Friedman said. "I think the same holds true for the city. The applicant was cer-

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photo by Edwin Folven

A resident was critically injured during a fire in a unit on Martel Avenue in the Melrose area.

## Man hospitalized after blaze erupts in Melrose bungalow

BY EDWIN FOLVEN.

The Los Angeles Fire Department was called to a multi-unit property at 834 N. Martel Ave. around 1:50 p.m. on March 2 after a fire erupted in a one-story bungalow in the Melrose area. Firefighters arrived to find smoke coming from a unit and went into “offensive fire-fighting mode,” LAFD spokesman Mark McLean said. Thirty-two firefighters quickly

extinguished the blaze, which erupted in “contents” inside the bungalow. They discovered a man inside in respiratory arrest and quickly rushed him to the hospital in critical condition. No further information was available about the victim. The specific cause of the fire remains under investigation, according to McLean. Firefighters prevented the flames from spreading to other units and no other injuries were reported.

## Leader of Hollywood-based drug operation found guilty

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

The female leader of an illegal Hollywood-based drug operation was found guilty on March 4 of distributing fentanyl, methamphetamine and other harmful drugs that nearly led to the overdose deaths of three people.

Authorities said Mirela Todorova, 36, oversaw a sophisticated drug distribution network in 2020 and 2021 that operated out of a stash house in Hollywood and employed drivers to deliver drugs to customers. Todorova, who goes by the name “Mimi,” was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances resulting in serious bodily injury, one count of distribution of fentanyl, three counts of distribution of fentanyl resulting in serious bodily injury, one count of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, one count of possession with intent to distribute cocaine, one count of possession with intent to distribute MDMA (ecstasy), and one count of making false statements to federal investigators. She faces 20 years to life in federal prison.

Prosecutors said Todorova’s drug trafficking operation was high-tech. She provided cellphones to drivers who she hired to deliver drugs to customers. A citizen of the United States, Canada and Bulgaria, Todorova frequently traveled out of the country, staying for extended periods in Mexico.

Authorities said Todorova hired Mucktarr Kather Sei, 39, of Koreatown, as a driver and later gave him access to a drug stash house she rented in Hollywood, allowing him to run the drug ring’s operations while she was out of the country. Authorities said Todorova, Sei and others distributed counterfeit oxycodone pills laced with fentanyl, as well as other drugs. Three cus-

tomers suffered overdoses and nearly died between November 2020 and January 2021. Prosecutors said despite warnings from customers that the oxycodone pills were laced and potentially fatal, Todorova continued to sell the drugs.

“This defendant used her knowledge of technology to peddle the poison of fentanyl despite knowing the pills she sold ran the risk of killing people,” Acting United States Attorney Joseph McNally said. “I commend our local and federal partners for stopping this dangerous criminal organization and bringing justice to the victims here.”

“This case highlights the importance of looking at every overdose incident,” said Matthew Allen, special agent in charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration’s Los Angeles Field Division. “This case started with a single overdose and led to the identification of the dealer responsible for multiple overdoses. This drug distributor had knowledge of the harm she was creating and didn’t care.”

Law enforcement conducted an investigation into the illegal drug operation in 2021 and arrested Todorova, Sei and two other people involved in the ring: Christopher Y. Moreno Nuñez, 29, of Pacific Palisades, and Ashley Alicia Nicole Johnson, 34, of Los Angeles. Authorities served search warrants and seized drug trafficking materials and narcotics from Todorova’s properties and car including methamphetamine, cocaine and MDMA, as well as a fake oxycodone pill laced with fentanyl. Todorova told federal law enforcement agents she thought the drugs were vitamins, prosecutors said.

Sei, Nuñez and Johnson pleaded guilty last year to felony narcotics distribution charges. Todorova is scheduled to be sentenced on Sept. 12.

## Two juveniles linked to mob attack on San Vicente

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Los Angeles Police Department investigators have arrested two male juveniles for a violent attack on a motorist on Feb. 22 in the Carthay Circle area and are continuing the investigation into the crime.

The victim was beaten and kicked by a mob of teen bicyclists after he honked and shouted at the group as they rode along San Vicente Boulevard and impeded traffic. When the victim stopped at a traffic signal at McCarthy Vista, the bicyclists caught up and began kicking and banging on the victim’s vehicle. The man got out of the car and members of the group immediately surrounded him and hit and kicked him until he lay motionless on the ground. Other motorists got out of their vehicles to intervene, and the bicyclists rode away south on Carrillo Drive. A bystander recorded video of the attack and provided the footage to police. The video was also uploaded to social media and broadcast by the media.

Lt. Mark Ro, with the LAPD’s Wilshire Division, said investigators received numerous tips about potential suspects following the media reports, including a tip on Feb. 26 that led them to the two juvenile suspects who were arrested. The suspects’ names and ages were not provided because they are minors.

“I can’t say much because they are under 18. We got an anonymous tip that two of them attend a high school in the San Fernando Valley. When we went to the high school, we learned that one attends the school and the other did not, but they knew each other. They were arrested and booked for assault with a deadly weapon and were released



photo courtesy of the LAPD

Police are asking the public to help identify the suspects, whose faces can be clearly seen in video footage of the crime.

to their parents.”

Ro said the two juveniles who were arrested “were not helpful” and did not provide information about any other suspects. He added on March 4 that detectives have secured a warrant to search a cell phone belonging to one of the suspects and that part of the investigation is still unfolding. Police believe the juveniles who committed the crime live in different places throughout the city and meet via social media, so many may not know each other. Searching the cell phone could be a key factor in identifying other perpetrators.

“That group is from all over. [We don’t believe they are] from our area,” Ro added. “They communicate on social media like the street takeover groups. It seems like they have been scaling back because of the media coverage. We haven’t had any additional activity from them since [Feb. 22].”

The victim, who has been identified as Maurice Benaim, 28, said in an interview with KTLA that he sustained lacerations, bruises, head trauma, pain and emotional trauma

from the attack. Ro said the victim lives in Beverly Hills. Paramedics treated Benaim at the scene and he declined to be taken to a hospital, opting to seek medical treatment on his own, Ro added. Attempts to reach Benaim through police and his attorney, Chantelle Ameli, were unsuccessful.

Ro said investigators are poring through security video to identify the perpetrators and have clear images of at least 10 suspects they believe were involved in the mob attack. Video of the attack and crime bulletins about the suspects can be viewed by visiting [x.com/lapdwilshire?lang=en](https://x.com/lapdwilshire?lang=en) and [youtube.com/watch?v=IB5BojStNWw](https://youtube.com/watch?v=IB5BojStNWw).

“We continue to process the incoming calls and the online tips,” Ro said. “We hope people do the right thing and turn them in.”

Anyone with information is urged to call detectives at (213)922-8205 or (213)473-0510. Tips can also be emailed to [dets-07@lapd.online](mailto:dets-07@lapd.online) and can be made anonymously through Crime Stoppers at (800)222-8477.

## Suspect convicted of 2021 hate crime sentenced

A male suspect has been sentenced to 51 months in federal prison for striking an Asian American woman in the head with his fist and shouting racial slurs during an attack in 2021 in Culver City, the U.S. Justice Department announced.

Jesse Allen Lindsey, 38, who was a transient at the time of the attack, was sentenced on March 3 by United States District Judge Michael W. Fitzgerald. Lindsey pleaded guilty last December to one count of committing a hate crime. He has been in federal custody since July 2024.

On June 14, 2021, at approximately 1 a.m., Lindsey followed the victim as she walked to work, prosecutors said. Lindsey shouted racial slurs, cursed at the victim and stated, “You don’t belong here.” He then violently punched her in the head and made additional racial slurs as the victim lay face down in the street, prosecutors said.

Paramedics took the victim to a hospital where she was treated for injuries to her head and ear. The victim was unable to work for a month and suffered psychological trauma, prosecutors said.

Fitzgerald called the attack a “shocking and horrible crime” and noted Lindsey’s “serious criminal record.” Lindsey has 13 criminal convictions for firearms and narcotics offenses, domestic battery, grand theft and attempted extortion. He also has at least 14 violations of probation or pretrial release

and 19 additional arrests or contacts with law enforcement.

Law enforcement officers later located Lindsey in a California state prison serving time for an unrelated conviction. During an interview with law enforcement about the assault in Culver City, Lindsey

admitted to punching the victim and claimed self-defense. Prosecutors called the suspect’s claim of self-defense false, adding that the victim is 5 feet tall and approximately 120 pounds, while Lindsey is more than 6 feet tall and weighs approximately 250 pounds.

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# Weaver’s Walk plan axes trees

■ Amended pathway will move forward

BY RANCE COLLINS

On March 3, the West Hollywood City Council approved C.S. Legacy Construction to build an amended version of Weaver’s Walk – the park space with a weaving pathway designated for the Melrose Design District along Melrose Avenue and Norwich Drive.

In April 2024, Weaver’s Walk was approved and included greenery, a public art piece by Karon Davis “Before Picasso” and 21 trees lining its pathways. But the number of trees has now been cut to 12 after a threat of litigation from store owner Ben Soleimani, who owns a self-named luxury furniture store that he claims would be obscured by the trees.

“The community spent years providing input for the Weaver’s Walk project at community gatherings, pop-ups, commission meetings and council meetings,” Councilwoman Lauren Meister said. “Their input was put aside for one business owner who chose not to participate in the process because, ultimately, it was easier to threaten litigation. A new plan with 43% less trees, and no input from the community – [is] beyond disappointing and a slap in the face to our residents and the environment.”

Weaver’s Walk has been on West Hollywood’s docket since 2014, when the city began community outreach. During the City Council meeting, several residents expressed disappointment, and even anger,

with the decision to cut the number of trees after more than a decade of community planning.

“Not quite a year ago, Mr. Soleimani had a parade of people show up, complaining about a lack of notice,” resident Kimberly Winick said, then citing the years of public engagement the project had before approval. “We’re here on less than a week’s notice on a radical revision into something that is not at all what any of us want in this neighborhood. And it’s not what this City Council ... approved 11 months ago. What is before you now has nothing to do with a green, healthy, inspirational space. This is nonsense.”

The council, however, said their hands were tied.

“We have to do what’s best for the city and also the residents and none of us that made whatever vote we made [at the meeting] were in any way, shape and form, happy with what we were trying to do,” Councilman John Erickson told the Beverly Press.

“I share the frustration with how much time has been invested by the

community and by the city to arrive at an outcome that feels so disappointing to some of the neighbors,” Mayor Chelsea Byers said. “But I don’t want to lose perspective – after 12-plus years, the city is finally gaining a brand-new green space where a concrete island once existed, featuring diverse trees and plant life, art, benches and enhanced walkability, all in the middle of the Design District. This space will hold great long-term benefits to the city and the surrounding community. Moving forward, we have to work harder to engage stakeholders from the outset to avoid costly project delays and to ensure our city is best representing all voices in the community in our final decision-making.”

Vice Mayor John Heilman echoed Byers’ sentiments.

“It will still be a beautiful addition to the Melrose streetscape with 12 new trees, art work and a shaded pedestrian walkway,” he said. “It’s unfortunate that the commercial property owner wasn’t involved in the process as this plan was formulated. In the future, we need to make sure that all stakeholders are represented when we design public improvements which will directly impact them. While the city had



photo by Rance Collins

Ben Soleimani threatened legal litigation over the previously approved Weaver’s Walk park space.

numerous, properly-noticed public meetings to discuss the plan, the property owner directly adjacent to the plan didn’t participate in those meetings.”

After the long gestation period, Councilman Danny Hang said he was thankful Weaver’s Walk was getting off the ground.

“Approving it now avoids even

more delays and gives people something real to enjoy sooner than later,” he said. “If we drag this out with more debate or litigation, we risk leaving the area unfinished even longer. Plus, this design complements the area. It’s going to look great once it’s done.”

Soleimani did not respond to a request for comment.

## Grant applications open for WeHo Pride

The city of West Hollywood has opened Community Group grant applications for its WeHo Pride 2025 celebration in May and June.

WeHo Pride Weekend will take place on May 30-June 1 in and around West Hollywood Park, located at 647 N. San Vicente Blvd. The weekend will include a free street fair, the Women’s Freedom Festival, the Dyke March, the WeHo Pride Parade and the ticketed OUTLOUD at WeHo Pride music festival and Friday Night at OUTLOUD.

West Hollywood invites community groups to take part in WeHo Pride 2025. Community groups may apply to request city funding for an independent Pride event. Applications can be found at [wehopride.com/getinvolved](http://wehopride.com/getinvolved), and completed must be submitted by Monday, March 17 at 11:59 p.m.

There are a variety of ways for brands to sponsor WeHo Pride, as well — traditional activation spaces to inclusion at one of the most diverse music events nationally, as well as creative customized opportunities. Organizations interested in becoming a WeHo Pride sponsor can reach out to [sponsorship@jj-la.com](mailto:sponsorship@jj-la.com).

Additional details about WeHo Pride 2025 will be posted as they become available at [wehopride.com](http://wehopride.com). For information about OUTLOUD at WeHo Pride, visit [weareoutloud.com](http://weareoutloud.com). For inquiries to West Hollywood’s event services division related to WeHo Pride, email [wehopride@weho.org](mailto:wehopride@weho.org).

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rendering courtesy of Beverly Hills Gateway, LLC

The six-building project would occupy a landscaped green space along Santa Monica Boulevard in Beverly Hills.

# Litigation threat emerges over proposed project in Beverly Hills

■ City, developer dispute preliminary application

BY TABOR BREWSTER

A threat of litigation has emerged over a proposed housing development at 9220 Santa Monica Blvd. in Beverly Hills.

The project is a 250-unit residential development with 12 separate six-story buildings and one four-story “amenity building” with two levels of underground parking. The project would be a total of 500,865 square feet of floor area and 915,514 square feet of construction. It would include 340 parking spaces. Additionally, the development would reserve 35 units for low income households to make use of the state’s density bonus law, which allows developers to bypass density restrictions by including affordable housing.

The project site is currently a landscaped area along Santa Monica Boulevard between Beverly Boulevard and Melrose Avenue.

The preliminary application was filed by Lyn Konheim, the manager of Beverly Hills Gateway, LLC on Jan. 22.

However, according to an email obtained by the Beverly Press sent by Dale Goldsmith, an attorney for the developers, to the city, the application was rejected by the city on Feb. 21. Goldsmith stated that the city rejected the preliminary application on the basis that it encroaches on public right-of-way.

However, City Attorney Laurence

Wiener denied that the application was denied.

“The developer of that property has submitted a ‘preliminary application’ and pursuant to state law the city does not make a determination of completeness on a permit application or otherwise approve or deny a preliminary application. So I am not sure what the developer is referring to,” Wiener said. “However, we have noted to developer concerns about ownership of the parcels that are included in the developer’s preliminary application, as a courtesy to the developer.”

The Feb. 21 letter from the city stated that “the city concludes that the preliminary application has not been deemed submitted.”

“The applicant does not intend for the project to encroach into the right-of-way; it is proposed to be entirely within the property owned by the applicant,” Goldsmith wrote in the email to the city.

Additionally, he states that even if the project did encroach the right-of-way in its preliminary application, that would not constitute a legal basis for the denial of the application.

Goldsmith also alleged that the city violated state housing laws in its action.

“Our client will vigorously contest any effort to wrongfully deprive it of its rights under state law to develop the project,” he added.

The Beverly Hills City Council discussed the threat of litigation in a closed session on March 4, according to the agenda.

# Fire relief applications for small businesses, workers close March 12

The L.A. Region Small Business and Worker Relief Funds celebrated an additional \$14.5 million in funding from Gov. Gavin Newsom, LA Rises and FireAid. With the new funding, L.A. County and the city of Los Angeles are keeping applications open through March 12 at 5 p.m.

Small businesses and workers who apply by the original due date of March 2 at 5 p.m. will be considered for Phase 1 awards with available funding prioritizing those with the greatest impact within the fire zones. The grants will be dispersed by mid-March as planned. Those who apply by March 12 will be reviewed with the total applicant pool for Phase 2 awards. Those grants will be dispersed in early April. If an applicant is not selected

for Phase 1, their application will automatically be considered for Phase 2 awards along with those who apply by March 12.

Technical assistance is available in person, virtually and at the Disaster Recovery Centers. Visit [laregionfund.lacounty.gov](http://laregionfund.lacounty.gov) to apply and access support in multiple languages. All impacted survivors are encouraged to apply.

Contributions for the L.A. Region Small Business and Worker Relief Funds remain open. To donate, visit [lacounty.gov/relief](http://lacounty.gov/relief) and select “worker” or “small business” from the lists. The funds will allow the L.A. Department of Economic Opportunity to provide the immense relief needed for small businesses and workers as they start recovery.

# Erickson files to run for State Senate

■ Councilman seeks to succeed Sen. Allen

BY RANCE COLLINS

West Hollywood City Councilman John Erickson announced on March 4 he is running for the California State Senate. He will be seeking the District 24 seat currently held by Sen. Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica), who will be termed out in 2026. The district includes West Hollywood, as well as Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Century City, Bel Air, Brentwood, the Pacific Palisades, Malibu, Venice, Santa Monica and much of the South Bay.

Erickson said that he decided to run “after much deliberation.”

“Given the outcome of the presidential election, the devastating Jan. 7 fires and the subsequent new world challenges we will face in the coming years, I feel a responsibility to step up to serve the community and the entire district on a greater scale,” he said in a statement. “My experience authoring and passing legislation at the local and state levels – and my service on several important regional bodies – has prepared me to meet the new and unprecedented challenges of the day. By serving in Sacramento, I will be able to expand my work in public safety, combatting homelessness and cre-



photo courtesy of John Erickson

Councilman John Erickson has served on the West Hollywood City Council since 2020.

ating more affordable housing, and fighting climate change in a fact-based, impactful way.”

Erickson was reelected to the City Council in November. During the campaign, several of his opponents accused him of using the City Council as a launching pad for higher office. During a September 2024 forum, candidates were pressed on whether or not they intended to serve a full four-year term, and Erickson said

he did.

He was first elected to the council in 2020. He previously served as an intern for Councilman John Heilman. Until last year, he was vice president of Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, and he recently became the chief of staff at the nonprofit Alliance for a Better Community. He holds a doctorate in American religious history from Claremont Graduate University, from which he also received his master’s degree. He attended undergraduate studies at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, majoring in English and women’s studies.

When asked by the Beverly Press about Erickson’s candidacy, Allen praised the councilman but said he would not be making an endorsement in the race.

“There will be a bunch of people running,” he said. “It’s going to be a crowded race, and I look forward to watching how it all progresses. John certainly will be one of the stronger candidates. I’m pretty friendly with nearly all of the candidates who [are] talking about running, so I’m certainly hopeful that the voters will choose a really good person. I’ve put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into the work, and I hope to pass it on to someone that’s great.”

# WeHo plans series of events for Women’s History Month

The city of West Hollywood will celebrate National Women’s History Month in March with a series of events to recognize and honor women and women’s history.

Through March 22, the globe lanterns above Santa Monica Boulevard will glow purple and gold. A series of street pole banners that commemorate famous American women, civil rights leaders and women’s rights activists will be on display along Santa Monica Boulevard. Additions this year to the banners are two notable women: visual artist, arts activist and community leader Dr. Judith F. Baca and actress, producer and author Jamie Lee Curtis.

West Hollywood City Poet Laureate Jen Cheng will offer her “Writing Strong Women Characters Workshop,” on Saturday, March 8, at 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the West Hollywood Library Community Meeting Room. Admission is free. RSVP required. To register and for information, visit [go.weho.org/poet](http://go.weho.org/poet).

West Hollywood and its Russian-Speaking Advisory Board will host a free program celebrating International Women’s Day on Sunday, March 9, at noon at the Fiesta Hall located at 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. The celebration will feature music, food, dancing, a concert showcasing music composed by talented women artists and a photography exhibit, “40 YEARS IN THE MAKING,” dedicated to the 40th anniversary of West Hollywood. Admission is free. For additional information call (323)848-6826 or email [wehoru-sevents@weho.org](mailto:wehoru-sevents@weho.org).

Also on March 9, the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives, one of the largest archives in the world dedicated to collecting, protecting and preserving lesbian and feminist history and culture, will host an open house from 2-4 p.m. located at 626 N. Robertson Blvd. The event will

feature a silent auction, meet and greet with the archivist, button-making and tours of the collection. Admission is free.

West Hollywood and its Women’s Advisory Board will co-sponsor the annual Herstory Awards and reception, which is presented by the Hollywood Chapter of the National Organization for Women (Hollywood NOW) to honor Yola Dore who has made exceptional contributions to the community and embodies the spirit of feminism. The event will take place on Thursday, March 13, at 7 p.m. at the West Hollywood Aquatic and Recreation Center, located at 625 N. San Vicente Blvd. Admission is free. To RSVP, visit [eventbrite.com/e/herstory-award-presented-by-hollywood-now-tickets-1261294007329](http://eventbrite.com/e/herstory-award-presented-by-hollywood-now-tickets-1261294007329).

The West Hollywood V-DAY and One Billion Rising on Friday, March 14, will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the West Hollywood City Council Chambers/Public Meeting Room. Admission is free, and RSVP is requested by visiting [weho.org/whm](http://weho.org/whm).

“WeHo Reads: Feminism and Fearlessness During Women’s History Month” will be held on Wednesday, March 19, at 6:30 p.m. The event is free and available to watch live on the YouTube WeHo Arts channel. Learn more at [weho.org/wehoreads](http://weho.org/wehoreads).

On Wednesday, March 26, from 6-8 p.m., the 28th Annual West Hollywood Women in Leadership Awards and reception will take place at the Andaz West Hollywood, located at 8401 Sunset Blvd. Admission is \$25. To RSVP, visit [weho.org/whm](http://weho.org/whm).

The Women’s Advisory Board will host “Sexual Healing: Age Positive, Sex Positive,” led by health experts who will discuss reproductive and mental health, menopause and sexual pleasure. The event will be held on Sunday, March 30, at 2 p.m. at the West Hollywood Aquatic and Recreation Center located at 625 N. San Vicente Blvd. Admission is free. To RSVP visit [weho.org/whm](http://weho.org/whm).

A full schedule of West Hollywood events and meetings is available at [weho.org/calendar](http://weho.org/calendar).

## Notable Quotes

“If silence seems to give approval, then remaining silent is cowardly.”

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

Roosevelt is credited with redefining the role of the United States First Lady, a title she held from 1933 until her husband’s death in 1945. Her high-profile advocacy for civil rights and women’s rights led to President Harry Truman, Franklin D. Roosevelt’s successor, to coin her “The First Lady of the World.” She served as the first chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women.

Source: “If You Ask Me” column, September 1944



# Voting opens soon for neighborhood council election

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Elections for Los Angeles’ neighborhood councils are rapidly approaching in April, with community members being asked to vote for candidates in the Mid City West and Greater Wilshire areas.

Neighborhood councils are advisory groups composed of elected community members who consider planning and land-use issues in their respective areas, as well as other community issues such as crime and homelessness, and make recommendations to the city. The neighborhood council elections are being held entirely by mail this year, meaning voters will receive and cast their ballots by mail.

The Mid City West and Greater Wilshire neighborhood council elections are scheduled on Tuesday, April 15. Residents, property owners, business owners and stakeholders who have an interest in the areas can currently request a ballot online from the L.A. City Clerk’s Office, and the city will start mailing ballots out on March 11. The final day to request a vote-by mail ballot is April 7, and bal-

lots must be postmarked by April 15. The Mid City West Neighborhood Council’s general boundaries are La Brea Avenue to the east, Willoughby Avenue and Romaine Street to the north, La Cienega Boulevard and the Beverly Hills and West Hollywood borders to the west, and Olympic and San Vicente boulevards to the south.

Amy Goldenberg, chair of the Mid City West’s Ad Hoc Election Committee, said 82 candidates are running for 36 seats on the council. Mid City West is holding a virtual candidate meet-and-greet session on Thursday, March 6, at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom. Goldenberg said it will not be a debate, but will offer each candidate time to discuss their campaign. The register for the forum, visit [us02web.zoom.us/j/87262801383](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87262801383) and use the meeting ID: 872 6280 1383.

Mid City West is also holding an in-person candidate meet and greet program on Sunday, March 16, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Picnic Pavilion in Pan Pacific Park, 7600 Beverly Blvd. For information, visit [midcitywest.org/calendar](https://midcitywest.org/calendar).

Goldenberg said more candidates are running in 2025 than in previous years and she believes it is in response to people wanting to get more involved in government. Neighborhood council members serve two-year terms.

“A lot of people have been getting involved and showing up at meetings,” Goldenberg said. “People are running because maybe they see a different vision than the board currently has.”

The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council, which runs from La Brea Avenue on the west to approximately Manhattan Place on the east, and Melrose Avenue to the north and Olympic Boulevard on the south, is also planning to hold a candidate forum on a date yet to be scheduled at the end of March. GWNC Board president Conrad Starr said 48 candidates are vying for 21 seats on the council. The deadlines for requesting and mailing in a vote-by-mail ballot for the GWNC election are the same as for Mid City West. People seeking information are encouraged to visit the council’s website at [greaterwilshire.org](https://greaterwilshire.org).

# Maple Counseling provides free mental health support after fires

In response to the devastating wildfires affecting communities across Los Angeles County, Maple Counseling has launched a mental health support initiative to help those impacted by the crisis. Maple Counseling’s Maplemobile recently

traveled to evacuation centers throughout L.A. County, providing critical information about free therapy services available to those in need.

Recognizing the unique stress faced by first responders during

emergencies, Maple Counseling is also offering free therapy to first responders from the Beverly Hills Police Department and Fire Department, as well as their families. Maple Counseling CEO Varina Bleil and board co-vice chair Myra Lurie joined Beverly Hills Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian to announce the initiative.

“Maple Counseling recognizes the immense psychological toll that first responders and their families endured during these fires. By offering these free therapy services, we hope to support those who selflessly dedicate their lives to protecting our community,” Bleil said.

In addition to providing immediate mental health care, Maple Counseling is preparing for the long-term psychological effects of wildfires.

“As immediate needs such as shelter, food and clothing are addressed, we expect to see a growing demand for mental health support in the coming days, weeks and months,” Bleil said. “The emotional toll of these disasters often emerges after basic survival needs are met, and we are here to support the com-



photo courtesy of Maple Counseling

Maple Counseling is providing free therapy to first responders from the BHPD, BHFD and their families.

# L.A. Marathon takes runners through Beverly Hills

The 40th annual Los Angeles Marathon “Stadium to the Stars” will take place on Sunday, March 16. Athletes from all 50 states and more than 67 countries will pass through Beverly Hills on miles 16 and 17 of the route before ending at Avenue of the Stars in Century City.

“We are looking forward to welcoming back the iconic L.A. Marathon to our city next month,” Beverly Hills Mayor Lester Friedman said. “This event brings

our community together in a special way where we can cheer on athletes from around the globe while our visitors and community can enjoy our restaurants and shops after the race.”

Proceeds from the 2025 marathon will go to the McCourt Foundation, an organization dedicated to those affected by health-challenges within the neurology community and beyond.

Major road closures and parking restrictions will be in effect in

Beverly Hills on March 16 from 5 a.m.-1 p.m. and include parts of Doheny Drive, Santa Monica Boulevard, Burton Way, Doheny Drive, Rexford Drive, Rodeo Drive and Wilshire Boulevard. A detour will be in place on the western border of Beverly Hills at Wilshire Boulevard and North Santa Monica Boulevard, as well as at Moreno Drive and South Santa Monica Boulevard, until 5 p.m. Access to all local businesses will be maintained.

Beverly Hills Police Department message boards will direct vehicles around the marathon route. Wider regional closures for the route will be in effect from as early as 3 a.m. until 5 p.m. For access to the 10 Freeway, drivers are advised to take Wilshire Boulevard east to Robertson Boulevard. To access the 405 Freeway, drivers are advised to go west on Olympic Boulevard.

For information, visit [lamarathon.com](https://lamarathon.com) or [beverlyhills.org/marathon](https://beverlyhills.org/marathon). On the day of the marathon, from 5 a.m.-2 p.m., questions regarding Beverly Hills street closures can be directed to the city of Beverly Hills Hotline by calling (310)550-4680.

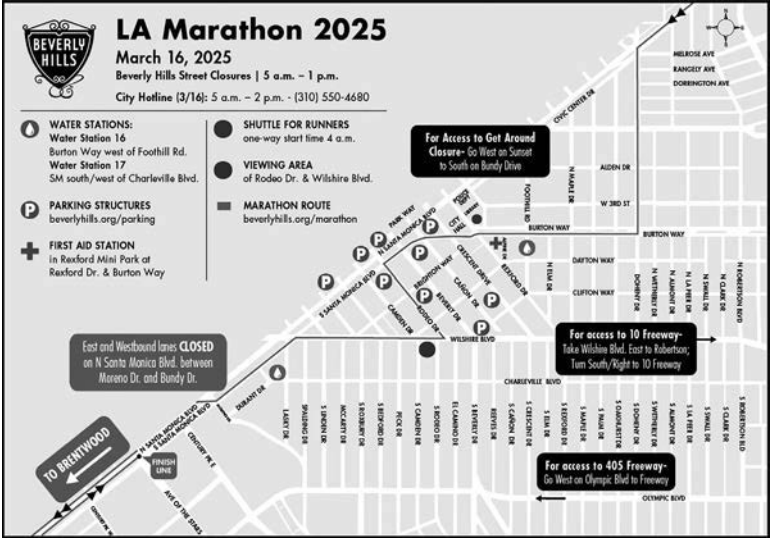


photo courtesy of Women’s March Foundation

The march will begin at Pershing Square and continue to Los Angeles City Hall.

# Activists to march for International Women’s Day on March 8

Women’s March Foundation is calling on all activists, allies and community members to join the International Women’s Day March and Rally on Saturday, March 8, in Downtown Los Angeles. The event will bring together thousands to demand gender equality, resist regressive policies and celebrate progress made in the fight for women’s rights.

“Women are still not equal, and we will not be silent. The war on women is real, driven by a Project 2025 playbook, and we must continue to resist, persist and demand change,” a statement from the foundation read. “International Women’s Day is a day to protest and fight back against policies that threaten our rights, but also a day to celebrate and protect the

freedoms we have left.” The rally will feature activism, speakers, live music and actionable next steps to keep the community engaged and empowered in the ongoing fight for equality.

“No rights have ever been freely given to women. We have always had to fight for them. International Women’s Day was born from labor movements, protests and demands for equality – and in 2025 we carry on that legacy,” said Emiliana Guereca, president of the Women’s March Foundation

The march will begin at 10 a.m. at Pershing Square, 532 S. Olive St., and continue to Los Angeles City Hall.

For information, visit [womensmarchfoundation.org](https://womensmarchfoundation.org).

munity through this process.”

To further extend support, Maple Counseling is offering six free therapy sessions to all individuals directly impacted by the wildfires. Leveraging its 53-year history of training mental health professionals, the organization has mobilized its alumni network and engaged its extended professional community.

To date, 104 licensed therapists have volunteered to provide free therapy sessions, with more joining daily. The Briskin Wilder Welcome

Center serves as the central hub for matching individuals in need with therapists, ensuring efficient and compassionate care.

“Through these efforts, we are reaffirming our commitment to helping the community heal, rebuild and recover. Our goal is to provide accessible, high-quality mental health care to anyone affected by these wildfires,” Bleil added.

For information on free therapy sessions, visit [maplecounseling.org](https://maplecounseling.org) or call the helpline at (310)271-9999.

# BH leaders visit California Delta

Metropolitan Water District delta engineering consultant Curt Schmutte, Beverly Hills Public Works Commission chair Mark Nehoray, MWD director Barry Pressman, Beverly Hills City Councilwoman Mary Wells, Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian and Councilman John Mirisch visited the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta in Oakley, California, on Feb. 22.

The purpose of the Metropolitan

Water District inspection trip, led by Pressman, was for MWD member agency representatives to visit dams, reservoirs, farms and other state water project infrastructure in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and learn more about the complexity and challenges associated with delivering water to Southern California through the Bay Delta Conveyance System.

For information, visit [beverlyhills.org](https://beverlyhills.org).



photo courtesy of the city of Beverly Hills



750ml Wines		
19 Crimes Snoop Cali Red	750ml	9.47
Apothic Red	750ml	6.97
Baron Herzog Cabernet	750ml	10.99
Bartenura Malvasia	750ml	12.99
Ben Ami Chardonnay	750ml	16.99
Bin by Binyamina Cabernet Sauv	750ml	6.97
Bogle Cabernet	750ml	6.97
Bogle Chardonnay	750ml	6.97
Bonanza Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml	16.99
Ch d'Esclans Whispering Angel Rose	750ml	16.97
Coppola Diamond Claret	750ml	13.99
Daou Chardonnay Paso Robles	750ml	13.99
Ferrari-Carano Chardonnay	750ml	17.97
J. Lohr Cabernet Seven Oaks	750ml	13.47
Jeunesse Cabernet	750ml	9.99
Joel Gott Cabernet 815	750ml	12.99
Josh Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml	11.99
Josh Cellars Chardonnay	750ml	11.17
Justin Sauvignon Blanc	750ml	12.97
Kendall Jackson Chardonnay	750ml	9.97
Korbel Brut	750ml	9.97
La Crema Chardonnay Sonoma Coast	750ml	13.97
Lions' Gate Cabernet Judean Hills	750ml	19.99
Matua Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough	750ml	9.99
Menage a Trois Red	750ml	6.97
Moet & Chandon Imperial Brut	750ml	41.97
Oyster Bay Sauvignon Blanc	750ml	9.97
Psagot Sinai	750ml	30.99
Roederer Estate Brut	750ml	21.97
Starborough Sauvignon Blanc	750ml	9.99
Stella Rosa Stella Black	750ml	9.97
The Prisoner Cabernet Sauvignon	750ml	44.49
Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label Brut	750ml	55.97
Whitehaven Sauvignon Blanc	750ml	14.97
Yarden Mt Hermon Red	750ml	16.99

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Absolut 1.75L		20.99
Angel's Envy Bourbon	750ml	38.99
Aperol Liqueur	750ml	22.49
Basil Hayden Bourbon	750ml	31.99
Buchanan's 12 Yr	750ml	23.99
Bulleit Bourbon 1.75L		41.99
Cazadores Reposado Tequila	750ml	21.99
Cointreau	750ml	30.99
Colonel E.H. Taylor Single Barrel	750ml	91.99
Don Julio Anejo Tequila	750ml	53.99
Don Julio Blanco Tequila	750ml	36.99
Espolon Blanco Tequila	750ml	22.99
Glenlivet 12 Yr	750ml	31.29
Glenlivet 18 Yr	750ml	145.59
Gran Centenario Anejo Tequila	750ml	23.99
Hendrick's Gin	750ml	24.99
High West A Midwinter Nights Dram	750ml	174.99
Hornitos Reposado Tequila 1.75L		26.99
Jack Daniels Black 1.75L		30.49
Jameson Irish Whiskey 1.75L		38.99
Jim Beam Bourbon 1.75L		20.99
Johnnie Walker Blue	750ml	175.99
Kahlua	750ml	19.99
Maestro Doble Diamante	750ml	29.49
Malibu Coconut Rum 1.75L		18.29
Patron Silver	750ml	35.99
SKYY Vodka 1.75L		17.99
Skrewball Peanut Butter Whiskey	750ml	17.49
Smirnoff Vodka 1.75L		14.99
Teremana Blanco	750ml	24.49
Teremana Reposado	750ml	28.99
WhistlePig 12 Yr Old World Rye	750ml	134.99
Woodford Reserve Double Oaked	750ml	38.99
Yamazaki Distiller's Reserve	750ml	104.99

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Carmel King David  
Red Sacramental  
Israel 750ml  
**8.49**  
(+CRV)



Butter Chardonnay  
California 750ml  
**12.97**  
(+CRV)



Kim Crawford  
Sauvignon Blanc  
New Zealand  
750ml  
**11.49**  
(+CRV)



Santa Margherita  
Pinot Grigio Italy  
750ml  
**17.97**  
(+CRV)



La Marca Prosecco  
Italy 750ml  
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# 'Today is Your Day ... You're Off and Away'

My son Smartacus calls from college to report that he's been stuck at an Oregon crosswalk for 15 minutes, waiting for drivers to let him cross.

I can imagine him, in full Erskine mode, first bemused, then dumb-founded, then appalled, then bemused all over again. Such is the usual emotional progression of my twinkle-eyed Irish offspring.

I've always taught my children to be kind but not meek, to approach tough intersections in their lives with a bit of confidence. Not quite bravado, too much of that already. I loathe L.A. bling and bravado. But neither can you march through life timid and scared.

Update: Smartacus reports that



he eventually wiggled through the college town intersection, darting here, waltzing there, spin-moving to the other side of the street, ending up safe and smarter about life than he was before the intersection.

And a much better ballroom dancer!



March is the month for favorite books and read-a-thons.

I asked Smartacus whether his big state university would be having any read-a-thons in March, like they're doing at elementary schools across L.A., celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday, the written word and boot-leg gin.

"To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world," is one of my favorite Seussian sayings.

A small quirk in the great author's bio: When Theodore Geisel was at Dartmouth, he was thrown off the student magazine for sampling some illegal hooch. Subversive even then, he continued contributing to the humor mag under "Seuss," his mother's maiden name. Eventually, he would submit all his work as Dr. Seuss, America's surgeon general of nervy playfulness. He would become Shakespeare for 10-year-olds, writing in is trademark anapestic meter, da-da DUM, da-da DUM, da-da DUM...

According to Smartacus, his school is not having any sort of read-a-thon, which I find sad. At the very least, colleges should provide a big box of clothes and props that the students could wear to honor Seuss - crooked top hats and red leggings, a celebration of life and individuality. I mean, the theater kids would do it, right?

Let's move on.

As I've always said, there is too much convention in American life. We claim to celebrate individuality, even as so many flock to chain restaurants and subdivisions.

I'm a bit Seussian, a tad quirky. I celebrate barkeeps the way Longfellow worshipped church bells. I prefer to sit in the backs of

planes. On a double-decker bus, I will always climb up to the open-air top, even if sleet puts more pink in my forehead.

By the way, a worthy way to tour L.A. with out-of-town guests is to hop aboard one of those double-decker buses for a spin through Hollywood, Beverly Hills, The Grove, the Observatory.

As we all know, Beverly Hills is a soft and pillowy paradise, warm and welcoming to outsiders, tasteful and morally pure. But never try to park there, not in a zillion years. And who wants to drive down the Sunset Strip at rush hour, which it always is in Los Angeles, from sunup to sundown, then a few hours after that.

So, what I suggest when out-of-towners visit this Easter: Schlepp your way to the big parking garage at Hollywood and Highland, hop aboard one of the bright red tour buses and sit back and enjoy L.A.

In March, L.A. smells like breakfast cereal.

If you're feeling frisky, hop off at the Beverly Hills Hotel, head to the Polo Lounge for the most-memorable Bloody Mary of your life, then Uber home. Or stop at that little Culver City dive where the Munchkins drank and misbehaved between scenes of "The Wizard of Oz" (it's called The Backstage, and it's glorious).

In L.A., mild misbehavior will always have a place.

In conclusion: Need a doctor? Try Dr. Seuss. He's better than my primary-care physician, Dr. Steve, whom I now pay in Crypto and weed. No judgment. He's an individual addressing individual needs.

Meanwhile, is the written word



photo by Chris Erskine  
Want to make a child light up? Read to him or her.

medicinal in any way? Hugely. Not mine, necessarily. My writing is more like a juicy burger, where the grilled onions smush out from under the bun and you keep poking them back in with your thumb. If you eat a cheeseburger the right way, it's similar to making love.

I never found love that much fun. But I do adore reading, and melted words, and hanging out with weird, quirky people.

You, for instance. You are literature. We all are.

*Final call for donations to our family compassion fund, which this year is aiding fire victims. If you'd like to give, please go to [lcpccparented.org/give](https://lcpccparented.org/give). Click on the Erskine Compassion Fund, which honors my late wife and son. Any amount helps. If you prefer, you can mail a check to La Cañada Presbyterian Church, 616 Foothill Blvd., La Cañada, CA 91011. Thank you.*



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# WeHo council approves expanded use of Pacific Design Center

■ Amendment could help fill complex’s vacancies

BY RANCE COLLINS

In recent years, the Pacific Design Center in West Hollywood has sat largely vacant. The mammoth complex, with its striking multi-story red, green and blue buildings, is 1.6 million square feet and includes showrooms for interior designers, decorators, architects and artists.

Its first section, known as the “Blue Whale” was completed in 1975, with the green and red buildings added in 1988 and 2013, respectively. For many years, a tan building housed the West Coast home of the Museum of Contemporary Art, though the space closed in 2019.

On March 3, the West Hollywood City Council approved a request from the center to amend its specific plan, with an aim to reinvigorate the PDC. The plan

expands which tenants can occupy the vacant spaces and eliminates square footage requirements for design showrooms. Other amendments include expanding the potential use of two restaurant spaces in the buildings, currently required as banquet facilities.

“The new PDC Specific Plan will help activate the space,” Councilwoman Lauren Meister said. “It’s been a ghost town for far too long. The more people who work at the PDC, the more people enjoying our coffee shops, restaurants and bars. A win-win for the city.”

Councilman John Heilman also praised the amendment.

“Without the amendment, the PDC would be required to leave more than 100,000 square feet empty,” Heilman said. “That’s not good for the PDC, nor is it good for the city. In exchange for the amendment, the city is permitted to hold additional events at the PDC and the PDC will provide additional parking for the public at nighttime and during special events. The PDC is an important architectural land-

mark. We need to make sure that it is fully occupied and thriving. The amendment will help existing businesses in the PDC expand. It will also help attract new businesses and jobs to our city.”

West Hollywood has often used the PDC space for city events, including in November when it used its Silver Screen Theater for the city’s 40th anniversary celebration.

“The PDC is a huge space and with more opportunities for activation between the new uses and the increased number of events, we are helping to energize this iconic landmark and better serve the needs of the area,” Mayor Chelsea Byers said.

Current occupants of the PDC include Cooper-Pacific Kitchens, the David Sutherland Showroom, Mosaic Floral Design, Raoul Textile Library, Tai Ping Carpets and William Haines Designs. A recently-opened ground floor coffee shop, Community Goods, has become popular with residents. During the March 3 meeting, the city approved temporary 15-minute parking for the circle drive on Melrose Avenue to facilitate the store’s traffic. The Airstream-based Silver Bullet Express, with simple breakfast and lunch options, also operates on the campus.



photo by Rance Collins

The Pacific Design Center’s “Blue Whale” opened in 1975.

# Schwartz appointed as chair of JCF Board of Trustees

■ Foundation gives funds to temples affected by wildfires

The Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles has announced that longtime trustee Mark N. Schwartz will serve as chair of the foundation’s Board of Trustees. Schwartz, an entrepreneur, business leader and philanthropist, succeeds Evan Schlessinger, who served as chair for the past four years.

Schwartz has been engaged with the foundation for 25 years, contributing financial acumen and strategic expertise to grantmaking initiatives and investment management. He has served in multiple leadership capacities, including on foundation grants, executive and finance committees. As an experienced entrepreneur with a background in venture capital and business leadership, Schwartz brings a wealth of experience that will strengthen the foundation’s focus on innovative philanthropy and impactful grantmaking.



photo courtesy of the JCF  
Mark N. Schwartz

our mission forward, ensuring that we continue to make a meaningful and lasting impact in our Jewish community and beyond,” Jewish Community Foundation president and CEO Aaron Lerner said.

The foundation has been at the forefront of Jewish philanthropy in Los Angeles for more than 70 years and recently embarked on an effort to provide financial aid to synagogues and congregations affected by the devastating Palisades and Eaton fires. Working in conjunction

with the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles, the foundation awarded more than \$400,000 in combined funding to 26 synagogues whose members live throughout Los Angeles. Synagogue leaders will distribute the funds to best support congregants. More than 1,000 Jewish families lost homes during the fires, and 50 Jewish-owned businesses were destroyed.

“This collaborative effort is just one of the ways the foundation is ensuring our community institutions can direct much-needed support to families and individuals who have suffered significant losses,” Lerner said. “By working closely with our community’s synagogues and JFEDLA, we can ensure that support extends directly to those facing tremendous loss.”

“This strategically earmarked funding will directly help members of our greater Los Angeles community who were displaced or severely impacted by the wildfires receive urgent financial assistance,” JFEDLA president and CEO Rabbi Noah Farkas added. “We are here for all of Los Angeles at this time, Jews and non-Jews alike, as we continue to provide aid to a wide swath of recovery efforts.”

For a complete list of grant recipients, visit [jcfla.org](http://jcfla.org).



photo courtesy of the city of Beverly Hills

## Beverly Hills honors second councilwoman

At the Beverly Hills City Council meeting on March 4, Councilman Craig Corman, Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian, Mayor Lester Friedman, Councilman John Mirisch and Councilwoman Mary Wells honored Donna Ellman Garber, the second woman elected to serve on the Beverly Hills City Council, for her steadfast dedication to the city of Beverly Hills as mayor in 1976 and 1981, her distinguished record of public service as council member for 12 years and for being a longtime Beverly Hills resident. Garber will be celebrating her 100th birthday this year.



## Niche Pet Diets: The Raw Deal

Raw food diets have recently gained popularity among health-conscious pet owners. I’m going to cut to the chase here – **raw pet diets are foolish**. These diets carry unnecessary risks that outweigh any perceived benefits. In clinics, I frequently see significant illnesses in dogs and cats from even the highest-end raw food diets. Virtually all raw meat harbors harmful bacteria like *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, *Listeria*, *Clostridium*, *Campylobacter*, *Yersinia*, and *Vibrio* – the only question is whether there are enough colony-forming units to make your pet severely ill. Raw meat can also contain dangerous mold and parasites such as *Toxoplasma* and *Trichinella*. Cooking food virtually eliminates these pathogens. Nutritionally, raw diets can also lead to deficiencies in taurine, vitamin D, and calcium, while excessive fat-soluble vitamins can cause toxicity.

Many assume that because raw diets are expensive, they must be superior. This is a classic example of Price Perception Bias in pet food—where cost is mistaken for quality and nutritional value without an underlying scientific basis. With dog food, price often reflects exclusivity rather than genuine nutritional or health benefits. Exclusivity doesn’t make pets live longer, but it can definitely make them sick.

But wait – someone must be regulating these raw pet food companies, right? Unfortunately, no. In the U.S., the **FDA** monitors pet food safety but generally only acts with recalls after pets become ill. While **AAFCO** provides nutritional guidelines, they are voluntary, and many niche diets avoid audits. The **USDA** inspects raw meat but does not require pre-market approval. So who ensures raw diets are researched and safe? No one. Scary.

**Conclusion**

What do I recommend? Avoid raw pet food for dogs and cats of all ages. Growing animals face even greater risks – never feed juvenile pets niche raw diets. There are many safer alternatives, including many cooked diets verified by veterinary nutritionists. Trends come and go, but good nutrition is fur-ever.

**Next week: Dangerous toxins for your pup.**

**About Dr. Ezra Ameis**

Dr. Ezra Ameis has been a veterinarian for over a decade, specializing in Emergency and Urgent Care medicine. He independently owns Paw Priority in West Hollywood, which provides general practice, urgent care and acupuncture.



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## '44' brings absurdist hope to uncertain times

BY RANCE COLLINS

It wasn't so very long ago that the whole vibe of America was decidedly different. Sure, the vibration of something concerning might've been felt if you were paying close enough attention, but most days went by without any serious worries. Egg prices? Stable. Nuclear war? Not gonna happen. Russia? Not a fan.

This idyllic time, just a decade in the past, was the quasi-Camelot of the Obama years. Political opinions aside, the former first family had a certain *je ne sais quoi* – and that doesn’t even begin to broach the historic nature of their very existence. “44: The Musical” is a satire of this period, so distant in memory yet tangible in heart.

Playing through March 23 at the Kirk Douglas Theatre, "44" is not striving for exact accuracy. It is instead playing off that feeling the Obama years conjured up, encapsulated in his "Hope" slogan of the 2008 campaign. With a powerhouse, one-woman Greek chorus called the "Voice of the people" (Summer Nicole Greer) serving as an introduction for "M.F. Obama" (you can figure out what M.F. stands for), we start with Barack Obama's 2004 Democratic National Convention speech, which propelled him from a little-junior senator to a presidential frontrunner.

This is where Joe Biden comes in, serving as the story's absurd, hilarious narrator, telling the story as he remembers it. Chad Doreck is Biden – he tells us his younger appearance is because he's "Benjamin Buttoning." The presence of ever-delightful, naïve Doreck is what keeps the absurdist humor flowing at a steady pace. T.J. Wilkins – affecting and reverent as Obama – is the straight man for Doreck's buffoonery.

Not that Biden is the only over-the-top character in the piece. There's Lindsey Graham (Jeff Sumner), accentuated by a parasol. There's a pin-up girl version of Sarah Palin (Jane Papageorge). There's Mitch McConnell (Larry

Cedar), complete with a pony tail and a bad attitude. Of course, Ted Cruz (Michael Uribes) makes appearances, too – not that anyone wants him to. Together, they make up a group determined to keep white conservatives in power. Their token Black man, and yes that's exactly how they refer to him, is Herman Cain (Dino Shorté) – who figures into the story (in a way that, unfortunately, does not match reality) later.

Within the Obama world, we have the reluctant First Lady Michelle (Shanice), who snaps her husband back to reality whenever necessary, in addition to creating some rather steamy scenes outside the Oval Office. Hillary Clinton (Jenna Pastuszek) is present, too, getting one of the best of the musical's many 11 o'clock numbers, "My Turn."

The current guy in the White House never figures in. This show stays squarely focused on the events of the Obama's first term. Songs like "Filibusters," "We Got Bin Laden," and "Brother Abe Lincoln" help illustrate that period between 2008-12.

The only truly serious section comes when the 2012 Sandy Hook school shooting occurs. The Republicans offer “thoughts and prayers,” and Obama’s famous use of “Amazing Grace” from the Charleston shooting memorial is referenced. I was moved, and I wondered how they would smoothly get things back to the farcical tone – but I needn’t worry. “44” wants you to smile. It wants you to laugh. The underscore of history does remain ever present, as the resistance to and the importance of racial equality serves as the throughline – the humor has heft to it, as the best social commentary always does.

I imagine that the 2023 Los Angeles engagement of the musical played differently. Under a different administration, the reflection on the Obama years must've been nostalgic and heartwarming. Seeing this now, it feels more wistful – almost like a fantasy. The ridiculous tone

of the piece feels appropriate, largely because the possibility of an Obama feels like a distant dream.

Even as the boisterous audience – who is encouraged by Biden to clap, shout, cheer and sing out – laughed and applauded, I found tears forming. Does this kind of American dream still exist?

And that's ultimately the hope of "44." That it can be performed now is proof that the dream is not dead.

Filing out of the theater, I whispered, "Yes, we can."

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is located at 9820 Washington Blvd., Culver City. For tickets and information, visit [centertheatregroup.org](http://centertheatregroup.org).



photo courtesy of Center Theatre Group

The campaign of “Hope” is making a musical comeback at the Kirk Douglas Theatre.

## WeHo Reads series returns


The city of West Hollywood is launching the 2025 WeHo Reads series beginning with “Feminism and Fearlessness,” an online program on Wednesday, March 19, at 6:30 p.m.

WeHo Reads is West Hollywood's literary series, presenting new, diverse and notable writers to the community since 2013. "Feminism and Fearlessness" is being held in conjunction with Women's History Month, offering a literary reading and panel discussion exploring feminism and bold creative expression. Four writers – each with a unique voice and perspective – will discuss their artistic journeys, inspirations and how their work uplifts communities and advocates for social justice. The event will feature Katya Apekina, Olga García Echeverría,

Angelina Sáenz and Kate Stayman-London.

The next event in the series is “WeHo Reads: Richard Blanco and Kim Dower” on Wednesday, April 16, at 6:30 p.m., online. Join an inspiring National Poetry Month discussion between two celebrated poets whose work explores the intersection of identity, culture and human connection. The event will feature Blanco and Dower in conversation and will open with a poem by current West Hollywood city poet laureate Jen Cheng. The dynamic exchange between two literary luminaries will offer insights into the transformative power of poetry and its ability to inspire personal and collective change.

The events are free to attend; RSVPs requested by visiting [who.org/wehoreads](http://who.org/wehoreads).



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Letters to the Editor

BHUSD Board of Education is ‘out of control’

Re “ACLU responds to BHUSD controversy; Bregy resigns,” Feb. 27 issue

Beverly Press does it again! Congratulations on excellent reporting of this extremely important story unfolding within the secretive Beverly Hills Board of Education.

Where there should be transparency, there is illicit clandestine secret actions and discussion by the board. Where there is abusive behavior of high school students by lead administrators, there is an “attitude” of indignation by the board.

Where parents and students come to voice their comment and opinion at their abuse of civil rights and speech, this board cuts public speaking time and removes speakers who they know in advance are controversial. Where this board should be responsive and proactive to the parents, students and residents who elected them, this board operates independently, violating students’ rights, blacking out negative news transmission of their own

student operated KBEV television broadcast and manipulating the Brown Act, which was instituted for the very purpose of protecting the rights of citizens against exactly these specific violations by government.

This board, with the exception of board member Russell Stuart, who was the only one to respond to the out of control spending, is out of control and needs to resign!

Ilona Sherman  
Beverly Hills

Kudos to Tabor Brewster and the Beverly Press for your up to the minute, thorough and continuing coverage of this ongoing saga involving the First Amendment, Mr. Carey, Dr. Bregy’s resignation, the shocking interrogations of minors by Dr. Horvath, the Board of Education and the district’s mounting legal battles.

Your reporting keeps the B.H. community informed on these crucial issues, and we truly appreciate your commitment to transparency. Please keep it up; we’re all reading!

Robbie Curtis  
Beverly Hills

I do not live in the Beverly Hills School District, but I am writing to give you the highest compliments for your ongoing and outstanding coverage of the multiple controversies at Beverly Hills High School. Devoting so much column space to these stories is a public service of the highest value.

If not for your newspaper, we wouldn’t know what was going on (I’m looking at you, L.A. Times!). Please continue to follow these important developments as they progress.

Jon Merritt  
Hillsboro Avenue  
Los Angeles

Beverly Hills opposes building more housing

Re “Beverly Hills approves changes to development application process,” Feb. 27

What really happened is the planning director had to go to the City Council to ask for permission to follow state law. That’s how adamantly opposed this city leader-

ship is to building housing.

Andrew Solomon  
West Hollywood

Zbur’s AB 1333 is misguided

Although Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur’s Assembly Bill 1333 has received both support and criticism, I believe it is fair to add further criticism of Zbur’s patently criminal-friendly legislative activities.

To summarize AB 1333, Zbur mandates harsh legal penalties for currently law-abiding constituents if a criminal attacker dies as a result of the constituent protecting home, family or the constituent’s own personal safety. And AB 1333 is Zbur’s third attempt to place the safety and security of criminals above the safety and security of Californians and their families. First, in the 2024 legislative session, Zbur tried to block a law that increased penalties for child sex-trafficking. Next, he attempted to prevent Californians from voting on Proposition 36. Zbur’s legislative machinations did not dissuade

voters from approving the proposition, which toughened penalties for retail theft and drug abuse.

And now, in the early days of the 2025 session, Zbur has authored and introduced AB 1333. Zbur reckons severe legal penalties against constituents protecting home, family or personal safety are appropriate because the constituent should have run away.

Perhaps worse, following explosive and well-deserved backlash, Zbur made the preposterous claim that AB 1333 was not intended to criminalize self-defense or defense of one’s family or home, but to thwart “wannabe vigilantes.” Meanwhile, a supporting group lauds the proposal for punishing “white supremacists.” But the actual wording Zbur chose in AB 1333 specifically criminalizes “defense of habitation” and does not mention vigilantism, hate crimes or victims’ race, creed or national origin.

All in all, Zbur has demonstrated a clear pattern of siding with criminals through his legislative manipulations and verbal duplicity. Apropos of the upcoming baseball season: three strikes and you’re out.

Peter DiChellis  
Santa Monica

Metro meeting details work at Beverly Hills subway stations

Join Metro for an in-person update on the D Line Extension Project on Wednesday, March 12, at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Gallery at Beverly Hills City Hall, 455 N. Rexford Drive. The meeting will focus on the Wilshire/La Cienega and Wilshire/Rodeo subway stations, including construction timelines, project milestones and how the stations will enhance transit access. The first segment of the D Line Extension Project from Wilshire/Western to Wilshire/La Cienega is scheduled to open this fall.

Street restoration work is ongoing in March around the Wilshire/Western, Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire/Fairfax and Wilshire/La Cienega subway stations. At the eastern end of the pro-

ject, work is occurring at street level near Wilshire/Western. Wilshire Boulevard will be reduced to two lanes in each direction between Oxford Avenue and Saint Andrews Place.

At the Wilshire/La Brea station, lane closures will be in place on Wilshire Boulevard between Sycamore Avenue and Detroit Street, and on La Brea Avenue between Sixth and Eighth streets. Wilshire Boulevard and La Brea Avenue may be reduced to a single lane in each direction on weekdays from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.-7 p.m., and on weekends from 6 a.m.-7 p.m.

Through March, a K-rail work zone is in place on Wilshire Boulevard between Courtyard

Place and Masselin Avenue. Wilshire Boulevard is reduced to two lanes in each direction between Ridgely Drive and Curson Avenue, and left turns from westbound Wilshire Boulevard to southbound Courtyard Place are prohibited.

At Wilshire/Fairfax, a K-rail work zone is in place in the middle lanes of Wilshire Boulevard between Fairfax and Spaulding avenues. Wilshire Boulevard is reduced to two lanes in each direction east of the intersection. The crosswalks along Wilshire Boulevard are maintained at Spaulding Avenue, Ogden Drive and Fairfax Avenue.

Through March 17, major demobilization work will continue daily starting at 7 a.m. in the Gale Staging Yard at the northwest corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Gale Drive. Sound mitigation measures will be in place when heavy equipment is in use.

From March 10-30, intermittent closures will be in place on North Hamilton Drive at Wilshire Boulevard and on the east sidewalk on Hamilton Drive. Access to businesses on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard will be maintained from San Vicente Boulevard and North



photo by Edwin Folven

Preparations are ongoing near the Wilshire/Rodeo station, where Wilshire Boulevard will be closed for three weeks beginning on March 17.

Hamilton Drive.

Metro is planning a three-week full closure of Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills beginning on March 17 to complete deck removal and street restoration for the Wilshire/Rodeo station. Wilshire Boulevard will be closed from just west of Crescent Drive to a point just east of El Camino

Drive. Detour routes include Century Park East and Robertson, Olympic and Santa Monica boulevards.

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.

Signals installed to make Melrose Avenue safer

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation has installed new traffic signals at Melrose and Genesee avenues to enhance safety and traffic flow. The traffic signal was activated on Feb. 19 at the intersection, which previously had marked crosswalks but no signal. The LADOT installed a full traffic

signal in all directions and marked the street with bright yellow stripes to improve visibility in the crosswalk, near Fairfax High School. The improvements are part of a streetscape improvement project to make it safer and easier to walk, bike and drive in the Melrose area.



photo by Edwin Folven

The new traffic controls at Melrose and Genesee avenues include signal lights in all four directions and brightly marked crosswalks.

LADWP offers online resource for water quality testing in fire zone

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has launched an interactive Water Quality Restoration Dashboard to provide essential updates and information for residents affected by the “Do Not Drink” notice in effect in most portions of Pacific Palisades and adjacent LADWP service areas.

“As customers throughout Pacific Palisades begin the recovery process and our water system staff work to flush, test the water and work to lift the ‘Do Not Drink’ notice in effect in the area, this new online tool puts timely and transparent information at our customers’ fingertips,” LADWP CEO

and chief engineer Janisse Quiñones said.

Customers in the affected areas can use the dashboard to locate their address on an interactive map and determine their corresponding water service zone. For added clarity, the dashboard specifies each zone’s current restoration status and provides preliminary test results and progress updates for testing in each zone. Residents can easily check if their address is within the impacted area.

The online tool also identifies each step of the restoration process and how the LADWP is working with regulators to meet standards. Property owners can access updat-

ed health-based water quality testing data by zone.

The LADWP is working with the California State Water Resources Control Board’s Division of Drinking Water to systematically flush, clean and test the water system in the affected areas. A rigorous and thorough process of sampling and retesting ensures that water meets all regulatory quality standards before the “Do Not Drink” notice is lifted.

Residents are reminded that the “Do Not Drink” notice remains in effect for impacted areas and bottled water should be used for drinking, food preparation, brushing teeth and making ice. Complimentary bottled water is available at designated LADWP distribution locations. For information and to use the Water Quality Restoration Dashboard, visit ladwp.com/palisadeswq.



RESTAURANT NEWS

New breakfast items arrive at Everytable

Everytable, the social enterprise on a mission to make nutritious food accessible to all, is adding two new bold favorites for breakfast, lunch or dinner: pollo asado with seasoned rice and chorizo sunrise scramble.

The pollo asado is achote-roasted chicken, marinated in a blend of aromatic spices and roasted to perfection. Served over cilantro-seasoned rice, with creamy refried beans and tender sautéed calabacitas – a vibrant mix of zucchini, corn, red peppers, and tomatoes – it is finished with a bold salsa roja. The Mexican-inspired meal brings together rich, authentic flavors in every bite.

Chorizo sunrise scramble is seasoned turkey chorizo and soft scrambled Vital Farms eggs over a hearty potato hash, served with black beans and fresh avocado salsa verde.

For information, visit [everytable.com](http://everytable.com). Locations include 5164 Wilshire Blvd. and 7288 W. Sunset Blvd.

St. Patty’s is extra lucky at STK

Get lucky at STK Steakhouse in honor of St. Patrick’s Day to enjoy \$6 lil’ corned beef sliders with tater tots and \$9 Leprechaun Stiletto during happy hour from Friday, March 14, through Friday, March 21, from 3-6 p.m. Lil’ corned beef sliders are also available for lunch, dinner, takeout and delivery. Pricing for dine-in is \$26 for two sliders, while takeout and delivery is \$59 for 6 sliders.

In addition, STK is launching a limited-time seafood menu to celebrate the flavors of spring. As spring approaches, STK invites guests to indulge in the freshest flavors of the season with The Bounty from the Seven Seas – a limited-time menu showcasing the best in seafood, available from March 5-April 17. Whether a seafood aficionado or simply looking to elevate the dining experience, the exclusive offering delivers bold flavors and innovative pairings that

are sure to impress.

To view the full menu and make reservations, visit [stksteakhouse.com](http://stksteakhouse.com) or call (310)659-3535. STK Steakhouse is located at 930 Hilgard Ave.

Limited-time sandwich unveiled at Dog Haus

Dog Haus is stacking up bold flavors with an irresistible collaboration that takes comfort food to the next level. The award-winning craft casual brand, known for its over-the-top creations, is once again teaming up with food innovator and social media star Josh Elkin to unveil a jaw-dropping new offering: the Big Hac – available for a limited time through March 31.

The next-level sandwich layers six ounces of Angus beef, smashed, grilled and chopped with melty white American cheese, stacked with crisp lettuce, pickles, onions and Dog Haus’ signature secret sauce – all sandwiching a grilled cheese and a toasted Big Marty’s sesame seed bun. It’s a flavor-packed masterpiece that pairs perfectly with an ice-cold lager.



photo courtesy of the Taste Awards

The Taste Awards celebrate the best in food-related entertainment.

Taste Awards to be held March 10

Now in its wax anniversary 16th year, the Taste Awards are the premier awards celebrating the year’s best in food, fashion, health, travel and lifestyle programs in film, television, online and streaming video, podcasts, radio and photography.

This year’s show, reception and ceremony will take place on March 10 at the Writers Guild Theater, located at 135 S. Doheny Drive. Portions of this event will be filmed for broadcast on various PBS-affiliate public television stations across the United States starting in Spring 2025. For tickets, visit [thetasteawards.com/tickets](http://thetasteawards.com/tickets).

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For information, visit [doghaus.com](http://doghaus.com). Dog Haus has several Los Angeles locations, including 615 N. Western Ave.

Nobu brings its starry magic

Tucked into a row of restaurants and shops on the busy La Cienega Boulevard is Nobu Los Angeles, Nobu Malibu’s unassuming sister that has remained a hidden gem in the local dining scene for over 15 years. Open for dinner nightly starting at 6 p.m., Nobu Los Angeles offers the signature Nobu experience to each guest, ensuring that expectations are not only met, but exceeded by the team’s attention to detail, menu curation based on preference and ability to make special moments even more unique. With a central location that is accessible to locals and tourists alike (plus a crowd that is no less glamorous), Nobu Los Angeles provides a go-to destination for date nights, anniversaries, business dinners and special occasions.

In the coming weeks, Nobu Los Angeles will roll out new programming including Tanoshi Hour

(happy hour) and live entertainment. They also recently debuted a new catering menu, which offers sushi platters as well as Nobu family-style set menus that can serve party sizes of 4-5 (small) or 8-10 (large).

For information, visit [noburestaurants.com](http://noburestaurants.com) or call (310)657-5711. Nobu Los Angeles is located at [noburestaurants.com](http://noburestaurants.com).

Find a pot of gold worth 33 Taps

This St. Patrick’s Day weekend at 33 Taps, find green beer on tap, Jameson shot specials, and on Monday, March 17, play “Find the Leprechaun” for an opportunity to win a pot of gold (aka a 33 Taps gift card). At all 33 Taps locations, one mini leprechaun will be hidden around each restaurant. If a guest finds it, snaps a photo and shares it on their Instagram story, tagging @33taps, they’ll win a 33 Taps gift card. For information, visit [eatdrink33.com](http://eatdrink33.com). 33 Taps locations include 8941 Santa Monica Blvd. in West Hollywood, 9739 Culver Blvd. in Culver City, 3725 W. Sunset Blvd. in Silver Lake and 1240 S. Figueroa St. in Downtown L.A.

TOMA joins ‘The Hideaway’

Sofia Vergara and her son, Manolo Gonzalez Vergara, are bringing their brand, TOMA, to The Hideaway in Beverly Hills, offering guests a taste of their delicious, hand-crafted empanadas.

Diners at The Hideaway can enjoy four varieties of TOMA empanadas: beef, cheese and onion, vegan, and a decadent chocolate hazelnut empanada for dessert. Inspired by their Latin American heritage, the empanadas feature bold flavors and high-quality ingredients, making them a perfect addition to the restaurant’s elevated Mexican menu.

Known for its stylish, vibrant ambiance, The Hideaway is the exclusive Beverly Hills destination to experience TOMA’s signature empanadas. Guests can now enjoy these flavorful, made-to-share bites alongside their favorite dishes and cocktails.



photo courtesy of TOMA

Sofia Vergara’s son Manolo Gonzalez Vergara partnered with his mother to launch TOMA empanadas.

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# Farmers Market lifts up female merchants

In honor of International Women’s Day on March 8, The Original Farmers Market is shining a spotlight on the incredible women who have made a lasting impact on the local community. These inspiring female merchants are at the heart of the market, each bringing their own unique craft, flavors and stories to this beloved L.A. institution.

Frances Tario first joined Dupar’s Restaurant in 2004, and she has since become the owner of the 87-year-old Third Street staple. With St. Patrick’s Day around the corner, Tario has whipped up some ‘luck of the Irish’ specials, like Lucky Charms hotcakes and shakes, Key Lime pie, and of course, corned beef, served from March 10-17. Easter treats and specials will be offered soon.

Virginia Jadidy, a Los Angeles native, has been connected to The Original Farmers Market for her entire life. Her father opened Feed Rite Pet Shop at the market in 1943, a family business that thrived for nearly 60 years. In 1994, Virginia and her husband continued the family legacy by launching By Candlelight, a beloved shop that

has been a market staple ever since.

One of the newest merchants at the Market, April Tayrien, opened her first brick-and-mortar boba tea shop, Figure 8 Tea Project, in October 2024 after building a following through pop-ups with her husband, James. Originally from Temecula, she was on the path to a legal career before pursuing her passion for handcrafted boba.

Lilly Kipper, daughter of current store owner Don Kipper, proudly continues her family’s legacy at Kip’s, a beloved market store since 1956. Balancing her role in the family business with life as a new mom, she cherishes both her time at Kip’s and raising her toddler at home.

Katy Strouk, a second-generation Californian, built a career in model management before joining her husband Stephane in their business at The Original Farmers Market nearly 20 years ago. Now, she oversees Monsieur Marcel Gourmet Market & Bistro and Maison, a home store, where she curates thoughtfully selected finds, blending her passion for discovery with her role as a proud mom to daugh-

ters Roxanne and Josephine.

Born and raised in Los Angeles with a rich Armenian heritage, Jasmine Chatallion and her husband Sam bring vibrant Middle Eastern flavors at Mediterranean Market. As a working mother with two young children, Chatallion is deeply rooted in her family’s culinary legacy and is connected to Moises Aroyan, longtime owner of Moishe’s restaurant at the Market.

Kamila Sudnicka, along with her husband and three children, co-own Stara, a true family-run business. Originally from Wrocław, Poland, where they ran a restaurant, they moved to Los Angeles nearly five years ago and quickly noticed the city’s lack of traditional Polish dining options. Inspired by their heritage and love for authentic cuisine, they created Stara to bring the flavors of Poland to their new home.

Visit these stores and help honor the incredible women that make The Original Farmer’s Market, located at 6333 W. Third St., the historic L.A. landmark it is. For information, visit farmersmarket-la.com.



photo courtesy of Tam O’Shanter  
Live music will help make St. Patrick’s Day unforgettable.

## Tam O’Shanter is lucky for St. Patty’s

Follow the rainbow straight to Tam O’Shanter for its legendary St. Paddy’s Day Bash on Monday, March 17 – a day packed with live music, festive drinks and nonstop good cheer.

The celebration kicks off at noon across the patio and inside lively tents brimming with delicious food, drinks and entertainment. General admission to the tent is just \$10, but for those looking to elevate their experience, a limited number of VIP tickets are available for \$149 per person.

The bars will be pouring Tullamore Dew Irish whiskey and Guinness, with VIP guests scoring \$2 drink specials. When hunger strikes, dive into classic St. Paddy’s Day eats like turkey, corned beef or brisket sandwiches on a Kaiser roll or rye bread, plus chips, cookies, bottled water and

soda available for purchase.

“Our St. Paddy’s Day Bash is more than just a celebration – it’s a tradition that brings our community together,” said Ryan O’Melveney Wilson, CEO of Lawry’s Restaurants Inc. “For over a century, we’ve had the honor of serving great food and creating memorable experiences with our guests. Their support is why we’re still here, and we couldn’t be more grateful.”

For those looking for a sit-down dining experience, the restaurant will serve lunch from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and dinner from 5-9 p.m. on St. Patrick’s Day.

The Tam O’Shanter is located at 2980 Los Feliz Blvd. For information and for reservations, visit lawrysonline.com/tam-o-shanter. Tam O’Shanter is located at 2980 Los Feliz Blvd.

## MPTF brings out the stars the ‘Night Before’

A star-studded host committee, Academy Awards nominees and presenters, along with some of the most powerful industry influencers came together on March 1, for Motion Picture Television Fund’s 23rd annual Night Before benefit.

Co-chaired by Demi Moore, Colman Domingo and Cynthia Erivo, the annual event raised close to \$4 million.

“MPTF has been there for our community for over 100 years and

this celebration is a great way to come together in the spirit of taking care of our own,” Domingo said.

“This incredible organization raises crucial funds and provides a host of other services for our industry family when they need it most,” Moore said. “I’m looking forward to celebrating everyone’s great accomplishments while supporting a cause that helps many generations.”

Funds raised will help MPTF

continue to provide essential support and services to working and retired entertainment industry members in response to the many needs associated with the recent wildfires in Los Angeles. Crew members and their families who survive in a job-by-job economy can struggle with basic needs like rent, mortgage and house payments, medical bills, and groceries even in the best of times, which is where MPTF’s emergency financial services and dedicated social services team are vital to provide a lifeline to those who need it.

MPTF supports working and retired members of the entertainment community with a safety net of health and social services, including temporary financial assistance, case management and residential living. From childcare to living and aging well with dignity and purpose, MPTF is there to guide the industry workforce through the enormous obstacles life presents. For over 100 years, the extraordinary generosity of the entertainment community has enabled MPTF to deliver charitable services to industry members in need. For information, visit mptf.com.



photo courtesy of the Motion Picture Television Fund  
Cynthia Erivo, Colman Domingo and Demi Moore co-hosted the Night Before benefit.

## Nicole Kidman, Olivia Munn among TIME honorees

On Feb. 25, TIME hosted its fourth annual Women of the Year Gala at the West Hollywood EDITION, celebrating the extraordinary women on this year’s list who are uplifting their communities and drive meaningful progress toward equality.

Kicking off Oscars week, the event featured appearances and toasts from actor and producer Nicole Kidman; actress, health advocate and breast cancer survivor Olivia Munn; founder and CEO of Women in Liberation and Leadership Fatou Baldeh; WNBA champion and Olympic gold medalist A’ja Wilson; and Feeding America CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot.

Additionally, the event included the presentation of the TIME100

Impact Award to Avery Colvert, introduced by Storm Reid; a special musical performance by Grammy Award-winning honoree Laufey; and remarks from TIME CEO Jessica Sibley and TIME editorial director Lucy Feldman and TIME executive editorial director Cate Matthews. Other notable attendees included Anna Cathcart, Sophia Bush, Whitney Cummings, Karen Pittman, Dylan Mulvaney, Lucy Hale and Kat Graham.

“Honor each other, create opportunities for each other, protect each other and encourage each other. And that’s what this room is doing tonight,” Kidman said. “All of you are creating hope, so thank you. Thank you for having me here. And thank you for including me. And may the work continue, and may

the future be bright for all of us.”

For information, visit time.com.



photo by Amy Sussman/Getty Images for TIME  
Nicole Kidman was honored at the Women of the Year Gala.

## Mozart returns to LA Opera

From March 8-30, LA Opera will present Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s “Così fan tutte,” conducted by music director James Conlon, at the Dorothy Chandler Pavillion. The opera will be seen in a new-to-Los Angeles production, created by the late Michael Cavanagh, that cleverly resets the action in a posh 1930s American country club.

“‘Così fan tutte’ is one of the most popular of all operas, yet it has been absent from our repertory since 2011,” president and CEO Christopher Koelsch said. “I am particularly pleased to welcome the long overdue return of Mozart’s delightful comedy to our stage under the baton of James Conlon, our magnificent music director. Sadly, we mourn the recent passing of director Michael Cavanagh, who was scheduled to restage for us the production he had created for San Francisco Opera in 2021. But we are fortunate indeed that his close associate Shawna Lucey, who made

a memorable debut here with her production of La Traviata last season, will step in as the ideal replacement director.”

In the opera’s deftly constructed plot, two young men go undercover to test the fidelity of their lady loves. What could possibly go wrong? Filled with ravishingly beautiful music, “Così fan tutte” [“Woman are all alike”] was bracingly politically incorrect even for Mozart’s day. The production originally created by director Michael Cavanagh blends elegance and farce to emphasize the very real human emotions embedded throughout Mozart’s miraculous score.

Tickets begin at \$33.50 and are on sale now. Tickets can be purchased online at laopera.org, by phone at (213)972-8001, or in person at the LA Opera box office at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave. For disability access, call (213)972-0777 or email laopera@laopera.org.



photo by Cory Weaver/San Francisco Opera  
“Così fan tutte” will perform at the Dorothy Chandler Pavillion.











# BHHS students advance to SkillsUSA state competition

Beverly Hills High School students demonstrated career readiness, technical expertise and professional excellence at the SkillsUSA Regional Competition, earning top honors across multiple categories. Competing against students from across the region, BHHS participants gained real-world experience in their chosen career fields, further reinforcing the school's commitment to equipping students with the skills needed for

future success. SkillsUSA is a national organization dedicated to preparing students for the workforce through leadership training, technical skill development and hands-on competitions. By participating in the event, BHHS students had the opportunity to apply their knowledge, refine their craft and compete at a high level in fields ranging from media production to culinary arts and customer service.

"We are so proud of these students for taking on this challenge and excelling at such a high level," BHHS Principal Drew Stewart said. "Their hard work, passion and professionalism continue to impress us." The students now advance to the state competition, where they will compete against top talent from across California. For information, visit [bhhsd.org](https://bhhsd.org).



photo courtesy of BHUSD

BHHS students won gold, silver and bronze medals in several categories at the SkillsUSA Regional Competition.



photo courtesy of BHUSD

Students Andrew Smiler, Benjamin Bakshian, Tali Goldkorn and Sarah Zhang were named 2025 National Merit Scholarship finalists.

# Beverly Hills High School seniors named National Merit finalists

Beverly Hills High School announced that seniors Benjamin Bakshian, Tali Goldkorn, Andrew Smiler and Sarah Zhang have been named 2025 National Merit Scholarship finalists, a prestigious recognition awarded to top academic achievers across the country. The National Merit Scholarship Program is one of the most distinguished academic competitions in the nation, recognizing students who have demonstrated exceptional performance on the PSAT/NMSQT, outstanding academic records and leadership in their school and community. As finalists, these students are among a select group representing the highest level of academic excellence.

"Being named a National Merit Finalist is an incredible achievement that reflects years of dedication, intellectual curiosity, and hard work," BHHS Principal Drew Stewart said. "We are immensely proud of Benjamin, Tali, Andrew and Sarah for this well-earned honor and look forward to seeing all they accomplish in the future." The outstanding students now advance in the competition for National Merit Scholarships, which will be awarded in the coming months. For information, visit [bhhsd.org](https://bhhsd.org).

# Natural History Museum comes alive on 'First Fridays'

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is holding "First Fridays: AMPLIFIED" on March 7 with an evening focused on "healing sounds." Visit the museum after hours and explore the science and art of sound healing with discussions, signature cocktails and live music. The upcoming season of "First Fridays" welcomes back neuroscientist and science communicator Dr. Yewande Pearse to moderate

discussions in the new NHM Commons Theater. The special guest in March is Dr. AZA Allsop, a neuroscientist and psychiatrist specializing in music and mindfulness. Together, they will dive into the science of vibrations, cymatics and entrainment, revealing how sound influences well-being. The event includes live musical performances by VÉRITÉ and Kelcey Ayer, along with songs from DJ Que Madre and Les the DJ.

"First Fridays" guests can enjoy special NHM collections displays, evening tours and food trucks. The event runs from 5-10 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. Tickets are \$25. Members receive two free tickets. Advanced reservations are recommended. The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is located at 900 Exposition Blvd. For information, visit [nhm.org/first-fridays](https://nhm.org/first-fridays).



photo courtesy of NHMLAC

Visitors can enjoy lively scientific discussions, music, food and after-hours tours during the Natural History Museum's "First Fridays" series.



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# Police Blotter

# Defendant gets five years in prison for scams

The following crimes occurred in West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and the areas patrolled by the LAPD’s Wilshire and Hollywood divisions between Feb. 23 and March 1. 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**

**Feb. 23**

At 1:52 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 400 block of S. Oakhurst.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Beverly at 3:30 p.m.

At 4:08 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 9500 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect burglarized a construction site in the 300 block of N. Bedford at 6 p.m.

**Feb. 24**

At 12:53 a.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs near Clifton and Clark.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Beverly at 2 p.m.

**Feb. 25**

At 11:05 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim near Wilshire and Almont.

An unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 9000 block of Sunset at 9:30 p.m.

**Feb. 26**

At 5 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a garage in the 100 block of S. Crescent.

**Feb. 28**

At 9:37 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 9800 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 200 block of N. La Peer at 1:10 p.m.

At 4 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 9000 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 9200 block of Wilshire at 4:39 p.m.

At 10 p.m., a suspect was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs near Wilshire and La Cienega.

**March 1**

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 9200 block of Beverly at 1:19 a.m.

At 7:29 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 500 block of Arkell.

An unknown suspect committed a commercial burglary in the 8800 block of Olympic at 9:45 p.m.

**West Hollywood Sheriff’s Station**

**Feb. 23**

At 12:30 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim near Santa Monica and Robertson.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 7700 block of Santa Monica at 12:48 a.m.

At 1 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 600 block of N. Robertson.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 8900 block of Santa Monica at 1:15 a.m.

At 2:30 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

An arson fire was reported in the 7500 block of Norton at 12:50 p.m.

At 6:08 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8400 block of Santa Monica.

**Feb. 24**

At 10:40 p.m., an unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 1000 block of N. Vista.

**Feb. 25**

At 9:30 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle parked in the 9000 block of Sunset.

**Feb. 26**

At 5 a.m., an unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked near Fountain and Crescent Heights.

An arson fire occurred in the 8500 block of Santa Monica at 9:45 a.m.

At noon, an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 900 block of Larrabee.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 8800 block of Santa Monica at 6:45 p.m.

**Feb. 27**

At 1:20 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim near Santa Monica and Poinsettia.

**Feb. 28**

At 1 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 9000 block of Harratt.

An unknown suspect assaulted a victim near Hancock and West Knoll at 2:30 a.m.

At 11:45 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 600 block of N. Croft.

**March 1**

At 1:50 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim near Santa Monica and San Vicente.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 9000 block of Beverly at 8:40 p.m.

At midnight, an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 8500 block of Melrose.

**Los Angeles Police Department**

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

A woman from the Mid-City neighborhood of Los Angeles was sentenced to five years in federal prison on Feb. 27 for fraudulently obtaining more than \$2 million in COVID-19 government loans and submitting false claims in an unsuccessful effort to secure nearly \$1.3 million in pandemic-related tax credits from the IRS.

Casie Hynes, 39, was sentenced by United States District Judge Hernán D. Vera, who also ordered her to pay more than \$2.2 million in restitution. In April 2024, Hynes pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and one count of false claims.

“The defendant exploited a crisis to line her own pockets, diverting vital relief funds from businesses that needed the money,” Acting United States Attorney Joseph McNally said. “The sentence sends a message to others that you will be held accountable if you steal government relief funds.”

From June 2020 to December 2021, Hynes submitted more than 80 fraudulent applications for Paycheck Protection Program loans and Economic Injury Disaster Loans from banks and the United States Small Business Administration in the names of approximately 20 companies. Congress created the programs to provide government relief to businesses during the COVID-19

pandemic.

Hynes submitted the bogus applications in the names of existing and newly created companies, including Nasty Womxn Project, She Suite Collective and others purportedly owned by Hynes or her friends and family members. On those applications, Hynes often used the personal information and signatures of other people without their authorization and who were not involved with the companies. Hynes also provided false information on the applications, including the number of purported employees at the companies, the companies’ average monthly payroll and who owned and controlled the sham businesses. Hynes also submitted fabricated tax documents and bank statements in support of the fraudulent PPP and EIDL applications.

Banks and the SBA approved PPP and EIDL loans for the various companies she created and then disbursed the COVID-19 relief funds into bank accounts she controlled and used to pay for her own personal expenses.

Hynes admitted that she received approximately \$2.2 million in fraudulent proceeds from the scheme. In a related fraud, Hynes used some of the same companies named in her PPP and EIDL loan scheme to submit bogus tax forms to the IRS,

requesting refunds. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress authorized the IRS to reduce the employment tax burdens of small businesses and reimburse businesses for wages paid to employees who were on sick or on family leave and could not work. During the tax years of 2020 and 2021, the IRS offered the Employee Retention Credit and paid sick and family leave credit to businesses that were significantly impacted by COVID-19.

From May 2021 to April 2022, Hynes submitted 12 tax forms that sought refunds based on false statements on behalf of Nasty Womxn Project LLC, She Suite Ventures and Casie Hynes Consulting. Hynes knew the companies had little to no business operations, did not have the number of employees she claimed and did not pay the quarterly wages she claimed in the tax forms, authorities said. Hynes fraudulently sought approximately \$1.2 million in COVID-19 tax credits and tax refunds through the false claims, none of which the IRS paid.

Anyone with information about attempted fraud is encouraged to report it by calling the Justice Department’s National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at (866)720-5721 or by visiting justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form.

# Celebrity tattoo artist found guilty of federal tax fraud

A prominent tattoo artist, once identified by the media as “Hollywood’s Go-To Tattoo Artist,” pleaded guilty on March 4 to filing false tax returns.

Daniel Joseph Winter, 43, who uses the moniker “winterstone,” pleaded guilty to one count of filing a false tax return, admitting he evaded payment of more than \$641,000 in federal income tax.

Winter operated tattoo businesses in the Los Angeles area, New York and Vancouver, Canada, specializing in single-needle fine-line tattoos and catering to celebrity clients. His tattoos were expensive, and he earned substantial income from his work as a tattoo artist and related endeavors, authorities said.

According to his plea agreement, Winter earned at least \$1.7 million from his tattoo business from 2021-23, but he declared no wages, salaries or tip income on the tax returns he signed and filed with the IRS. For 2021, he reported taxable income of negative \$3,442 instead of

his actual taxable income of \$501,710; for 2022, he reported taxable income of \$1,105 instead of his actual taxable income of \$347,159; and for 2023, he reported income of \$14,852, instead of his actual taxable income of \$850,447, authorities said.

By underreporting his actual income, Winter reduced the taxes he appeared to owe by more than \$641,000. At the March 4 hearing, Winter presented a cashier’s check for \$641,959 to the court to pay the taxes he owed due to the underreporting of his income.

Winter also admitted in court that he knew he was required to report all income but willfully lied about it on his tax returns. He accepted payment for his tattoo services almost exclusively in cash, making it harder for the IRS to determine his true income, authorities said.

United States District Judge Otis D. Wright II scheduled an Aug. 11 sentencing hearing. Winter faces a statutory maximum sentence of three years in federal prison.

# Court streamlines small claims cases

The Los Angeles County Superior Court has expanded its Digital Evidence System to all small claims courthouses.

The expansion follows a successful pilot program at the Beverly Hills and Compton courthouses that launched last September. The Digital Evidence System allows small claims litigants to upload and share digital evidence instead of exchanging physical copies, improving efficiency and streamlining the court process.

Litigants in small claims cases are required to exchange evidence in advance of hearings. Traditionally, litigants have mailed physical copies to the court and to

the opposing side. Litigants may still choose to share physical copies of evidence, but the expansion of the Digital Evidence System allows them to electronically exchange evidence directly within the system using the internet, or by using a scanner and kiosk at any small claims courthouse.

Evidence must be uploaded and shared with the opposing party and the court at least 10 days prior to a hearing. Litigants with small claims cases can create an account and upload evidence, making it available for all small claims hearings scheduled on or after March 14.

For information, visit lacourt.org/digitalevidence.

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.





NOTICE INVITING SEALED BIDS  
FOR  
FY2025 STREET REHABILITATION PROJECT, CIP 2505  
IN THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of West Hollywood as AGENCY, invites sealed bids to be received only by submitting electronically at:

<https://www.weho.org/city-government/city-departments/public-works/bids>  
or <http://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=22761>

for the above stated project and will only receive such bids no later than the hour of **5:00 P.M. on April 17, 2025**, at which time or thereafter said bids will be electronically opened and available online. Bids received after this time will be considered to be non-responsive.

No pre-bid meeting is scheduled.

The work to be done consists of furnishing all materials, equipment, tools, labor, and incidentals as required by the Plans, Specifications, and Contract Documents for the above state project. The general items of work include pavement preparation, cold milling, street resurfacing, pavement striping and markings, centerline tie-out reestablishment, loop replacement, adjustment of manhole frame and utility cover to grade, re-install vehicle humps and all appurtenant work and other items not mentioned that are required by the plans and specifications.

Bids must be submitted electronically for the exact item(s) requested in the bid specifications. Copies of the plans, specifications, and contract documents are available for free from the City of West Hollywood website:

<https://www.weho.org/city-government/city-departments/public-works/bids>  
or  
<http://www.planetbids.com/portal/portal.cfm?CompanyID=22761>

Each bid submitted electronically is required to be accompanied by the Proposal Documents; Proposal, Bidder’s Information, Proposal Bid Schedule (enter online), List of Subcontractors (enter online), Registration with the Calif. Dept. of Industrial Relations Form, References, Designator of Sureties, Bid Bond, Bidder’s Violation of Law/Safety Questionnaire, Non-Collusion Declaration, Certificate of Non-Discrimination by Contractors, Statement Acknowledging Penal & Civil Penalties Concerning Contractors’ Licensing Laws, Addendum Acknowledgement, and all additional documentation required by the Instructions to Bidders. Bids must be submitted on the Agency’s bid forms.

The bid must be accompanied by certified or cashier’s check, or bidder’s bond, made payable to the AGENCY for an amount no less than ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Any proposal not accompanied by such a guarantee will not be considered.

Any contract entered into pursuant to this notice will incorporate the provisions of the State Labor Code. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 1773.2 of the Labor Code of the State of California, the minimum prevailing rate of per diem wages for each craft, classification, or type of workman needed to execute the contract shall be those determined by the Director of Industrial Relations of the State of California, which are on file at the City Hall, City of West Hollywood, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90069, and are available to any interested party on request.

Attention is directed to the provisions of Section 1777.5 (Chapter 1411, Statutes of 1968) and 1777.5 of the Labor Code concerning the employment of apprentices by the Contractor or any such subcontractor under him. Affirmative action to ensure against discrimination in employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or handicap will also be required.

The AGENCY will deduct five (5) percent retention from all progress payments as specified in Subsection 7-3.2 of the standard specifications. The Contractor may substitute an escrow holder surety of equal value to the retention. The Contractor shall be beneficial owner of the surety and shall receive any interest thereon.

The AGENCY hereby affirmatively ensures that minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this notice and will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, or religion in any consideration leading to the award of contract.

In entering into a public works contract, or a subcontract, to supply goods, services, or materials pursuant to a public works contract, the Contractor, or subcontractor, offers and agrees to assign to the awarding body all rights, title, and interest in, and to, all causes of action it may have under Section 4 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. Section 15) or under the Cartwright Act (Chapter 2 [commencing with Section 16700] of Part 2 of Division 7 of the Business and Professions Code), arising from purchases of goods, services, or materials pursuant to the public works contract or the subcontract. This assignment shall be made and become effective at the time the awarding body tenders final payment to the Contractor, without further acknowledgement by the parties.

The successful bidder shall be licensed in accordance with the provisions of the Business and Professions Code and shall possess a valid **California State Contractor’s License Class A** at the time of bid submittal.

**THE SUCCESSFULL BIDDER WHO ENTERS INTO CONTRACT WITH THE CITY SHALL BE BOUND BY ALL TERMS AND CONDITIONS INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT LOCATED IN THE APPENDIX.**

The City of West Hollywood reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or bids or to waive any irregularities or informalities in any bids or in the bidding should it deem this necessary for the public good, and also the bid of any Bidder who has been delinquent or unfaithful in any former contract with the City of West Hollywood and to take all bids under advisement for a period of ninety (90) days. No bidder may withdraw its bid for a period of ninety (90) days after the date of the opening thereof. The award of the contract, if made, will be to the lowest responsible Bidder as determined solely by the City of West Hollywood.

The California Air Resources Board (“CARB”) implemented amendments to the In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations (“Regulation”) which are effective on January 1, 2024 and apply broadly to all self-propelled off road diesel vehicles 25 horsepower or greater and other forms of equipment used in California. A copy of the Regulation is available at:

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/barcu/regact/2022/off-roadddiesel/appa-1.pdf>

Bidders are required to comply with all CARB and Regulation requirements, including, without limitation, all applicable sections of the Regulation, as codified in Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations section 2449 *et seq.* throughout the term of the Project. Bidders must provide, with their Bid, copies of Bidder’s and all listed subcontractors the most recent, valid Certificate of Reported Compliance (“CRC”) issued by CARB. Failure to provide valid CRCs as required herein may render the Bid non-responsive.

BY ORDER OF the City of West Hollywood,  
Melissa Crowder, City Clerk



# KCCLA and LAUNCH LA partner on dynamic art exhibition

The Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles, in partnership with LAUNCH LA, presents “Edge of Now,” an open call exhibition running from Thursday, March 6, through Friday, March 28.

The exhibition fosters communication and exchange by showcasing works by artists from diverse cultural backgrounds. The jury panel included professor Sunook Park, of the California State University, Long Beach School of Art and an independent curator, and Shana Nys Dambrot, an art critic and independent curator.

“Edge of Now” explores the dynamic interactions and responses of individuals and communities within an ever-evolving cultural landscape. It reflects on how people continuously adapt – or sometimes resist – while shedding light on the formation and significance of identity amid change. The special exhibition

incorporates different media, materials and techniques to create new artistic expressions, including oil paintings, drawings, photography and mixed media.

“This open call received over 560 submissions from more than 140 local artists. Following a rigorous selection process, works by 36 artists were chosen for the exhibition,” KCCLA director Sangwon Jung said. “As this exhibition was designed with community outreach in mind, we hope it will be an opportunity for artists and audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds to come together and engage with the artworks.”

“This exhibition is a unique opportunity to experience the creativity and diversity of Southern California artists,” LAUNCH LA director James Panozzo added. “We look forward to continuing our col-

laboration with KCCLA to provide more opportunities for local artists and to foster communication and inspiration through art.”

The artists are Irene Abraham, Susan Amorde, Terry Arena, Ernie Charles Black, Ada Pullini Brown, Suzanne Budd, Hye Soo Byun, Ashoke Chhabra, Fei Ewald, Ahrong Ferreira, Emily Goff, Kaitlyn Hahn, Wayne Hunt, Yung Ah Hwang, Justin N. Kim, Sandra Lauterbach, Nancy Goodman Lawrence, Annie Marini- Genzon, Katie Middleton, Gautam Misra, Edward Lance Montgomery, Rebecca Nabarrete, Michelle Oh, Lily Park, Joo Park-Kwon, Minna Philips, Michelle Ramin, Samuelle Richardson, Frederika Roeder, Alain Rogier, Seda Saar, Charlotte Schmid-Maybach, Jason Thompson, Gianni Trieste, Liberty Worth and Kacy Yu.

The exhibition opens with a reception on March 6 from 6-8 p.m. at the Korean Cultural Center Art Gallery, 5505 Wilshire Blvd. For information, visit [kccla.org](http://kccla.org).



photo courtesy of KCCLA

Works by more than 35 artists are included in the exhibition, including Katie Middleton’s “Tessera No. 9” (2024).

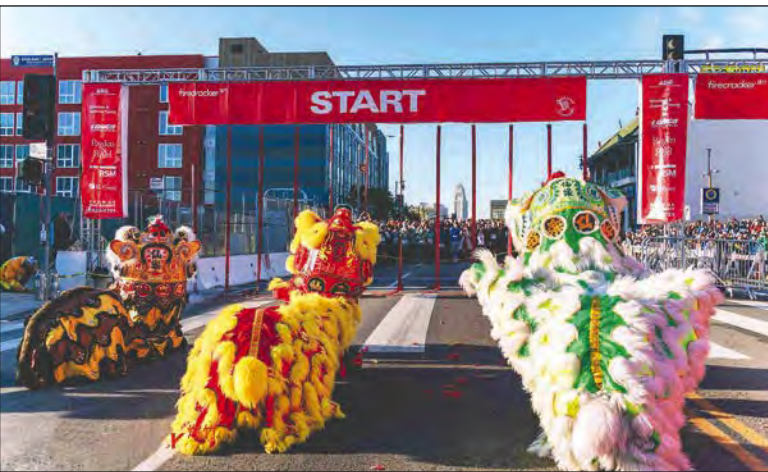


photo courtesy of L.A. Chinatown Firecracker

The annual run will take place at Los Angeles Chinatown Plaza.

# L.A. Chinatown Firecracker is off to the races March 8-9

Celebrating 47 years, the L.A. Chinatown Firecracker is one of the largest and oldest running races in the U.S., with its upcoming Lunar New Year run, walk, cycling and dog walk events taking place over the weekend of March 8-9 at the historic Los Angeles Chinatown Plaza.

Participate in-person or virtually. Each registered participant receives a commemorative 2025 Firecracker race bib, exclusive collectible finisher’s medal, limited edition shirt – including for registered kids and dogs – and a goody bag. Additionally, participants

and guests will enjoy a Lunar New Year celebration in the heart of historic Chinatown with an opening ceremony including lion dancers and the traditional lighting of 100,000 firecrackers. The Firecracker post-event festival includes a two-day expo with exhibitors, a beer garden, vendors, activities for children and live entertainment. Admission is free to the public.

The 47th Annual L.A. Chinatown Firecracker is produced by the nonprofit L.A. Chinatown Firecracker Run Committee, a group of volunteers who donate time and energy to

organize and stage events and programs promoting healthy lifestyles, fitness, cultural awareness, education and community participation. LACFRC reinvests proceeds in the community, providing service and programs benefiting elementary schools and nonprofit organizations.

The races will take place at Los Angeles Chinatown Plaza, 943 N. Broadway. For information, visit [runsignup.com/Race/CA/LosAngeles/LAChinatownFirecracker?rsus=200-500-c87aae07-8bb5-4687-806a-41633f36d94a](https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/LosAngeles/LAChinatownFirecracker?rsus=200-500-c87aae07-8bb5-4687-806a-41633f36d94a).



# LA Marathon 2025

March 16, 2025

Beverly Hills Street Closures | 5 a.m. – 1 p.m.

City Hotline (3/16): 5 a.m. – 2 p.m. - (310) 550-4680

 **WATER STATIONS:**

**Water Station 16**  
Burton Way west of Foothill Rd.

**Water Station 17**  
SM south/west of Charleville Blvd.

 **PARKING STRUCTURES**  
[beverlyhills.org/parking](http://beverlyhills.org/parking)

 **FIRST AID STATION**  
in Rexford Mini Park at  
Rexford Dr. & Burton Way

 **SHUTTLE FOR RUNNERS**  
one-way start time 4 a.m.

 **VIEWING AREA**  
of Rodeo Dr. & Wilshire Blvd.

 **MARATHON ROUTE**  
[beverlyhills.org/marathon](http://beverlyhills.org/marathon)

**For Access to Get Around Closure-** Go West on Sunset to South on Bundy Drive

**For access to 10 Freeway-** Take Wilshire Blvd. East to Robertson; Turn South/Right to 10 Freeway

**For access to 405 Freeway-** Go West on Olympic Blvd to Freeway

East and Westbound lanes **CLOSED** on N Santa Monica Blvd. between Moreno Dr. and Bundy Dr.



## ‘Jaws’ takes a bite out of Academy Museum

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures announced during the 97th Oscars telecast that it will present “Jaws: The Exhibition,” on view from Sept. 14 through July 26, 2026.

The exhibition will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Steven Spielberg’s film, a culture-defining thriller that continues to be a fixture in popular culture. This is the first-ever exhibition of this scale at the Academy Museum focused exclusively on a single film, and the largest mounted exhibition ever for Jaws, the Oscar-winning film from Universal Pictures. The exhibition will feature over 200 original objects – including concept illustrations by production designer Joe Alves, a costume worn by Roy Scheider as Brody, original shark design schematics by design engi-

neer Frank Wurmser and a screen-used dorsal fin prop – plus behind-the-scenes revelations and interactive moments. “Jaws: The Exhibition” will illustrate how the film became the first summer blockbuster that forever changed the motion picture industry. Tickets for “Jaws: The Exhibition” are available to purchase now.

Curated with direct access to the collections from Steven Spielberg, The Amblin Hearth Archive and NBCUniversal Archives and Collections, “Jaws: The Exhibition” has visitors step into the world of the iconic film, scene-by-scene, as it translates the movie into a spatial experience for all-ages audiences.

“As an institution both devoted to and deeply enshrined within the film industry, the Academy Museum can combine deep, rigorous and fulfilling research with exciting moments of interactivity and discovery for our audiences, allowing them to experience this beloved film and enduring story in a brand-new way,” Academy Museum director and president Amy Homma said.

“After 50 years, many of the accounts about the production of ‘Jaws’ are as well-known as the film itself. This exhibition uncovers the film’s multilayered mythologies and lore for both new and seasoned fans,” senior exhibitions curator Jenny He said. “It’s fascinating to think that ‘Jaws’ was Steven Spielberg’s second theatrical feature film – the movie is a testament to the storied filmmaker’s early success as a tenacious visionary pushing creative boundaries.”



photos courtesy of the Academy Museum

The groundbreaking 1975 film “Jaws” will be highlighted at the Academy Museum starting in September.

The Academy Museum has been home to the sole surviving full-scale model of the shark from “Jaws” since the museum’s opening in 2021. At 25-feet-long, “Bruce the Shark” is the largest object in the Academy’s collection and currently hangs outside of the museum’s fourth floor exhibition space where it will remain on-view during the

exhibition.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a dynamic series of film screenings, exclusive new merchandise and public programs to be announced at a later date.

For information, visit [academy-museum.org](http://academy-museum.org). The Academy Museum is located at 6067 Wilshire Blvd.

## Wallis picks ‘Blueberries’ for the stage

In “Here There Are Blueberries,” performing for 17 performances only at the Bram Goldsmith Theater of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts March 13-30, a mysterious album featuring Nazi-era photographs arrives at the desk of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum archivist Rebecca Erbelding.

As Erbelding and her team of historians begin to unravel the shocking story behind the images, the album soon makes headlines around the world and ignites a debate that reverberates far beyond the museum walls. Based on real events, Pulitzer Prize-nominee “Here There Are Blueberries” tells the story behind these historical photographs – what they reveal about the perpetrators of the Holocaust and, ultimately, about humanity.

The new piece from Tectonic Theater Project is conceived and directed by Tony and Emmy-nominee Moisés Kaufman and co-written by Emmy-nominee Amanda Gronich. “Here There Are Blueberries” is produced by Tectonic Theater Project in partnership with Brian and Dayna Lee and Sonia Friedman Productions.

“Here There Are Blueberries” was named a 2024 Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama and became the highest-grossing production in the 45-year history of New York Theatre Workshop during its celebrated limited engagement. An international tour is set to launch in 2025 with engagements in London and Germany.

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd. To purchase single tickets, subscriptions and for information, call (310)746-4000 or visit [thewallis.org](http://thewallis.org).

## L.A.’s Nowruz celebration returns March 9

The most vibrant and lively spring event of the year is just around the corner – the Farhang Foundation’s annual Nowruz celebration at UCLA on Sunday, March 9.

Nowruz, meaning “new day,” is an ancient celebration marking the vernal equinox – a universal moment of rebirth and renewal. The Iranian New Year begins precisely at the moment of spring’s arrival. Nowruz is celebrated by more than 300 million people around the world, including in Iran, Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Georgia, India, Iraq, Tajikistan, Turkey and the United States.

Farhang Foundation’s festival welcomes spring with its 15th annual Celebration of Nowruz in Los Angeles and is one of the largest Nowruz celebrations in the world. The daylong program offers something for all ages, and includes traditional music, arts and crafts, dance, food, children’s activities, stilt walkers and the signature Grand Haft Sîn display.

“For 14 years, Farhang Foundation has been proud to bring

the spirit of Nowruz to Los Angeles,” said Alireza Ardekani, executive director of Farhang Foundation. “Our annual celebration at UCLA has become one of the largest Nowruz festivals in the world, uniting our diverse community in a joyous tribute to renewal, culture and tradition.”

All Nowruz outdoor activities are free and open to the public from noon-5 p.m. and will take place at UCLA’s Dickson Court, adjacent to Royce Hall.

Additionally, a special ticketed concert takes place at Royce Hall at 6 p.m. The unforgettable evening concert is presented in collaboration

with UCLA’s Herb Alpert School of Music. UCLA and Farhang Foundation have had a long relationship; the Farhang Foundation helped establish an academic degree in Iranian music – the only program of its kind in the world outside of Iran dedicated to Iranian music. The Nowruz Concert will feature world-renowned musicians, many of whom are coming to Los Angeles from around the world for the event.

UCLA’s Royce Hall and Dickson Court are located at 375 Portola Plaza.

For information and tickets, visit [farhang.org/nowruz/2025-nowruz-concert-at-ucla](http://farhang.org/nowruz/2025-nowruz-concert-at-ucla).



photo by Vafa Khatami

The annual festival features live music, dancing, food and entertainment for attendees of all ages.



## WeHo blazes a trail with new fire station



A new fire station opened in West Hollywood in this photograph from the March 8, 2001, issue of the Beverly Press and Park Labrea News. West Hollywood and county officials gathered at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Los Angeles County Fire Department’s Station 7, located at 864 N. San Vicente Blvd., at Cynthia Street. West Hollywood City Councilman Steve Martin, left, joined L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, L.A. County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, West Hollywood City Councilman Sal Guarriello, West Hollywood Mayor Jeff Prang and Councilman John Heilman at the ceremony. Freeman said it was challenging to build the new state-of-the-art fire station due to it being on a busy thoroughfare with a steep grade. In addition to housing firefighters and a paramedic squad, the multi-level station has a community meeting room and classrooms

## Bogie’s Liquor

Celebrate  
St. Patrick’s Day!  
Stop in for your  
favorite beer or  
Irish Whiskey



We carry the finest in

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Get ready for  
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Pick up your favorite  
beverages & snacks before  
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[www.bogiesliquor.com](http://www.bogiesliquor.com)



# Fire chief loses bid to get her job back

From page 1

of high winds, failed to notify her of the potential danger presented by high winds ahead of the disaster and did not comply with a request to conduct an after-action report. Bass was on a diplomatic trip to Ghana when the fire erupted and returned the following day.

Crowley openly criticized the city in a media interview shortly after the fire for not providing the resources needed to adequately prepare and fight the Palisades fire. She asked the City Council to overturn her termination, which would have required a two-thirds majority vote of the 15-member council. Only Councilwomen Monica Rodriguez, 7th District, and Traci Park, 11th District, voted in favor of Crowley’s appeal.

The vote came after numerous representatives of the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City union and a handful of public speakers voiced support for Crowley. Multiple public speakers also said it is time to move on and supported the fire chief’s termination. Crowley spoke directly to the council, stating the reasons the mayor gave for her firing were false.

“Over my 25-year career and all of the ranks that I have held, I have seen our fire department struggle from year to year with limited funding, staffing and resources. We are past the point of sustaining our services without compromising public safety and the safety of our firefighters,” Crowley said. “For nearly three years as the fire chief, I have submitted realistic budget requests that were carefully crafted

based on data, reports, analysis and recommendations from outside, independent agencies that show just how understaffed and under-resourced the LAFD is.”

The fire chief said 128 personnel were pre-deployed to fire prone areas throughout the city in anticipation of the windstorm on Jan. 7. She said the 1,000 firefighters in question were not deployed because there was an insufficient number of fire engines and apparatus available because they need repairs.

“As for the 1,000 firefighters who allegedly were sent home prior to the fires, we did not have enough apparatus to put them on because of the budget cuts and lack of investments in our fleet maintenance,” Crowley told the council. “Over 100 of our fire engines, fire trucks and ambulances sat broken down in our maintenance yards, unable to be used to help during one of the worst wildfire events in our history.”

In terms of the after-action report, Crowley said the LAFD does not have enough resources to conduct an analysis for such a large disaster, and she suggested that it be conducted by the state. Crowley also stated that the appropriate notifications were made prior to the fire erupting.

“The LAFD engaged in all of its standard communications, including emailing two separate media advisories, conducting multiple live and recorded media interviews about the predicted extreme weather and fire danger, and also notifying city officials about the upcoming

weather events,” Crowley added.

Rodriguez, Park and Councilwoman Imelda Padilla, 6th District, asked to speak before the council’s vote. Rodriguez and Park, whose 11th District includes the Pacific Palisades, supported the former chief.

“I just want to simply say to the men and women of the L.A. City Fire Department, you are respected and valued. And we know, as a number of our city employees are, you are working with a lot of deficiencies in support. We know this to be the case, and unfortunately, we are looking ahead at a fiscal crisis that is only going to continue to exacerbate a lot of the challenges that we are currently experiencing,” Rodriguez said. “But scapegoating and pointing fingers is not going to aid us in correcting these shortcomings, and I think we all have to be honest. The only failure that I believe chief Crowley had was thinking that people had her back,” Rodriguez said.

“Just like my constituents, I am deeply disturbed by reports of under-deployments in the Pacific Palisades where there had been a fire just days before,” Park said. “We deserve to know who made that decision and why. We also deserve to know why the Palisades evacuations turned into chaos and gridlock, in addition to why America’s second largest city didn’t have water in our fire hydrants to respond to an emergency.”

Padilla said she supports the mayor’s decision to remove

Crowley.

“Chief Crowley, with my team, was instrumental last summer in developing a plan to address the fire prone nature of the Sepulveda Basin in my district. ...On the day of the winds, we saw that the work of the summer paid off,” Padilla said. “However, I do believe there is a need for accountability regarding the way the fire response to the Palisades went down. My disappointment with this situation is that the chief chose the wrong time and the wrong place to raise an issue. Spending time talking to the press to tell her side of the story, which I think is important, versus at the command center during the fires, raises major concerns about what proper timing should be. And it is because of that I hope that we recognize that this is a mayor doing what is within her jurisdiction to fire someone.”

Los Angeles City Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson, 8th District, told the council that under the city charter, the mayor has the power to fire a department head for any reason or no reason at all. Following the vote, the mayor’s office reaffirmed the decision to fire Crowley.

“After testimony by the former chief confirming she sent firefighters home on the morning of Jan. 7, her appeal was rejected 13-2 by members of the City Council,” Bass’ spokesperson Zach Seidl said in a statement. “This is an issue of public safety and for the operations of the Los Angeles Fire Department. The city of Los Angeles is moving forward.”

Crowley expressed disappointment after the council’s vote.

“Although I am disappointed in the outcome of [the] appeal vote, my heart is full of gratitude for the outpouring of love and support that

I received. I especially want to thank UFLAC president Freddy Escobar, the many other UFLAC leaders and the members who supported my efforts to shine the light on LAFD’s needs. Standing up, speaking out and advocating for our LAFD firefighters, their families and the communities that we serve will always be the right thing to do,” Crowley said. “It has been an absolute honor of a lifetime to serve and represent the incredible men and women of the LAFD for nearly three years. The LAFD deserves to be properly funded, staffed and resourced so we can meet the ever-changing needs of our communities. We owe that to the LAFD and to those we serve.”

Bass has faced criticism for being out of the country when the Palisades fire erupted and for not ensuring adequate resources were in place to address a major fire emergency. Papers were filed on March 3 by opponents to recall Bass. They have stated that Bass mishandled the Palisades fire, has overworked and under-funded first responders, has not done enough to address homelessness and has not ensured government transparency and accountability. The recall campaign has started collecting the 330,000 signatures needed for a referendum. According to the group’s website, the effort is led by the Recall Karen Bass Committee with major funding by Nicole Shanahan, an attorney and Silicon Valley entrepreneur who was Robert F. Kennedy Jr.’s running mate in his presidential campaign and a major donor to Kennedy.

After firing Crowley on Feb. 21, Bass appointed Ronnie Villanueva, a 41-year LAFD veteran, as interim fire chief. The city is currently conducting a nationwide search for the next fire chief.

# Tax credits aim to boost film production

From page 1

dealt a big blow by the wildfires but we will come back stronger, and one way to do that is by keeping our signature industry here at home. These bills ... are a milestone in this fight and I look forward to seeing this expansion passed this session.”

Allen said that the tax credit in its

current form has created nearly 200,000 jobs and \$26 billion in economic activity. He added that it brings in exponentially more tax revenue than the tax credits awarded.

“The challenge, of course, is that other jurisdictions have been throw-

ing enormous attention at the industry to move out and do their productions elsewhere,” Allen said. “They see it as an economic driver. You’ve got 38 competing tax credit programs in the U.S., 36 in Europe. Everyone’s been increasing the generosity of their credit. The California program doesn’t need to match these programs, but it needs to be competitive. We’ve been losing so much production in our limited program right now.”

Zbur described the legislation as a “jobs program.”

“We know that the [current version of the] program has been oversubscribed year after year, and about 77% of those productions that don’t get the tax credit, go to other states,” he said. “So, this is going to

be a big help in trying to keep some of these jobs here in Southern California.”

“So many people in the L.A. area rely on these good, middle-class jobs that have made such a tent pole industry for our region,” Allen said.

Oscar-winning “American Beauty” producer Dan Jinks expressed hope that the legislation would drive production back to the city.

“Film and television is the life blood of Los Angeles,” he said. “The industry is why so many of us move to Los Angeles.”

Mike Werb, screenwriter of “The Mask” and “Face/Off,” also celebrated the development.

“California has always prided itself on being on the vanguard of progress, on being the very definition of modernization,” he said. “It’s mind boggling how many film and TV productions have fled the state for economic reasons. We

should’ve had bills like SB 630 and AB 1138 a long time ago. But we definitely need it now.”

SAG-AFTRA president Fran Drescher discussed the importance of having the industry as an integral part of the state.

“Since Hollywood’s golden era, television and cinema have had worldwide influence and have launched a million dreams,” she said. “Here in California, the industry has created a plethora of middle-class union jobs, boosted local businesses and helped to fuel the fifth-largest economy in the world. A thriving entertainment sector brings creative professionals and new opportunities, creating well-paying jobs and fostering innovation.”

The tax program would be the second-most lucrative in the country, if passed, behind Georgia – which currently does not have a limit on incentives.

# City denies new development

From page 3

tainly well aware of what it takes to get an application perfected so that it is properly filed.”

The council voted unanimously to deny the appeal.

“We believe that the city acted unlawfully [on March 4] in its denial of the project,” Leaderman said in an email to the Beverly Press following the meeting. “We are exploring all legal options and will respond accordingly.”



rendering courtesy of CARA Architecture  
A rendering shows how the project would have been configured.

The city is currently engaged in two lawsuits over a similar denial of an appeal for a builder’s remedy project at 125-129 S. Linden Drive. One of those lawsuits was filed by the developer, Leo Pustilnikov, while the other was filed by housing advocacy non-profit Californians for Homeownership. The group also won a lawsuit against the city in 2023 over its lack of a certified housing element.

In a statement to the Beverly Press, Californians for Homeownership counsel Matt Gelfand said the city’s denial of the appeal for the 140 S. Camden Drive project may prompt a third lawsuit from the group.

“The city’s latest builder’s remedy denial was based on transparently pretextual grounds and was unlawful,” Gelfand said. “Our organization has told the city that we are likely to file our third lawsuit against the city to compel the approval of this project.”



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# BHUSD searches for new superintendent

From page 1

able to find somebody that can handle the crisis that we’re in right this moment.”

The services provided by Corder Creative will not exceed \$15,000, as set by the board. The budget was initially set at \$25,000, but was reduced at the suggestion of Board Vice President Judy Manouchehri following a discussion.

The proposal states that the firm will help the district “draft key messages, talking points and FAQs to address immediate concerns, including the journalism instructor’s leave, litigation against the district, allegations of racism and allegations of staff member misconduct in student interviews/investigations, and [to] demonstrate our commitment to deal with any such

issues and to ensure all our students are treated with respect and feel safe.”

The approval was passed in a 4-1 vote, with board member Russell Stuart voting against approving the funding.

“My concerns are ... our communications strategy in the past few weeks in my opinion has been horrible,” Stuart said. “The media has been neglected in my opinion. They’ve not been getting the information that we should be giving them in a timely manner or even just subject-wise. Unfortunately, even since this opportunity to work with [Corder Creative] has been brought to us, even since then when there has been certain headlines in the media that we needed immediate attention to, the focus was more on a broader future plan than the immediate needs. That’s a concern to me – that there’s a contract here on the table that gets into these three points of

‘cooling the waters’ and all these kind of catchphrases. But the only way to cool the waters is to be transparent and get the proper information out to the public, and that has not happened.”

While other board members agreed that the district had not properly addressed the controversies, they stated that an outside company should be hired to ensure transparency.

“First of all, we obviously need a company. Second of all ... I don’t want somebody or a company that’s just going to make everything look pretty,” board member Sigalie Sabag said. “I want us to be transparent. I want us to be real. As board members, we cannot say a lot of things, and we cannot respond in a lot of ways, so we do need a communication that is not just pretty, we need communication that is real.”

Stuart also disagreed with the statement by Marcus that the district is in a “crisis.”

“We’re not in a crisis at all,” Stuart said. “If you look at school districts up and down the state of California, they have lawsuits, they have problems, they hire and fire people, things happen. We’re not in a crisis at all. A crisis is like – everyone’s dying. That’s a crisis. We’re not in a crisis. So when you’re talking about crisis management in the press, all the press wants to know is, what’s the truth?”

Board member Dr. Amanda Stern pushed back on Stuart’s assertion, pointing toward statements made by Sen. Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica) asking the district to enroll more displaced Palisades Charter High School students after the district suspended enrollment as an example of

the need of an outside communications firm. Stuart responded by saying that the district should have responded to Allen’s statements immediately. As Stuart and Stern discussed the issue, Hasty could be seen motioning to Marcus to use the gavel and call the meeting to order. However, Marcus did not, and the discussion continued.

**“We need some form or someone who can handle the communications right now because we are up a creek without a paddle as far as I’m concerned. I would love to be able to find somebody that can handle the crisis that we’re in right this moment.”**

*-BHUSD Board President  
Rachelle Marcus*

“It sounds like there’s different people who have different perceptions,” Stern said to Stuart. “People who talk to you are happy and everything’s calm and fine. People who talk to me ... To say things are smooth sailing at this point are different from how they’ve been.”

The board also voted against approving two agreements with two outside consultants to lead a “board

workshop” for its members. The goals of the proposed workshop were to “develop professional norms, establish a culture of collaboration, mutual respect and effective governance among board members and the acting superintendent” and to “strengthen trust and accountability through agreed-upon behavioral expectations.”

The proposal received a mixed response from board members.

“The phrase ‘professional norms’ makes me uncomfortable,” Manouchehri said. “I have spent two years already going along to get along, and I won’t do it anymore, because I’m here with two years left and I’m very clear about who I am and why I’m here. I’m here for transparency, communication, accountability and results. And that’s where I’m going. Respectfully to you, Dr. Hasty, I cannot appease anyone anymore. I will gladly have a discussion about a strategic plan and the goals of this board and where we’re trying to go, but I do not want to be told how to speak and in what tone, and therefore I can’t agree to this. I feel like the expectation of certain board members is to silence ... I’m just not here for any of it.”

The first agreement with an outside consultant for a board workshop was not approved due to a lack of majority votes in favor. Manouchehri and Stuart voted against approval, while Marcus and Stern voted for its approval. Sabag abstained, stating that she wanted to “learn more about it.”

A second, similar agreement with

another outside consultant for a board workshop was not approved. Stern made a motion for its approval, but it did not receive a second.

The actions by the board and the debate over the “crisis” are a response to several lawsuits, controversies, allegations and community outcry.

The administrative leave of journalism teacher Romeo Carey prompted many students and community members to speak out in support of Carey, who they said was placed on leave in an act of retaliation and censorship by the district. Carey said on March 5 that he reached an agreement to return to Beverly Hills High School.

Controversies facing the district also include a wrongful termination claim filed by former teacher Joanie Garratt.

Additionally, Black students, parents, teachers and an administrator have accused the district of ignoring rampant racism and discrimination. The racism allegations are now at the center of a claim filed by attorney Brad Gage.

The school’s current athletic director Tim Ellis has been accused of sexual harassment by former tennis coach Robbin Cafagna in a wrongful termination claim.

A civil lawsuit against the district will return to court on April 7, to determine damages awarded to a former Beverly Hills High School student Laurie Siegman after a former teacher, Henry “Hank” Friedman admitted to sexually abusing her between 1978 and 1981.

# Cartier project receives approval

From page 2

coming in to buy a \$20,000 necklace going to park,” Commissioner Myra Demeter said. “I know there are plenty of public structures but I still would like to know what, if any plans you have for servicing. They’re certainly not going to take bicycles to make these purchases.”

Beauchamp said the store expects most customers to be dropped off by chauffeurs, based on the clientele of the current Cartier store located at 411 N. Rodeo Drive, which also does not have parking spaces. Additionally, he said Cartier expects most employees to use public transportation.

The project was initially approved in 2018, however, several delays occurred due to “regulatory changes” in building code and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Beauchamp said. The previous building at the site was demolished in 2024. Beauchamp said the current project is “99% the same” as the project approved in 2018.

Deborah Quick, a representative of the project, said that some of those “regulatory changes” were the result of a 2018 remapping of the Santa Monica fault by the California Geological Survey, which discovered that the earthquake fault zone runs directly below Rodeo Drive. After the fault zone was discovered, the site underwent geological testing, which resulted in a unique structural feature in the new building.

“The city’s geologist recommended to the building official that there be imposed a modest structural setback in the corner of the parcel that’s on Rodeo,” Quick said. “There was very minor evidence of secondary faulting found there that had happened historically. If there were ground movement in the future in

that area, the intent is that the building be structurally supported only in the area outside of that corner. Cartier nonetheless was very dedicated to Foster and Partners’ design, and wanted the building to look as it had originally been envisioned from the street. The façade was redesigned to not rely on any structural support there, but from the street it will look continuous, and you won’t be able to see that there’s any difference.”

Beauchamp said Cartier hopes to open the new store between July and September 2027. He said excavation is set to begin in August.

The commission unanimously approved the project, with the added condition that “no amplified sound that is noticeably audible beyond the property lines shall be permitted on the outdoor terrace on the third floor.”

“I think this is a fantastic project,” Commissioner Gary Ross said. “It’s not just a beautiful project, it’s an important project for the Golden Triangle here in Beverly Hills. It’s a brand that we consider to be an important part of our community and a partner in the city.”

## Answers From Page 27



# Instructor reinstated at Beverly Hills High School

From page 1

to my legal counsel, Daniel Kolodziej and Peter Eliasberg of the ACLU, whose commitment to justice has been invaluable ... This victory belongs to all of you.”

More than 900 people signed a petition supporting the reinstatement of Carey.

The district placed Carey on leave on Dec. 1 without giving a specific reason – only stating that he was placed on leave “pending the finding of the district’s investigation of the incidents at Beverly Hills High School,” without specifying what the incidents were. During board meetings, members of the BHUSD community routinely accused the district of placing Carey on leave in retaliation for student journalists’ coverage of an incident involving the alleged assault of a student by the district’s executive director of school safety, Mark Mead.

Peter Eliasberg, chief counsel for the ACLU of Southern California, said in an interview with the Beverly Press that the

organization had “very serious concerns” over the situation surrounding Carey’s leave and the alleged censorship of KBEV and that he believed the district was “acting illegally.”

KBEV’s coverage included a video uploaded to KBEV’s YouTube channel. The video, still publicly available on YouTube, was taken during a pro-Trump campus gathering on Nov. 6, and appears to show Mead with his hands around a student’s neck.

Students and parents allege that Carey was placed on leave in retaliation for allowing KBEV students to upload the video.

“All of the evidence I’ve seen very clearly suggests that the district has violated the California Education Code,” Eliasberg said while Carey was on leave.

Carey will return to his role as the executive producer of KBEV, the school district’s student-run broadcasting service, which was founded in 1969. KBEV provides live streams and archived recordings of the district’s board meet-

ings and events, as well as news segments updating the school community on student life and district-related issues. KBEV provides students with journalism experience, and its anchors, reporters and behind-the-scenes crew are Beverly Hills High School students. Many of the students who spoke out at school board meetings were KBEV students, who attested to Carey’s character and commitment as an educator.

“I’m incredibly fortunate to have been in Mr. Carey’s class for three years,” student Ava Wizmann said in a board meeting on Jan. 28, while Carey was still on leave. “Every day with him was a lesson in generosity, kindness and real-life values. He wasn’t just another teacher, he was unforgettable. The impact he has on us goes far beyond the classroom and his absence is something we feel every single day.”

The BHUSD did not respond to a request for comment by press time.

# Getty-led Fire Relief Fund helps more than 1,700 artists

Six weeks after a Getty-led coalition established the L.A. Arts Community Fire Relief Fund, more than 1,700 artists and arts workers are receiving emergency support. A total of \$14.3 million in immediate help is

being provided to individuals who lost residences, studios and archives.

The vast majority of people receiving support are being funded at their requested amounts, up to \$10,000. Among the recipients, 85% applied as

artists and 15% as arts workers, with 78% of the group impacted by the Eaton fire and 22% by the Palisades fire. For information, visit [getty.edu/about/development/LAArtsReliefFund2025.html](http://getty.edu/about/development/LAArtsReliefFund2025.html).



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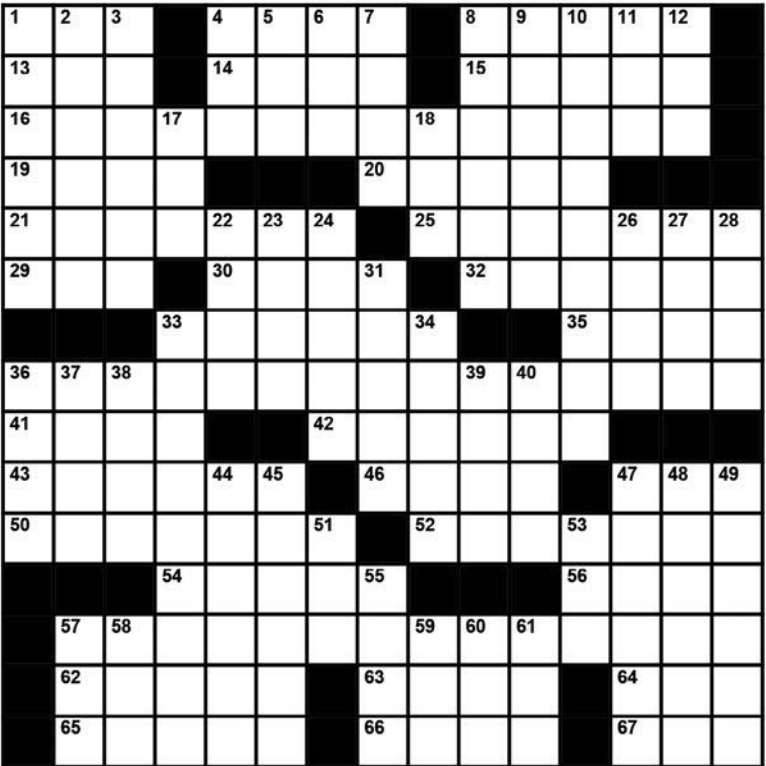
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Crossword Puzzle

by Myles Mellor

- Across
1. Untrained  
4. As far as  
8. Haile Selassie follower  
13. Before, of yore  
14. Gambling mecca  
15. Give voice to  
16. Order on a test  
19. Jamaican fruit  
20. Hard work, slangily  
21. Pop song that was #1 a very long time  
25. Following a consequence  
29. UFO crew  
30. "Mon \_\_\_!"  
32. Music maker  
33. Prohibits  
35. Lachrymose drop  
36. Looked clueless  
41. Condition in which goods are often sold  
42. Box of golf balls  
43. Trample  
46. Well-balanced  
47. Evidence collectors  
50. Supplied with gas  
52. Womanizer  
54. Tore  
56. Grps.  
57. Harmless ammo  
62. Symbol of authority  
63. Lost fish  
64. Rent  
65. Unhappy spectator  
66. Online craft store
- Down
67. Speech stumbles
1. Disprove  
2. Properly  
3. Kane's portrayer  
4. Spoon bender  
5. Write  
6. It can make a molehill out of a mountain  
7. \_\_\_ and aahs  
8. "The Garden of Love" painter  
9. Finally!  
10. Academy Award  
11. "Perfect" number  
12. First animal shelter  
17. Grafton's "\_\_\_ for Lawless"  
18. Mrs. sheep  
22. Suggestion  
23. Any of the Bee Gees  
24. Actress Patricia et al.  
26. Specialty  
27. Hereabout  
28. Lacerated  
31. Russian range  
33. Old west outlaw  
34. Three-time Masters champ  
36. Catch one's breath  
37. Concerning  
38. Penthouse feature  
39. Game of chance  
40. Cinematographer Nykvist  
44. California county  
45. Ending for rubber  
47. Turn



48. Baked clay box
49. They are placed inside
51. Last-qtr. month
53. \_\_\_ de vivre
55. Denmark citizen
57. Business watchdog for customers (abbr.)
58. Philosopher \_\_\_-tzu
59. Abbr. after a general's name, maybe
60. Corp. brands, often
61. Siegfried's partner

answers on page 26



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