



Partly cloudy,
temps in the
60s

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BEVERLY PRESS

Volume 35 No. 14

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

April 3, 2025

Nazarian takes reins as Beverly Hills mayor

■ Mirisch, Corman share vice mayoral term

BY TABOR BREWSTER

Sharona Nazarian became the first Iranian American woman to lead Beverly Hills as she was sworn in as the city's mayor on April 1 at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. Nazarian will serve as mayor for one year, while

Councilmen John Mirisch and Craig Corman will each fulfill the role of vice mayor for six months, respectively.

"It's hard to believe that it's been almost three years since I was installed as a City Council member. I knocked on over 3,000 doors and

See Nazarian page 25



photo by Tabor Brewster

The newly organized City Council is comprised of Co-Vice Mayor Craig Corman, Co-Vice Mayor John Mirisch, Mayor Sharona Nazarian, Councilman Lester Friedman and Councilwoman Mary Wells.

Amoeba turns up the tunes for CicLAvia

■ Record store hosts event hub for street fair

BY RANCE COLLINS

CicLAvia, one Los Angeles' favorite street festivals, is coming back to Hollywood April 6. The event, which allows participants to explore neighborhoods car-free, always takes over a different section of the city. This time, it's snaking west from Koreatown on Wilshire Boulevard to the

Hollywood/Vine Metro station.

Also located at Hollywood Boulevard and Vine Street is one of the city's most popular music stores, Amoeba Records, which is playing an instrumental role in Sunday's block party. From 9 a.m.-4 p.m., the store will be manning a performance stage with sets from a variety of artists. The lineup includes Groov3, Wadood, Mystical Joyride, DJ Kerry, Pearl & The Oysters, Discotchari and Photay & Celia Hollander. And that's not all.



photo courtesy of CicLAvia

Music and dancing will be an integral part of the April 6 CicLAvia in Hollywood.

County changes course on homelessness

■ Board OKs split with LAHSA, redirects funds to its own agency

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted on April 1 to take a different direction on providing homelessness services, redirecting millions of dollars from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and creating its own department to provide services.

The decision was based on a motion by County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District, and Board of Supervisors Chair Kathryn Barger, 5th District, aimed at streamlining services and providing more transparency and accountability in how funds are spent. The board voted 4-0, with County Supervisor Holly Mitchell, 2nd District, abstaining.

The county plans to have the new department operational by Jan. 1, 2026, and will finish a phased approach of transferring funds to the new department by July 1, 2026. The board's vote came on the same day that the



photo by Edwin Folven

The L.A. County Board of Supervisors believes having its own department will help better address homelessness.

county's Measure A sales tax increase from 9.5%-9.75% went into effect, potentially raising the amount of money for homeless services by \$1 billion per year.

"With the support of my colleagues, Los Angeles County is leaving the status quo behind and is embracing a model for home-

less services that centers accountability and results. This isn't making the system bigger, it's making it work better, which our communities have been demanding for years," Horvath said. "The hard work to overhaul our current system begins now, guided by the

See County page 26



photo by Patrick Toth

The West Hollywood Fatburger location has been a landmark on Santa Monica Boulevard for many years.

Former Fatburger CEO still under investigation

■ Federal prosecutor in charge of case dismissed by Trump

BY RANCE COLLINS

On March 28, federal prosecutor Adam Schleifer was terminated, with several news sources stating it was at the direct request

of President Donald Trump. Reports indicate that the move was motivated by a case Schleifer was heading against former Fat Brands Inc. CEO Andrew Wiederhorn. Fat Brands Inc. operates Fatburger and Johnny Rockets, among other brands.

Wiederhorn was charged on See Prosecutor page 26

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CALENDAR

Films of Carroll Ballard

Film fans are invited to "Carroll Ballard: An American Cinematheque Retrospective" from Friday, April 4, through Sunday,

April 6, at the Egyptian Theatre and Aero Theatre. "The Black Stallion" will be shown on April 4 at 7 p.m. at the Egyptian Theatre.

The program begins with short film "Rodeo." "Never Cry Wolf" and "Duma" will be shown on April 5 at 3 p.m. at the Aero Theatre. "Fly Away Home" and the short film "Seems Like Only Yesterday" conclude the series on April 6 at the Egyptian Theatre. Ballard will speak at each event. Tickets are \$17, \$12 for members. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd. american-cinematheque.com.

**Emmet Cohen Trio**

Jazz pianist and composer Emmet Cohen makes his BroadStage debut with the Emmet Cohen Trio on



Friday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m. Winner of a 2019 American Pianists Award, Cohen has performed at venues and festivals worldwide. With more than 10 albums and frequent collaborations with jazz legends, Cohen has made a significant impact on the genre. Enjoy pre-show music on the plaza with the

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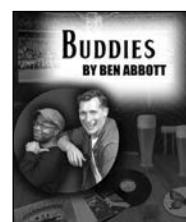


The Beverly Press and Park Labrea News are weekly newspapers, published on Thursdays. Mail subscription is \$120 annually. Decreed newspapers of general circulation, entitled to publish legal advertising, Feb. 10, 1960 by Superior Court Order No 736637. Decreed newspapers of general circulation, entitled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

Samohi Jazz Combo, performing 45 minutes before the main concert. Tickets start at \$45. 1310 11th St., Santa Monica. broadstage.org/tickets-shows/calendar/emmet-cohen-trio.

'Buddies'

Skypilot Theatre Company presents the world premiere of the new comedy "Buddies" from Friday, April 4, through Sunday, May 4, at 905 Cole Theatre. David doesn't have friends so much as he has an obligation to hang out with his wife's friends' husbands. When his sister-in-law brings over her new boyfriend Adam, the two men connect. As they try to figure out



how to make a new friend at this stage of life, they realize they have no idea what they're doing and must embark on a journey of self-discovery. The cast includes Morgan Benson, Jon Paul Burkhardt, Vincent Doud, Sean Dube, Alyssa Klein, John Klenk, Piper Major, Jason Owsley, Tim Trobec and Melanie Uba. Showtimes are at 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday; 3 p.m., Sunday. Tickets are \$40. 905 N. Cole Ave. skypilottheatre.com.

'The Paper Escaper'

The Wallis presents "The Paper Escaper" on Saturday, April 5, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Lovelace Studio Theater. The new work from Terrapin Puppet Theatre tells a story of determination, friendship and the power of following one's own path. Benny, the plucky protagonist, knows the puppets are destined for greater things than a simple pop-up book. In a world that's trying to squash Benny between its pages – from a wily dancing fire to a disillusioned illustrator – Benny will need



the help of a new friend to achieve their dreams. 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd. (310)746-4000, thewallis.org.

Spring Egg Hunt

Families are invited to the Pan Pacific Park Spring Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 5, from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Children can participate in egg hunts, games and crafts and have fun in a moon bounce. Food is available for purchase. Egg hunts will be separated by age: 3 and under at 11:30 a.m., 4-8 at 12:45 p.m. and 9-12 at 1 p.m. Bring your own basket. 7600 Beverly Blvd. (323)939-8874, laparks.org/reccenter/pan-pacific.

Art of Rachel Jones

Regen Projects presents "Dark-Pivot," London-based artist Rachel Jones's first solo exhibition with the gallery and in Los Angeles, from Saturday, April 5, through Saturday, May 10. The new paintings pose fundamental questions about how the body – and traces of its movement – is comprehended differently when pushed beyond its figurative or abstract limits. An opening reception will be held on April 5 from 6-8 p.m. Regular hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday. 6750 Santa Monica Blvd. (310)276-5424, regenprojects.com.

'Theatre Rocks!'

"Theatre Rocks!" comes to Theatre West on Saturday, April 5, at 8 p.m. The show is presented by Theatre West and David P. Johnson, and produced by Garry Kluger. Audiences can rock out to the music of 53 Trees featuring Grace Marquez and David P. Johnson, as well as Bobby Bognar and

Cat Chemist featuring Bobby Cox. Proceeds support nonprofit Theatre West's artistic endeavors and community programs. Admission is \$20 at the door. 3333 Cahuenga Blvd. West. (323)851-4839, theatrewest.org.

**Petersen Museum
Ken Block Cruise-in**

Join the Petersen Automotive Museum in honoring the impact of Ken Block with a cruise-in on Sunday, April 6, from 8-11 a.m. In partnership with the 43 Institute, the event is dedicated to honoring the life and legacy of a true automotive legend. Known for a daring driving style, visionary approach to motorsports and groundbreaking business ventures, Block's influence continues to ignite passion in automotive enthusiasts around the world. Spectator admission is free. General tickets are \$43 and include museum admission, coffee, doughnuts and a poster. Tickets are \$69 to display a car. 6060 Wilshire Blvd. petersen.org.

**Culture of the Andes**

The Fowler Museum is holding "Fire, Tradition, and Cultural Survival in the Central Andes" on Sunday, April 6, from 3-6 p.m. The special afternoon celebrates the exhibition "Taming the Desert" and includes a performance by Afro-Peruvian musician Nadia Calmet, followed by a tour of the exhibition led by Peruvian archaeologist Solsire Cusicanqui. The program is co-sponsored by the Race in the Global Past through Native Lenses project, UCLA CMRS Center for Early Global Studies and the Peruvian Consulate of Los Angeles. RSVP is required. 308 Charles E. Young Drive North. fowler.ucla.edu.

**Becca Mann book signing**

Author Becca Mann will discuss and sign "Outside the Lanes: A Pro Swimmer's Story of Resilience, Reinvention and Redefining Success" on Tuesday, April 8, at 6:30 p.m. at Diesel, A Bookstore in Brentwood. Record-breaking swimmer Mann was a two-time USA National champion and represented Team USA at four World Championships. But after years of sacrifice, relentless drive and coming heartbreakingly close to Olympic glory, Mann's dreams came crashing down. The event is free; seating is limited. The book will be available for purchase. 225 26th St., Ste. 33. diesel-bookstore.com.

Japanese Shinto lecture

Learn about Japanese Shinto tradition during an online program on Wednesday, April 9, at 8:15 p.m. Shinto is an indigenous religion of Japan, characterized by devotion to deities representing natural forces. Dr. Fabio Rambelli will discuss the main features of the ancient kami (a generic name for Shinto's various deities, or metahuman entities) with special reference to their cosmology. The program is presented by the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles and is the first in a four-part series exploring Japanese culture, Shinto and its deities. Registration is required. jflalc.org.



photo courtesy of Mayor Karen Bass' office

Mayor Karen Bass joined public works crews to launch an easier to use and more efficient version of the 311 app.

New 311 app makes it easier to report neighborhood problems

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass announced the launch of a new MyLA311 system on March 28 to make Los Angeles cleaner and safer through improved city services. The new system makes it easier for people to request that graffiti be removed, potholes be filled and that abandoned items are collected from city streets.

Residents can still call 311, but the app and website are faster and easier to use. 311 operators will also use a new and improved system. The new platform will offer 86 service request types, including 15 new and 25 consolidated service requests.

Bass called for the modernization of the MyLA311 system in her fifth executive directive, which focused on making it eas-

ier for residents to get basic city services. The new MyLA311 system delivers better customer service, provides more communication about the status of requests and streamlines processes within city departments.

"This new and improved way to request and receive city services is another example of how we are breaking away from the old way of doing things to make our neighborhoods cleaner and safer," Bass said. "Download the new app so you can let us know where the city needs to respond in your neighborhood."

The new MyLA311 system replaces an outdated app and web page. To download the app, visit lacity.gov/myla311.

L.A. City Council approves right to counsel law for tenants

The Los Angeles City Council on April 1 unanimously adopted a new right to counsel ordinance, establishing a city-wide program for tenants facing eviction who are unable to afford legal representation. It is the final step in a process to draft and adopt an ordinance, initiated in 2023 by Councilwoman Nithya Raman and co-presented by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield, Heather Hutt, Eunisses Hernandez, Hugo Soto-Martinez and Katy Yaroslavsky. Similar legislation in New York City and San Francisco has resulted in significantly reduced eviction filings as well as more people who faced eviction staying in their homes, the council members said.

In Los Angeles County, a record 45,000 unlawful detainees were filed in 2023 and an average of nearly 4,000 eviction notices were filed monthly in 2024. The recent trends are higher than the county experienced between 2015-20, immediately prior to the pandemic.

When tenants are unable to afford a lawyer, they frequently fail to contest an eviction notice, even if it's unlawfully issued. As a result, many eviction actions end in default judgments against tenants that may have been able to make successful arguments in court if they had representation. The newly adopted ordinance establishes the Eviction Defense Program/Stay

Housed L.A. as a permanent phased-in program citywide, codifying services and ensuring that eligible tenants have access to critical legal services.

"Establishing a right to counsel program is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. By investing in protecting tenants, we are not only keeping Angelenos housed, we are saving money in costs related to emergency shelter, temporary housing programs and health care," Raman said.

"The best way to prevent homelessness is to keep people housed in the first place. Yet, too many tenants lose their homes simply because they can't afford an attorney during eviction proceedings," Yaroslavsky said. "By establishing a right to counsel for tenants, the city of Los Angeles will start to level the playing field for so many renters in Los Angeles facing eviction and keep more Angelenos housed."

"After New York City passed their right to counsel law, 84% of renters represented by city lawyers were able to remain in their homes," Soto-Martinez said. "Smart, preventative policies like this are what we need to stop needless evictions and keep hardworking families from falling into homelessness."

For information, visit housing.lacity.gov.

Search for BHUSD superintendent continues

■ Results of community survey on search for district leader released

BY TABOR BREWSTER

The search for a Beverly Hills Unified School District Superintendent is still underway following Michael Bregy's resignation on Feb. 24.

"The [BHUSD] Board of Education is fully committed to appointing a new superintendent who embodies our district's values of excellence, integrity and community," Board President Rachelle Marcus said in a statement on April 2. "We recognize the importance of having this leadership in place before graduation to ensure a seamless transition and to foster unity as we prepare for the upcoming school year. The board has been diligently conducting extensive interviews to find the right individual to guide BHUSD forward with stability, vision and a continued focus on educational excellence."

While a reason for Bregy's resignation was not given, the February announcement by the school board followed months of controversy over the administrative leave of a journalism teacher, allegations of racism and discrimination within the district and several lawsuits.

Jason Hasty, former assistant superintendent of business services, stepped into the role of acting superintendent following Bregy's departure.

Several parents alleged that the

board's messaging on Bregy's resignation lacked transparency. In an interview, Hasty stated that Bregy's resignation was a "mutual agreement" between Bregy and the district. Following the resignation, some parents asked that the district take greater steps to increase transparency during the search for the next superintendent. As a result, the district sent out a survey to the BHUSD community seeking feedback on a prospective superintendent.

The district received 197 survey responses. Approximately 64% of the responses were from parents and guardians, while 12% were from students and 11% were from teachers. A small number of classified staff, administrators and alumni also responded.

Over 70% of people surveyed said that "integrity and ethical leadership" is the most important quality in the next superintendent. Over 50% of survey participants said it is "very important" for the superintendent to have prior experience as a superintendent, while over 40% said it is "somewhat important" and 8.6% said it is "not important." Approximately 57% of respondents said it is "extremely important" that the next superintendent maintains "visibility and engagement" within the BHUSD community, and 70% said the superintendent's primary approach to communication with the community should be through "regular newsletters and email updates." Over 57% of those surveyed also expressed interest in "town hall meetings and public forums," while approximately 52% supported

"direct meetings with parent and staff representatives."

Overall, the results point toward a desire to increase transparency and communication between the next superintendent and the community, while maintaining a focus on academic success.

To view the survey results, visit docs.google.com/presentation/d/1XJ1cZnifLh2uCWu92on5vD7a9_OVsRIBv9XCAVC-DP8/edit#slide=id.p.

While it is unclear how many individuals are being considered for the role of superintendent, Hasty said he would accept the position if offered. Hasty has recused himself from the superintendent search process.

"If offered, I would take it," Hasty said.

The BHUSD Board of Education is currently reviewing applicants for the superintendent position.

One possible candidate that has drawn both support and criticism is Alex Cherniss, a former BHUSD teacher, principal and assistant superintendent. Since leaving the district in 2012, Cherniss has served as the chief business officer of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, San Marino Unified School District superintendent and Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District superintendent.

Cherniss was recommended by former BHUSD parent Robbie Curtis in a board meeting on March 4. Curtis highlighted Cherniss' resume and achievements, including leading San Marino's district when it was recognized by the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress as the No. 1 school dis-



photo by Tabor Brewster

The next superintendent will oversee all BHUSD schools, including Beverly Vista Middle School.

trict in the state and being a nominee for Los Angeles County Superintendent of the Year in 2018.

"Beyond the impressive CV, what has brought him to the attention of the parents is his deep understanding of our community," Curtis said. "He understands the culture, expectations and challenges of Beverly Hills, having lived and breathed our district's value throughout the years."

However, Cherniss has also been the subject of concern and criticism from members of the community.

In a March 11 board meeting, former parent Ilona Sherman recounted a personal experience from when Cherniss was principal of Hawthorne Elementary School. She said her son, a Hawthorne student at the time, was wrongfully suspended by Cherniss. While the suspension was quickly reversed after Sherman wrote a letter to the district, she said that Cherniss would not communicate with her,

and "did nothing" to address her concerns.

"I'm asking you to review him carefully, to look at his behaviors from the last four or five jobs, why he was in so many jobs, and I'm asking you to realize that you're modeling our kids with these kinds of behaviors," Sherman said. "What people do yesterday is what they do today, and what they do tomorrow. BHUSD cannot afford mistakes, and we can't afford Alex Cherniss."

Cherniss was placed on administrative leave by the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District Board of Education in December 2024, pending an internal review. While the Placentia-Yorba Linda board stated that it could not release further details due to confidentiality protocols, the vote came shortly after Cherniss said he filed a hostile work environment claim against the board's president Marilyn Anderson.



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photo by Edwin Folven
The deputy-involved shooting occurred after an assault near the West Hollywood Gateway complex.

Man shot by deputies after domestic assault in WeHo

■ Incident prompts closures at La Brea, Santa Monica

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Deputies with the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station shot and injured a male domestic violence suspect on March 29 near La Brea Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard.

Authorities received a call from the assault victim shortly before 6 p.m. and responded to the 7100 block of Santa Monica Blvd., near the La Brea Gateway shopping complex. While deputies were speaking to the victim, they saw the suspect near the intersection of La Brea Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard and attempted to detain the man. The suspect resisted and a physical altercation ensued, at which time the deputy-involved shooting occurred,

authorities said.

The suspect, who was not identified, was struck once in the lower torso by a gunshot. He was treated at the scene by Los Angeles County Fire Department paramedics and taken to a hospital in stable condition.

No deputies or bystanders were injured during the incident. Portions of the shopping complex and areas around the intersection were closed during the investigation. Detectives with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau responded to the scene and are conducting the investigation, which is standard procedure with shootings that involve deputies. No further information was available.

Anyone with information about the incident is urged to contact the sheriff's department's Homicide Bureau at (323)890-5500.

Two out of state men arrested for firearms in Melrose area

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Officers from the Los Angeles Police Department's Wilshire Division arrested two men from Louisiana on March 24 after they pulled over the suspects' vehicle in the Melrose area and found two concealed firearms.

"They blew through a stop sign at Romaine and Curson and got stopped by officers near Willoughby and Curson," said Lt. Mark Ro, with the Wilshire Division. "They saw marijuana in the car, did a further investigation and found a gun. They also found a concealed gun in the trunk. Two out of the three people in the vehicle – the front passenger and rear passenger – got arrested for carrying a con-

cealed firearm."

Ro said the driver was cited and released for a traffic violation and having a small amount of marijuana in an open container inside the vehicle. The two men who were arrested had criminal records, but Ro did not have any further information. Their names were not released. Ro said they are in their 20s.

The guns were confiscated as evidence. Ro said the firearms were "unregistered" but had not been reported stolen. Police are following up with authorities in Louisiana on the firearms that were located. He said the men were not connected to any other crimes in the area.

Anyone with information is urged to call the Wilshire Division at (213)922-0476.

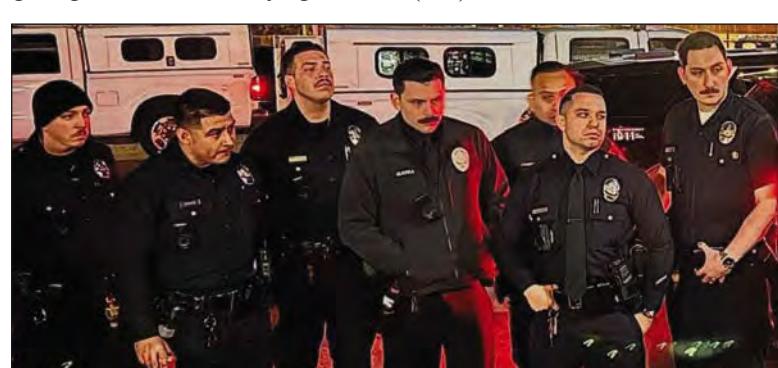


photo courtesy of the LAPD's Wilshire Division
Officers from the Wilshire Division stopped a vehicle with three occupants in the Melrose area on March 24 and found two guns.

Crash on Highland Avenue leaves one dead

■ Residents call for measures to reduce speeding

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Police are narrowing their search for the driver of a Lamborghini SUV who fled the scene after causing a violent collision on Highland Avenue on March 31 that left an 18-year-old girl dead. Authorities said on April 2 that the investigation is moving forward but the driver has not yet been identified.

The crash occurred around 1:25 a.m. at the intersection of Highland Avenue and First Street. The Lamborghini was heading north on Highland Avenue at a high speed when it struck a Toyota RAV4 with a group of teens traveling east on First Street, said Detective David Holmes, with the Los Angeles Police Department's West Traffic Division. The Toyota was occupied by five teens – two boys and two girls ages 18-19 and a female minor, Holmes said. All five were taken to hospitals by the Los Angeles Fire Department. A female passenger seated on the right rear side of the Toyota was later pronounced dead.

"It's tragic. They were all friends," Holmes said. "We believe speed was a factor. The Lamborghini was traveling at a high speed on Highland. We have been speaking to neighbors and officers have been able to get a video from one of the houses on Highland that shows the collision."

The two occupants of the Lamborghini got out and fled on foot after the collision, which knocked down a light pole and left wreckage strewn across lawns. Holmes said a female passenger in the Lamborghini returned to the scene and was questioned by police. She is cooperating with the investigation and is not being identified. Holmes said the Lamborghini is privately owned but would not provide any further details about the owner.

"We may have a possible suspect, we have some information on



photo by Edwin Folven
The violent collision knocked down a light pole and scattered debris across lawns along Highland Avenue.

a possible ID, but we are still putting the connections together," Holmes added. "The Lamborghini was left at the scene and it's in our custody. The investigation is ongoing, and I can't give out much information right now."

The Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner has not released the victim's name pending identification and notification of next of kin. The names of the other victims were not released.

Neighbors in the area said speeding and collisions are a problem on Highland Avenue and the March 31 fatal crash highlights that more needs to be done.

"I saw another car accident here, maybe two, three weeks ago. And I think we had one here last month," said Kerop Artenian, a 25-year resident of Highland Avenue near First Street. "I'm not divorced from reality, this thing keeps occurring and occurring. A lot of people are using their iPhones, not paying attention, a lot of people are speeding. They need to pay more attention."

Hancock Park resident Matt Connors said Highland Avenue has long stretches between stoplights and drivers often speed in the area.

"Sometimes they're flying by,"

he said. "People trying to get across have to be really careful. Sometimes people are going 60 to 70 miles per hour. Something needs to be done to slow people down."

Holmes said he didn't have statistics for collisions along Highland Avenue but said it is among streets in the area with a high number of collisions. He said Sixth Street and the Western Avenue corridor are also streets with a high number of collisions. Officers have increased patrols and are working to address the problem.

"Speeding is a factor, reckless driving is a factor and driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs is a factor," Holmes said. "There have been crashes on Highland before, and speed is the main violation or running a red light. We've also seen it on Sixth Street."

Holmes added that the police department wants more cameras installed at intersections, which help investigators determine what happened and who is at fault in collisions.

"We are working to get more LPR (license plate reading) cameras in areas where with a high number of collisions," he said. "We are trying to address the problem."

Suspect sentenced for Beverly Hills jewelry heist

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

A Long Beach man was sentenced on March 31 to seven years in federal prison for his role in a smash-and-grab robbery at a Beverly Hills jewelry store in 2022.

Ladell Tharpe, 39, was sentenced by United States District Judge George H. Wu, who also ordered Tharpe to pay more than \$2.6 million in restitution. Tharpe pleaded guilty last September to one count of interference with commerce by robbery.

"Braven criminal action that directly targets our small businesses in Los Angeles County will not be tolerated," Acting United States Attorney Joseph McNally said. "The consequences for such action are severe and penalized accordingly, and I want to thank our law enforcement partners for their exceptional and dutiful work during this investigation."

"The Beverly Hills Police Department is committed to protecting our community and ensuring justice," Beverly Hills Police Chief Mark Stainbrook said. "We value our partnership with the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office and appreciate the investigators who relentlessly

pursued and prosecuted those responsible for this crime. As a reminder, crime will not be tolerated in Beverly Hills."

Tharpe was among a group that robbed Luxury Jewels of Beverly Hills at 203 S. Beverly Drive on March 22, 2022. Authorities said Tharpe and accomplices Deshon Bell, 22, Jimmy Lee Vernon, 33, both of Long Beach, as well as a minor whose name was not released, used sledgehammers and crow bars to break glass surrounding merchandise at the store while employees and customers were present.

The thieves stole at least 19 bracelets, seven pairs of earrings, four necklaces, a pair of obelisks, eight rings and 20 watches, all valued at approximately \$2,674,600. The robbers returned to the car in which Bell was waiting and fled the scene. Another car used by the suspects, which was reported stolen four days before the robbery, was abandoned in front of the jewelry store.

Two days after the crime, Tharpe posted images of large amounts of cash on his Instagram account with the text "Robbery Gang," authorities said. He has been in federal custody



photo by Rance Collins
A group of suspects smashed the front window of a store on South Beverly Drive on March 22, 2022.

since March 2023.

Bell and Vernon each pleaded guilty to one count of robbery. Wu sentenced Bell to one year and one day in federal prison in February 2024. Vernon, whose cellphone fell out of his sweatpants pocket during the robbery and was recovered by investigators, was sentenced on Dec. 12, 2024, to six years and eight months in prison and was ordered to pay restitution.

The FBI and the Beverly Hills Police Department investigated the case.

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GLAAD Awards serve as rallying cry for LGBTQ+ community

BY RANCE COLLINS

On March 27, the 36th annual GLAAD Awards honored the best in LGBTQ+ media across 33 categories. Actress Cynthia Erivo was given the Stephen F. Kolzak Award, which recognizes individuals who help fight homophobia in the entertainment industry.

"This is for those who have not yet even begun to find the road, be encouraged and be patient with yourself, it will show itself," the "Wicked" star said in her acceptance speech. "I know this event is

to celebrate the work and I am endlessly grateful for that honor and for this celebration, but the real work is making the ground we leave in our wake level enough for the next person who finds their way to the path we have made. For the person who is searching and searching and has not found it yet. This room is full of people who can and will, if they choose, and I hope they will, because I do, be lanterns to light up your journey and your path on your way to showing the world who you are."

With recent executive orders by

the Trump administration targeting LGBTQ+ people, specifically the trans and nonbinary communities, the tone of the event oscillated between celebratory and defiant.

Trans actress Nava Mau, who accepted the Outstanding Series – Limited/Anthology award on behalf of "Baby Reindeer," recounted a visit she had with Pope Francis, organized with GLAAD, last fall.

"He told us he wishes us all the love and success we desire, and he told us that we should keep fighting," Mau recounted. "So, I share that blessing with all of you tonight."

When the cast of RuPaul's Drag Race accepted the award for Outstanding Reality Competition Program, Sapphira Crystal encour-

aged the audience who gathered at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills.

"The only way we can make change is if we stand together," Crystal said.

Host Michael Urie, donning a pink and green "Wicked"-inspired outfit, called on the audience to use GLAAD's 40-year history as a guide to fight back against oppression.

"It's harder and harder to have a difference of opinion, because we can't agree on the facts," he said. "We are in it together. I am confident that if we keep fighting, loving and showing up, we can change minds."

On the red carpet before the ceremony, attorney Gloria Allred

See GLAAD Awards page 25



photo by Emma McIntyre/
Getty Images for GLAAD

Cynthia Erivo received the honorary Stephen F. Kolzak Award.

Mid City West Progressive Slate aims to maintain progress

The Mid City West Progressive Slate has announced its candidates for the 2025 Mid City West Neighborhood Council election. Representing a cross-section of the community including homeowners, renters, nonprofit leaders, youth and small business advocates, the diverse group is united by a shared commitment to making Mid City West a more equitable, vibrant and connected place to live, work and visit. The neighborhood council election is vote-by-mail only, and the final day to vote is April 15.

Several members of the slate are incumbents running for re-election, bringing essential experience and leadership continuity to the group. The slate has been endorsed by the Miracle Mile Democratic Club, Streets For All and the Park La Brea Residents Association, and is actively working to connect with voters in the final weeks of the campaign.

Incumbent candidates are denoted

with an asterisk. The 2025 Mid City West Progressive Slate candidates are Don Whitehead*, Valerie Washburn* and Chris Dower * – Homeowner Representatives; Henry Mantel*, Tyler Mathews*, Ramiro Castro Jr.*, Lynda La Rose* and Sara Griebe* – Renter Representatives; Holly Also – Business Representative; Lauren Borchard* – Nonprofit Representative; Jenny Da*, Christian La Mont*, Amy Goldenberg*, Christina Mondy*, David Mann*, Jawhara Tariq*, Jenny Matkovich, Anna Mayer Dower, Julian Stern*, Arianna Miskin* and Patrick Vukovich – At-Large Representatives; and Sonya Turoff * – Youth Representative. Zone Representative candidates are Hunter Burgarella* – Zone 1; Shawn Dhanak* – Zone 4; and Robert Shore* – Zone 6.

The Mid City West Progressive Slate is running on a forward-looking, community-first platform that

includes addressing homelessness through dignified services and housing, increasing affordable housing opportunities, protecting and expanding renters' rights, fostering stronger community relationships to improve public safety; and connecting residents to city services and resources. The group also supports increasing access to elected officials, ensuring diverse voices are represented in local decision-making, holding city leaders accountable, ensuring social and racial equity and making streets safer for all forms of mobility. Advocating for multimodal transit options to connect to new Metro stations, strengthening climate action efforts, partnering with local businesses to revitalize commercial corridors and expanding public access to parks and green space are also supported by the candidates.

The minimum voting age in neighborhood council election is 16. People who live, work, worship, own property or a business in the Mid City West area are eligible to vote. To receive a ballot, voters must register online or by mail by April 7. All ballots must be post-marked by Election Day, April 15.

For information about the election, visit neighborhoodempowerment.lacity.gov/elections. For information about the Mid City West Progressive Slate, visit midcitywestla.com.



photo courtesy of the Mid City West Progressive Slate
Members of the Mid City West Progressive Slate are connecting with voters ahead of the upcoming election.

Valley National Bank expands with Beverly Hills branch

Valley National Bank, a New Jersey-based regional bank with \$62 billion in assets, is celebrating the success of its first California branch location in Beverly Hills, which has grown to over \$50 million in deposits and established strong community connections in its first six months. Located at 225 N. Beverly Drive, near Rodeo Drive, the branch, which opened in August 2024, provides comprehensive banking services for commercial and retail customers including private banking, traditional financing, treasury management solutions

and HOA banking.

"We are excited to enhance the Valley brand in California. We have seen strong demand for our customized and holistic banking solutions from individuals and businesses through deposits thus far," said Meline Kalendjian, first vice president and market manager at Valley National Bank.

Kalendjian, who joined Valley Bank in 2024 with more than 30 years of branch management and client relations experience, also contributes deep market knowledge to furthering key relationships with the community.

Since entering the market, Valley's Corporate Social Responsibility and California market teams have further developed community relationships with impactful nonprofits through meaningful engagement, such as volunteerism and investments. The bank's most recent activity includes supporting wildfire relief and recovery efforts to the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles, Abode Communities Los Angeles and American Red Cross Los Angeles Region.

The success of the new branch location will be celebrated with the attendance of Valley Bank leadership, local officials, customers and community members at a grand opening celebration on April 8.

The Beverly Hills branch includes five full-time branch bankers working in the 4,000-square-foot space which offers private offices, meeting space and an on-site ATM to cater to high volume of foot-traffic. Hours for the location are 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The branch can be reached by phone at (310)916-9980 or by email at mkalendjian@valley.com.

Notable Quotes

"We only have so many faces in our pockets."

Marlon Brando (1924-2004)

The two-time Academy Award winning actor was born on this date 101 years ago, April 3, 1924.

*source: goodreads.com



The Disappearing Family Vet: The Quiet Takeover of Veterinary Medicine

If you've been taking your pet to the same vet clinic for years, you might assume it's still independently owned. But behind the scenes, many veterinary clinics are quietly being bought by corporations, keeping the same name while shifting decision-making to corporate offices – often in another state.

Signs Your Clinic Has Gone Corporate

Corporate transitions aren't always obvious. Many newly acquired clinics try to keep the change quiet. Often, the former-owner vet stays for a transition period but becomes less available. Other signs include a rotating lineup of unfamiliar vets, pricing hikes, increased mandatory diagnostics, or pressure to purchase wellness plans.

Why a Consistent Vet Matters

Good veterinary care is harder without consistency. Many clients have told me: "I loved my old vet, but they left, and now I never see the same doctor twice." A vet who knows your pet's history can make better decisions. Medicine isn't just about lab results – it's about noticing small changes and remembering past reactions to treatments.

What Pet Owners Can Do

Ask who owns your clinic. Knowing how decisions are made matters. Find a clinic with stable staff. A consistent vet ensures continuity of care. Support independent practices. Many vets leave corporate hospitals to focus on patient care. Trust your instincts. If something feels off, seek a second opinion. Your pet benefits from a veterinarian who truly knows them – someone who provides personalized care based on their unique needs.

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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Richard Chamberlain dies at 90

BY RANCE COLLINS

When Richard Chamberlain died in Hawaii on March 29, Los Angeles mourned. While the actor spent much of his final decades in O'ahu, he was an L.A. native and a regular presence in the West Hollywood community.

"I would see Richard Chamberlain regularly at community meetings about proposed residential and commercial developments in our neighborhood," resident Ted Green said. "He was always gracious about saying hello and taking a picture. He would speak ... his opinions but I never got the sense he thought his views were any more important than anyone else's."

Reports that Chamberlain was gay circulated in the tabloid press for decades, although the star remained in the closet during most of his acting career.

"When I grew up, being gay, being a sissy or anything like that was verboten," he later said. "I disliked myself intensely and feared this part of myself intensely and had to hide it and became 'Perfect Richard, All-American Boy' as a place to hide."

Chamberlain was born on March 31, 1934, at the since-shuttered Angelus Hospital. He graduated from Beverly Hills High School in 1952 and Pomona College in 1956. An Army veteran, he attained the rank of sergeant during his service in post-war Korea.

When he returned to Los Angeles, he quickly became involved in stage and television acting. His break came in 1961 when he was cast on the NBC series as "Dr. Kildare," which ran until 1966.

Following this success, he appeared in numerous films throughout the 1960s and 1970s, including "The Towering Inferno," "The Slipper and the Rose" and "The Three Musketeers."

The Emmy-nominated actor gained further popularity with a run of successful television miniseries in the 1980s, most significantly "The Thorn Birds," which achieved blockbuster ratings. In it, Chamberlain played a repressed priest tempted by a torrid romance with a woman (Rachel Ward) in early-1900s Australia.

In 2003, Chamberlain officially came out as a gay man in the memoir "Shattered Love," discussing his relationship with actor and pro-

ducer Martin Rabbett, who he had dated since 1977. While the couple separated in 2010 – during which time Chamberlain began living full time in L.A. again – the two were living together again at the time of his death.

"I'm not a romantic leading man anymore so I don't need to nurture that public image anymore," Chamberlain said upon coming out. "I can talk about it now because I'm not afraid anymore."

After he came out, the actor often leaned into his sexuality with his roles, appearing in "Will & Grace" and "Brothers & Sisters" as gay characters.

"Over a long period of time, living as if you were someone else is no fun," he said.

His later credits also included, "Nip/Tuck," "Chuck" and "I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry."

He also frequently appeared on the stage, including a 2012 production of "The Heiress" at the Pasadena Playhouse. On Broadway, he appeared in "The Night of the Iguana," "Blithe Spirit," as Henry Higgins in "My Fair Lady" and as Captain von Trapp in "The Sound of Music." Over the course of his career, he won three Golden Globes and was nominated for four Emmys.



photo courtesy of legacy.com

A Los Angeles native, Richard Chamberlain rose to fame in the 1960s playing "Dr. Kildare."

lived a good life. On one occasion we were talking and some dressing had dribbled down his cheek. Without a second thought, I said 'Here, let me get that for you.' One would never know he was a big star of the stage and screen. He had a very calm and gentle presence. Little did he know how honored I felt to be in his presence and to take care of him."

Val Kilmer dies at 65

BY RANCE COLLINS

Val Kilmer was born in Los Angeles on Dec. 31, 1959. Just over 65 years later, on April 1, Kilmer died in his hometown. Between those years, Kilmer was one of the most prominent actors in Hollywood.

His storied life included a starry high school – counted among his classmates were Kevin Spacey and Mare Winningham, who was his sweetheart. He was accepted into Juilliard when he was 17, the youngest person ever admitted to the drama program.

Kilmer made his screen debut in

1984 in the spoof "Top Secret!" and followed that up with roles in "Real Genius" and, significantly, the box office phenomenon "Top Gun." Next came Ron Howard's "Willow" and Oliver Stone's "The Doors," where he played Jim Morrison. He played Elvis Presley in "True Romance," appeared alongside Robert De Niro and Al Pacino in "Heat" and was part of the all-star cast in "Tombstone."

In 1995, he was chosen to replace Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne/Batman in "Batman Forever," which received middling reviews but was a huge commercial success. After this, Kilmer's career

had ebbs and flows. The production of "The Island of Dr. Moreau," co-starring Marlon Brando, was notoriously fraught and the film bombed at the box office. "At First Sight" and "Red Planet" met similar fates, though Kilmer had some success in the late-1990s with "The Saint" and "The Prince of Egypt."

He would continue to appear in movies during the 2000s, including "Pollock" and "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang." He worked steadily through 2022, when he had an emotional appearance in "Top Gun: Maverick."

In later years, Kilmer battled throat cancer, which left him with health difficulties even after he went into remission. In 2020, Newsweek reported that he was using a feeding tube.

Kilmer was connected to many actresses throughout his career, including Cindy Crawford, Cher and Angelina Jolie. From 1988-96 he was married to his "Willow" co-star Joanne Whalley, with whom he had

two children.

"Will miss [you], [you] were funny, crazy, pain in the ass, great friend ... brilliant as Mark Twain, brave here during [your] sickness," Cher wrote on X.

"He was a wonderful person to work with a joy to know – I will always remember him," director Francis Ford Coppola wrote on Instagram.

"See ya, pal. I'm going to miss you," actor Josh Brolin wrote on Instagram. "You were a smart, challenging, brave, uber-creative firecracker. There's not a lot left of those. I hope to see you up there in the heavens when I eventually get there. Until then, amazing memories, lovely thoughts."

When Kilmer was 17, his brother drowned in an accident when he was 15 years old. Kilmer later reflected on the tragedy.

"Life is precious, and when someone dies, it's an opportunity to realize how precious it is," he said.

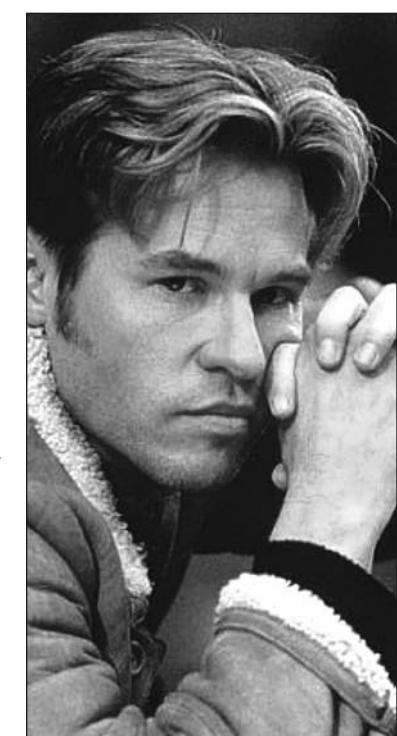


photo courtesy of IMDb
The versatile Val Kilmer appeared in numerous hit films.

Shadrach set to be sworn in as WeHo's first feline pet mayor

The city of West Hollywood's Picasso Pets event will feature the swearing-in of the city's honorary pet mayor, Shadrach Byers, who, with Chelsea Lee Byers as the city's mayor, will serve as the city's first-ever honorary cat mayor. The event will take place on Saturday, April 5, at West Hollywood Park, located at 647 N. San Vicente Blvd. Activities begin at 11 a.m. and the pet mayor ceremony will start at noon.

The free Picasso Pets event will provide an opportunity for pet parents to participate in pet-friendly activities and receive event souvenirs while supplies last. Please note that the pet caricature portrait activity has reached capacity for this event, but pet pawrents are encouraged to enjoy a wide range of pawticularly amazing festivities in the park, including visiting pet care organization booths.

Pets must always remain leashed and under the control of their humans. No ruff housing. Cats are welcome to attend. For the safety of your feline friend, the city encouragese cats to be placed inside a carrier, pet backpack, pet stroller, or wearing a harness and leash.

Incoming Pet Mayor Shadrach is

a trailblazing feline with a passion for advocacy and adventure. As the first-ever cat mayor, Shadrach duties as pet mayor will include attending community events, supporting pet-friendly initiatives and advocating for expanded resources for animals, particularly Community Cats.

A true trailblazer, Shadrach is not only a historic first but also a leader with a purpose. Born under a guava tree in West Los Angeles, she is the eldest of three siblings – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – all of whom share a strong bond. Her brother, Meshach, will serve as honorary deputy pet mayor, ensuring that the administration remains a family affair.

Shadrach is a nature enthusiast and public safety advocate, known for her dedication to patrolling her home and exploring the local community. As Pet Mayor, Shadrach proposes a thoughtful agenda, which includes tenant rights to stay safely housed, expanded animal protections including resources for community cats, as well as fresh treats and timely breakfasts for all.

For information, visit weho.org/Home/Components/NewS/News/11617/23.



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- I want a total stranger to go through all of my personal papers and financial affairs.
- I like family fights – especially unnecessary ones.
- I don't care who inherits my hard earned money.
- I've been messy in life; I'll be messy in death.
- They say you can't take it with you, but what if you can?
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Beverly Hills Film Festival highlights independent filmmakers

BY Tabor Brewster

With awards season in the rear view and many local, regional and international film festivals in full swing, filmmakers from around the world descended upon the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood this week for the Beverly Hills Film Festival. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the festival, founded in 2001 by producer Nino Simone.

Simone created the festival with the goal of bridging the gap between independent cinema and Hollywood. The festival began in Beverly Hills, located primarily at the Clarity Theater, but relocated to Hollywood after the theater was sold. Throughout the years, the festival has screened thousands of films – from new shorts and features by independent filmmakers to the early movies of Old Hollywood legend.

"I have a knack for finding things that not too many people can. In our third year, I screened the first film ever shot in Hollywood," Simone said. "Literally, the shot was taken right here on Hollywood and Highland – that's the first time they said action."

The 1910 film, "In Old

California," was thought to be lost before being rediscovered and screened at the 2004 festival.

Over 20 years later, the 2025 festival has grown to include 350 film screenings, networking opportunities for independent filmmakers and several awards presented at the closing night ceremony at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The awards include honors for feature, short, documentary and animated films in addition to best screenplay, and are determined by a panel of judges led by Frederico Lapenda, a film producer and sports promoter known for popularizing mixed martial arts in the U.S.

The closing night film, "Dwelling Among the Gods," tells the story of an Afghan refugee in Serbia who faces immense challenges in burying her recently deceased brother. The film brings attention to the struggles encountered by many migrants in Europe through a heartfelt story about family and grief. However, in a situation which Simone described as "art imitating life," the Serbian team behind the film will not be able to attend the festival in-person.

"The irony of this film is, the

director and producers are now stuck in Serbia with all the revolution happening there," Simone said. "The same thing is happening to them that happened to the couple in the film."

Due to the months-long anti-corruption protests that have embroiled the Balkan country, the filmmakers will appear remotely, Simone said.

Additional films include "Hello Beautiful," an emotional story of a woman whose life is halted by breast cancer, and "The Second Oldest Man Alive," a psychological drama about a man who attempts to outlive the world's oldest living man.

"The Second Oldest Man Alive" stars Gerry Bamman – known for his role as Uncle Frank in the "Home Alone" franchise – and was written by Ryan Delouya.

"One of the most fascinating parts of this film's journey is the mentorship I received from Academy Award-winning writer Alexander Dinelaris Jr. ('Birdman'), who guided me through the screenplay's development," Delouya said. "Additionally, 'The Second Oldest Man Alive' marks an exciting new chapter for Gerry Bamman, who we specifically



photo courtesy of the Beverly Hills Film Festival

The annual festival showcases filmmakers from 350 films, with the cast and crew of "The Persistence of Memory" attending the opening night on April 1.

ly sought out for his unique comedic sensibility – something audiences remember him for in 'Home Alone.'

In this film, Gerry takes on a radically different role as William Bennett, a heartwarming family man with a hidden darkness within. It's an incredible transformation, and what's even more amazing is that we brought Gerry out of a decade-long retirement to join our project."

Overall, the film festival highlights a diverse array of stories from independent filmmakers from around the world.

"This is our 25th year," Simone said. "Lasting this long with all the

chaos that's happened in the world is quite a feat itself."

He added that he is hoping to hold more of the festival's events within Beverly Hills in the coming years – with the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts being a top contender for film screenings.

Screenings run daily through April 5 at the TCL Chinese Theatre, 6925 Hollywood Blvd. The awards night gala will be held on April 6 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, 9876 Wilshire Blvd.

Tickets to screenings start at \$23 and are available at beverlyhills-filmfestival.com.

Cedars-Sinai raises flag to encourage life-saving organ donation in April

BY EDWIN FOLVEN

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center called attention to Donate Life Month by hoisting a flag on April 1 on a median between its North and South Towers. Members of the public are encouraged to sign up for organ donation, potentially saving another human life.

"It saved my life," said Richard Aidem, a 2104 heart transplant recipient who joined staff from the hospital's Comprehensive Transplant Center at the flag raising ceremony. "I wouldn't be around today. I was a couple of days away from dying. The goal is to spread the word, because there's a big shortage of organs."

Aidem, of Valencia, was joined by fellow transplant recipients David O'Neil and Richard Udin. Aidem serves as an ambassador for OneLegacy, an organ procurement organization that works with hospitals including Cedars-Sinai to save lives. OneLegacy and Cedars-Sinai are highlighting the crucial importance of organ and tissue donation, as thousands of lives are dependent on it. People can sign up to donate when applying for or renewing a driver's license or state ID with the



photo by Edwin Folven

Richard Aidem showed photos of his grandchildren and said organ donations gave him the opportunity to be part of their lives.

California Department of Motor Vehicles, or can register online through organizations such as OneLegacy.

Dr. Tsuyoshi Todo, surgical director of kidney transplantation at Cedars-Sinai and director of the Abdominal Transplant Surgery Fellowship, said the need for organ donation is urgent.

"Transplantation is a life-saving procedure. Many patients with end organ failure, from liver failure to

kidney failure, patients that are on dialysis, heart and lung failure – when you have end organ disease, the only thing we can do to save somebody is with transplantation," Todo said. "Unfortunately, organs don't grow on trees, so we really have to rely on the generosity of donors and donor families."

Todo said Donate Life Month was established in April 2003 by the federal government to raise awareness about organ donation, and has tripled the annual number of donations nationwide from approximately 6,000 to 18,000. Cedars-Sinai completed nearly 700 transplants last year.

"There are still over 100,000 folks waiting for transplantation every year, so we're not even close," Todo added. "But hopefully, we'll get there, and this is just a small part of it."

The Donate Life flag will fly at the medical center throughout April on Gracie Allen Drive just west of George Burns Road. For information on the Cedars-Sinai Comprehensive Transplant Center, visit cedars-sinai.org/programs/transplant.html.



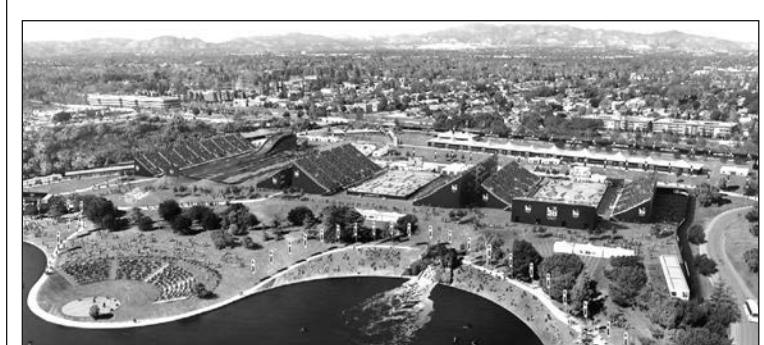
The Donate Life Flag will fly throughout April at Cedars-Sinai.

City Council OKs Olympic venues changes

The Los Angeles City Council approved updates on March 28 to the 2028 Olympic Games Plan proposed by LA28 last June, relocating some of the Olympic and Paralympic sports into existing world-class arenas and stadiums across the region.

The City Council decision followed a March 26 unanimous vote by the Ad Hoc Committee on the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. By moving some sports, the council was able to add two new sports to L.A. venues including flag football, which will make its Olympic debut in 2028, and lacrosse, which will return as an Olympic medal sport for the first time in more than a century.

Following the inclusion of five new sports in the 2028 Olympic sport program, LA28 is optimizing the use of the Stadium in Exposition Park (aka BMO Stadium), adjacent to the L.A. Memorial Coliseum, for flag football and lacrosse. The optimized use of the stadium brings more days of competition between the two sports, which will result in more spectators visiting one of the main competition zones in Los Angeles. Football preliminaries will take place in several stadiums outside the host city, with locations announced later.



rendering courtesy of LA28

The Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area will host BMX freestyle, BMX racing, skateboarding park and skateboarding street competitions, modern pentathlon and 3x3 basketball.



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Spotted that gimp coyote again the other day, the one with the mangled paw, the one that inspires guys like me with achy knees and wounded hearts. If there's a poster child for perseverance, I pick this mangy, courageous creature.

Back when they were making decent mainstream movies, I pitched an animated film about all the critters living around Los Angeles — the hunky lion in Griffith Park, the skunks that slip into Dodger Stadium, the wild bear they dubbed Meatball over his fondness for leftover pasta.

This Pixar menagerie would also include hawks, deer, wild parrots, gophers, escaped hamsters, and one random mink dripping in diamonds.

The setting: The most-exquisite town one could ever imagine: Glendale, Calif. (obviously)

The theme: It's difficult enough to live in Southern California with a new Rivian in your garage, with an American Express card. Imagine dodging all the traffic, the traps, the poisons, the fires? Imagine living under houses, or in someone's itchy attic?

I liked the fraternal elements of this animal world, what it said about co-existence, plus the human need for nature in our zoomy lives.

In the third act of the movie, wildlife officials darted the fearsome cougar and carted him deep into the mountains. But he made his way back; if I remember correctly, in the back of an Amazon truck (free delivery).

Because home is home, no matter how flawed it may be. More than anything, it's where your friends and family are.

That, I suppose, is one reason Los Angeles will always carry on.

As an Irish writer once said, "We travel the world in search of what we need. We return home to find it."

Similarly, I never met a hotel pillow that was better than the one in my own messy, wonderful bed.

FYI, some overstuffed art critic suggested recently that we move the Getty from its majestic hillside perch, the most-magnificent museum venue in the universe, to downtown L.A., where it would be safer from ignition (evidently, he forgot about the massive Central Library fire in the '80s).

It's a provocative take, and well-meaning, I'm sure. Nobody loves art more than an art critic. Without them, where would the world be?

Yet, I hate the fretfulness of his suggestion. I hate fretfulness in general.

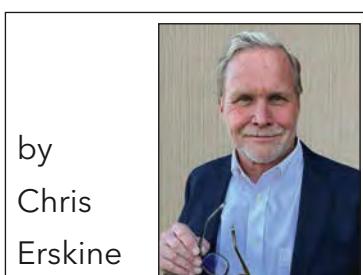
Look, life is never all laughter and joy. How vapid would such a world be? It would be a ball crawl, an opium den. Too much of anything has consequences, even sunshine and light.

In California, we could measure the trademark sunlight in miles per hour. Ironically, that's the same sunlight that cooked our hillsides this past winter.

If Southern California maintains its vigor, its worldclass gleam, it won't be because it embraced fretfulness. It will be because it embraced its gawd-awful challenges.

As you know, Hollywood has always been a hero's workshop. George Bailey. Indiana Jones. Lassie. Belle.

Directors used that iconic sunshine to backlight heroes in heaven-



by
Chris
Erskine

Los Angeles is like a towering wedding cake, carried into the banquet hall by Laurel and Hardy, or Ferrell and Fey — wobbly, swaying this way, then the other way.

ly ways. Early L.A. was based on ego, crude oil and star-power sunshine. What is it based on now?

Thai noodles? Pajamaed influencers? Those are nice too.

Obviously, like that coyote, glorious Los Angeles is limping along for now. But just wait for those '28 Olympics. It would've been a bit horrid to cancel them. Los Angeles doesn't just rise to the occasion, it is the occasion.

For all its struggles, L.A. is still No. 1 on every call sheet. It is America's chiseled profile, gazing out at that vast, shimmering pond. Mock it if you must, much of that kind of thing comes out of envy and ignorance, just as we mock Paris and New York.

Those of us who love L.A. — who really go out and celebrate it — have our little nooks, our lairs, our secret hideouts. For instance, that old carousel where Walt Disney first conjured his massive theme park. Or the tidal pools at Crystal Cove ... the grunion runs in Malibu ... the swan boats in Echo Park.

A city is great in a million tiny ways. It's not the mansions, that's for sure. It's not the bling and bombast of the Oscars. It's that perfect little bookstore in Manhattan Beach, that spooky-dark tavern near Sony, the flowers at Descanso,



photo by Chris Erskine

Tulips at Descanso Gardens: We have a human need for nature.

the chowder at Paradise Cove (so thick you could eat it with a pitchfork).

Out of these neighborhoods — these nooks — comes something intangible and incredible.

Los Angeles is like a towering wedding cake, carried into the banquet hall by Laurel and Hardy, or Ferrell and Fey — wobbly, swaying this way, then tipping too much the

other way.

See, L.A. will be back, a wobbly moment here, a swaying moment there.

Because the best stuff lasts forever.

For past columns, or weekly Wednesday posts, please go to ChrisErskineLA.com.

Mid City West Progressive Slate Candidates & Platform for 2025 Neighborhood Council Election

We will work to make our community a better place to live, work, and play.

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If you're 16 or older and live, work, gather, own property, or own a business in Mid City West, you're eligible to vote in the upcoming vote-by-mail election. This is not linked to standard voter registration.

Endorsed by
Miracle Mile Democratic Club, Streets for all, and Park La Brea Residents Association

MID CITY WEST BOUNDARIES

Our Priorities are housing, transportation, jobs, community, and civic engagement

2025 Mid City West Progressive Slate Candidates (* = incumbent)

Homeowner Representatives

- Don Whitehead *
- Valerie Jaffee Washburn *
- Chris Dower *

Renter Representatives

- Henry Mantel *
- Tyler Mathews *
- Ramiro Castro Jr. *
- Lynda La Rose *
- Sara Griebe *

Business Representative

- Holly Alsop

Nonprofit Representative

- Lauren Borchard *

At-Large Representatives

- Jenny Da *
- Christian La Mont *
- Amy Goldenberg *
- Christina Mondy *
- David Mann *
- Jawhara Tariq *
- Jenny Matkovich
- Anna Mayer Dower
- Julian Stern *
- Arianna Miskin *
- Patrick Vukovich

Youth Representative

- Sonya Tuoff *

Zone Representatives

- Zone 1: Hunter Burgarella *
- Zone 4: Shawn Dhanak *
- Zone 6: Robert Shore *

Learn more about the slate, platform, and how to vote:
www.midcitywestla.com

Register to receive a ballot by April 7, 2025

All ballots must be postmarked by Election Day: April 15, 2025

Le Petit Four closes for good

■ Landlords say 'no' despite community support

BY RANCE COLLINS

After what appeared to be a comeback, Le Petit Four is officially closed on Sunset Boulevard. The restaurant, which last week announced it was closing for good on March 31, had fallen on rough financial times.

It appeared, however, after a community rallying cry, that it might be saved. On March 30, the restaurant announced via Instagram

that it had been saved.

"Just one day before we were set to close our doors for good, everything changed – you showed up in ways we never imagined," the restaurant wrote. "Reservations were packed, heartfelt messages poured in, social media lit up and your generosity helped us cover what we needed to keep going."

But one day later, Le Petit Four reversed course.

"It is with a heavy heart that we must share some unfortunate news. Despite the overwhelming support, love and generosity we received from each of you in our efforts to keep our restaurant open, circum-

stances beyond our control have led us to an unexpected outcome," a March 31 post read. "By the time we were able to gather the necessary funds to pay our dues, our landlord had already made other plans – and sadly, Le Petit Four no longer fits into his vision."

The post went on to say legal actions "have since unfolded," and the eatery was forced to close its doors. March 31 was indeed its last day in operation after 44 years on the Sunset Strip.

The business owners declined a request to comment.

Last week, Le Petit Four shared a throwback Beverly Press cover from May 28, 1992, which included the headline, "Le Petit Four: Stylish Setting, Memorable Food."



photo by Rance Collins

Le Petit Four stayed busy during its last week of operation on the Sunset Strip.

WeHo offers free parking every Wednesday in April

The West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and the city of West Hollywood have announced the launch of WeHappy Wednesdays, an initiative under WHCC's WeHo Gives Back program, which is designed to help local venues and businesses thrive and foster community by making it easier and more affordable for residents, regional community members and visitors to shop, dine and explore the city.

West Hollywood will offer free parking at all parking meters, city-owned surface lots and city parking structures every Wednesday evening throughout April 2025 from 4 p.m.-midnight. The initiative removes a common barrier to visiting local establishments and encourages the community to rediscover favorite spots and explore new ones – all while directly supporting local businesses.

"WeHappy Wednesdays isn't just about free parking, it's about making sure our local businesses continue to thrive by giving people an extra incentive to go out and experience our vibrant city," said Genevieve Morrill, president and CEO of WHCC.

As an initiative of WeHo Gives Back, a WHCC program that supports the success and longevity of businesses in West Hollywood, WeHappy Wednesdays is a direct effort to raise visibility and drive people to support West Hollywood venues and establishments. Many local businesses are navigating economic challenges following the pandemic, and the impact of recent wildfires, weighed with a general trend of changing consumer habits, is compounding these challenges. By eliminating parking fees for one evening each week in April, the initiative makes springtime outings more convenient and fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility for West Hollywood's ongoing success.

West Hollywood is home to more than 200 entertainment-oriented businesses, such as restaurants, lounges, bars and nightclubs. Its local businesses, shops, galleries and destination boutiques make West Hollywood like no other place in the world.

To donate to WHCC WeHo Gives Back efforts, visit pledge.to/weho-gives-back. For information about WeHappy Wednesdays, visit wehochamber.com/wehogivesback.



McKinney unveils precious gems at The Peninsula

BY RANCE COLLINS

Margot McKinney – or at least her jewelry – has a new permanent home at The Peninsula Beverly Hills.

"We feel that The Peninsula really aligned so well with our family values and the way that we like to provide exceptional service for our customers and collectors," McKinney said during a week-long visit to launch the store.

The McKinney family has been in the business of crafting jewelry since 1884, and the boutique showcases some of the brand's most significant creations. Among them is what those in the industry refer to as a "masterpiece."



photo courtesy of McKinney's Jewellers

The Marina Collier is among the pieces currently housed at The Peninsula Beverly Hills.

NHM announces Earth Month events

In honor of Earth Month, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is introducing "Green Screen: Our Planet on Film" in the new NHM Commons Theater. The three Green Screen evening events on April 10, 17 and 24 will be part of a month-long celebration centered around the upcoming annual Earth Day festival on April 19.

Online Earth Month content will explore topics such as how the recent wildfires affected birds, the United Nations Biodiversity Summit and how smartphones can help scientists learn more about the biodiversity of Los Angeles for the historic 10th anniversary of the City Nature Challenge, which kicks off on April 25.

City Nature Challenge is one of the world's largest community sci-

ence events, connecting tens of thousands of people through local nature and communities each year.

NHM's biggest new addition for Earth Month is the free Green Screen film series taking place at the NHM Commons Theater, featuring Sundance World Cinema Documentary nominee "Nocturnes" on April 10, "Manzanar, Diverted: When Water Becomes Dust," presented in partnership on April 17 and "Earth Focus," on April 24.

NHM's annual Earth Day festival will take place on April 19 during regular museum hours. Nickelodeon will also feature the "Science of SpongeBob" and a character visit from the beloved series.

For information, visit nhm.org. The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is located at 900 Exposition Blvd.



Earth Month programming includes three film screenings, the annual City Nature Challenge and a day of interactive activities at the museum.

photo courtesy of NHMLAC

Straight from its appearance at the European Fine Art Fair, the Mariana Collier evokes the Great Barrier Reef, with 29 Australian South Sea baroque pearls, green beryl, aquamarines, tourmalines, sapphires, diamonds, tsavorites and paraibas, all set in 18-karat gold. McKinney said its value is, "a little bit of change from \$2 million."

The store includes fine crafted pieces of all styles – from necklaces to bracelets to earrings. Coral inspiration extends to many of the products, with hues of purple, green and pink predominant. Pearls that accentuate much of the jewelry are particularly unique.

"The only place in the world where the *Pinctada maxima* oyster

grows is Australia, and that's why the only place in the world that a white pearl that's bigger than a garden pea has to come from Australia," McKinney explained.

The jewelry maven is intricately involved with the entire pearl farming process.

"When we open the oyster to harvest the pearl – and that happens after two years – we don't know what's going to be there. It's a great surprise. So, I try to go to the pearl farm for the harvest as often as I can and watch as each of these pearls come out of the oyster. It's an amazing experience," she said.

McKinney said that an oyster can

produce as many as five pearls during its lifetime.

"It's a very caring industry. It's environmentally sustainable, and there's a lot of care put into the nurturing of the oyster. Pearls are the only gems that come from a living organism," she said.

McKinney's company uses the only independently owned pearl farm in Australia, which has also been operating since the 1880s.

"Our business is about relationships," she said, further explaining that McKinney's also uses a fifth-generation opal miner. "It's when people know the story behind a piece of jewelry that it comes to life. It's not just something in a cabinet. It has a history. It has meaning. People's lives have gone into creat-

ing that piece of jewelry."

McKinney has had a long relationship with The Peninsula, using it as her base of operations when doing business in Beverly Hills. Two decades ago, she began a partnership with Neiman Marcus – and later Bergdorf Goodman. When it came time to set up a permanent shop, it only made sense to put it inside The Peninsula.

"There isn't anywhere to buy Australian pearls in the whole of Los Angeles," McKinney said. "It's a market that hasn't been very well served."

Margot McKinney's shop is located just off the lobby of The Peninsula, 9882 S. Santa Monica Blvd. For information and inventory, visit margotmckinney.com.

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Curbs and sidewalks restored along Wilshire with subway project

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority has announced more details about work in the coming months on the D Line Subway Extension Project.

Street restoration will continue through June around the Wilshire/Western, Wilshire/La Brea and Wilshire/Fairfax stations, requiring lane closures at the intersections.

At Wilshire/Western, Wilshire Boulevard is intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Saint Andrews Place and Western Avenue, and Western Avenue is intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Sixth and Seventh Streets. Farther west at Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire Boulevard is intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Highland and Cloverdale avenues, and La Brea Avenue is intermittently reduced to one lane

in each direction between Sixth and Eighth streets. At Wilshire/Fairfax, Wilshire Boulevard is intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Spaulding Avenue and San Diego Way. Fairfax Avenue is intermittently reduced to one lane in each direction between Sixth and Eighth streets.

The work will require a full closure of the Wilshire/Western, Wilshire/La Brea and Wilshire/Fairfax intersections on separate weekends in June. More information will be announced closer to the closures.

Work continues in April at the Wilshire/La Cienega station. A K-rail work zone is in place on the north side of Wilshire Boulevard between San Vicente and La Cienega boulevards. A second work zone along the east side of La Cienega Boulevard is in place north of Wilshire Boulevard. Two lanes of traffic are open in each

direction on Wilshire Boulevard, and northbound La Cienega Boulevard is reduced to two lanes. The traffic control supports ongoing civil restoration work including new curbs, sidewalks, pedestrian ramps and tree wells, and construction of the La Cienega station structure.

Deck removal and street restoration work continues in Beverly Hills near the Wilshire/Rodeo station. The closure is scheduled to remain in effect through April 7 between Crescent Drive and a location just east of El Camino Drive. Detour routes include Century Park East and Robertson Boulevard, North Santa Monica Boulevard/Burton Way and Olympic Boulevard.

At the Century City/Constellation Station, construction has begun on an underground cross passage between the tunnels beneath Century Park West. Work is anticipated to continue for up to 22 weeks. Construction activities including drilling and concrete pouring will take place on Century Park West between Santa Monica



photo by Edwin Folven

Lane closures are in place to accommodate street-level restoration work on Wilshire Boulevard.

each weekend.

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.

Letters to the Editor

Cost of housing inmates on death row is enormous

Re "Hochman reinstates death penalty in L.A. County," March 27 issue

Thanks for an informative article. One thing I do not understand

is why doesn't Beverly Press or the L.A. Times indicate in their articles the cost per inmate per year to taxpayers. I know it's about \$133,000 for inmates in jail who are not on death row. Can you advise how much it costs to keep a prisoner on death row for one year? Also, how many people are on death row in California?

Susie Lancaster

Editor's note: The annual average cost to incarcerate a person in California is \$133,000, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office. According to the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California, it costs an additional \$90,000 to house each death row inmate per year. There were 592 inmates on death row in California as of March 7, 2025, according to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

LADWP optimistic about water availability in 2025

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power announced on April 7 that the Eastern Sierra snowpack measured 91% of normal, ensuring reliable water supplies through the Los Angeles Aqueduct, the city's most cost-effective source.

This year's snowpack presents a promising outlook for water supply, which is anticipated to meet more than half of the city's annual water demand. It translates to 81 billion gallons of water – enough to supply about 62,000 households for an entire year.

"The Los Angeles Aqueduct, local water supply investments and our customers' continued water conserving ethic all help to ensure a secure water future for all

Angelenos," LADWP CEO and Chief Engineer Janisse Quiñones said. "As we face more frequent and extreme natural disasters, it is essential that we remain focused and strategic, preparing now for any challenges ahead."

In addition to the LADWP's annual snow surveys, yearly water level measurements at Mono Lake provide key data to guide decisions on water exportation in the region. The LADWP announced on April 7 that the official surface elevation reading of Mono Lake was 6,383.3.

LADWP conducts snow surveys annually from February to April at five locations in the Eastern Sierra mountain range, measuring snow depth and water content. The data

helps estimate runoff, which projects water supply from the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Runoff season typically lasts from May to June.

On average, the Los Angeles Aqueduct meets approximately 40% of L.A.'s annual water demand. The remaining water supply comes from groundwater sources, recycled water and purchased water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which delivers water from the State Water Project and Colorado River. Also, LADWP estimates that 6.6 billion gallons of stormwater were captured since last fall, enough to meet 4% of the city's annual water demand.

For information, visit ladp.com.

Opt-in for free fire debris removal extended to April 15

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has extended the deadline to April 15 for property owners in areas affected by the January wildfires to opt-in for the government's free debris removal program.

The deadline was extended to allow more people to participate in the program and to expedite Los Angeles County's recovery. Following advocacy by Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District, FEMA also announced that owner-occupied condos and multi-family units are eligible for debris removal by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Thank you to FEMA, CalOES and all our partners for working with us and honoring our request to include condos and townhomes in the federally funded debris removal

program," Horvath said. "Thanks also for hearing the pleas of our residents who have been traumatized by the impacts of these fires to give them more time to process information needed for [right of entry] submission. Extending the deadline to April 15 means more residents will get the help they need to clear debris on their properties and begin the

rebuilding process. We pushed for these changes because our communities needed them, and we'll keep fighting to make sure no one is left behind in recovery. While there's more time, don't delay. Submit your right of entry form now."

For information and to opt-in to the program, visit recovery.lacounty.gov.



photo by Edwin Folven

Property owners in Altadena, the Pacific Palisades and Malibu have more time to opt-in to the debris removal program after the deadline was extended from March 31.

WeHo seeks volunteers for spring cleanup programs

The city of West Hollywood will host three community cleanup events in observance of Earth Month, giving residents, business owners, community members and volunteers an opportunity to beautify the city and engage with City Council members and staff.

The program kicks off with the Eastside Community Clean-Up on Saturday, April 12.

Check-in runs from 9:30 a.m. on the Fuller Lawn at Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. The cleanups all run from 9:45 a.m. to noon.

The Westside Community Clean-Up will be held on Saturday, April 26. Check-in starts at 9 a.m. at West Hollywood Park, 647 N. San Vicente Blvd. The cleanups continue on Saturday, May 10, in the Mid-City Community. Check-in is at 9 a.m. at West Hollywood City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Blvd.

Volunteers are encouraged to register in advance by visiting volunteer.weho.org.

Zbur authors bill to help owners rescue pets after emergencies

Assemblyman Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Hollywood) recently announced Assembly Bill 478 – the FOUND Act: Friends of Oreo Uniting During Disasters – a critical new bill to ensure that pets are protected during emergencies and procedures are in place to support pet owners during evacuations.

Sponsored by Social Compassion in Legislation, the bill was inspired by the story of Oreo, a Pomeranian who went missing during the Palisades Fire and survived for five days in debris before being reunited with his owner.

"Pets are more than just property, they are family," Zbur said. "When disaster strikes, no one should have to choose between their safety and their pet's survival. The FOUND Act ensures that local governments have clear rescue plans in place so pet owners don't have to risk their lives to save their animals. While we've seen incredible examples of fire and safety officials working alongside the public to reunite pets with their families, as well as the extraordinary efforts of local animal shelters and rescuers, we owe it to pet

owners across California to ensure that every city and county has a plan in place before disaster strikes."

The FOUND Act will create key pet rescue procedures requiring cities and counties to update emergency plans with procedures for rescuing pets in evacuation zones. It directs local governments to provide online resources on pet evacuation and reunification assistance, and a list of pets that have been rescued. The bill would also ensure that any pet rescued from an evacuated area is held for at least 90 days before being listed for adoption, euthanized or transferred – a significant improvement from the current 72-hour minimum – giving pet owners more time to reclaim their animals.

"This bill is about making sure no pet is left behind," said Judie Mancuso, founder and president of Social Compassion in Legislation. It provides the necessary tools to coordinate rescues, support evacuees and reunite families with their beloved animals."

For information, visit asmdc.org.

RESTAURANT NEWS

Enjoy Burrito Day at Descanso

Descanso Restaurant is celebrating National Burrito Day on Thursday, April 3, with an exclusive one-day offer. Guests can indulge in the modern taqueria's signature burrito, featuring a choice of steak, al pastor, carnitas, chicken, shrimp or vegetables, made with charro beans, tres quesos, Mexican fried rice, salsa frita and the option to make it wet with red or green housemade salsa.

As part of the special National Burrito Day offer, each guest will receive a complimentary menu item of their choice with every burrito order, including: agua fresca, ensalada clasica, elote asado and flan.

Brunch season has also arrived at Descanso, where the restaurant is serving up bold brunch flavors, refreshing cocktails, bottomless mimosas and all the weekend vibes. From savory chilaquiles to sweet churro pancakes, it's time to gather, indulge and make every brunch

unforgettable. The brunch menu is available Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Descanso is located at 5773 Wilshire Blvd. For information, visit descansorestaurant.com or call (213)672-2444.

NYC ice cream favorite opens in Beverly Hills

Van Leeuwen Ice Cream, the New York-born and nationally beloved ice cream brand known for its made-from-scratch dairy and vegan ice cream, is opening a scoop shop in Beverly Hills on Friday, April 4 at 11 a.m. This opening marks the brand's 75th scoop shop. Scoops will be only \$1 from 3-5 p.m. and free totes will be offered to the first 100 customers, starting at 3 p.m. For information, visit vanleeuwenicecream.com. Van Leeuwen Ice Cream is located at 253 S. Beverly Drive.

Levain opens second L.A. location, with third on the way

On April 4 at 8 a.m., Levain Bakery will celebrate its Venice grand opening with a team ribbon cutting. The first 100 people in line will receive a custom Levain Bakery tote bag filled with fun bakery swag celebrating the Venice community. All proceeds from Levain Bakery's Venice opening day will be donated to St. Joseph Center, an organization originally founded on Rose Avenue in Venice that has since grown into the leading housing and supportive services provider on the Westside of Los Angeles.

To celebrate the opening of their Venice bakery, Levain Bakery will exclusively offer its hit black and white chocolate chip cookie at this location for a limited time. A special Levain nod to the quintessential NYC delicatessen treat that goes perfectly with L.A., the cookie is crafted with extra dark cocoa, semi-sweet chocolate chips and white chocolate chunks, offering a visually striking and delicious experience.



photo courtesy of Ronan

Ronan will offer special pizzas on April 7 only.

Margherita Monday has extra 'Cheese' at Ronan

Ronan is excited to announce a one-night-only collaboration with The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills. Margherita Monday gets an upgrade on April 7 only, as Ronan highlights Chef Daniel's culinary creativity and the finest imported Italian cheeses. The Margherita Monday menu will include focaccia with Casolare fior di latte, walnut pesto, sun dried tomato, Sicilian anchovy, Burrata pugliese genovese, pine nuts, basil oil and petite basil. There will be three

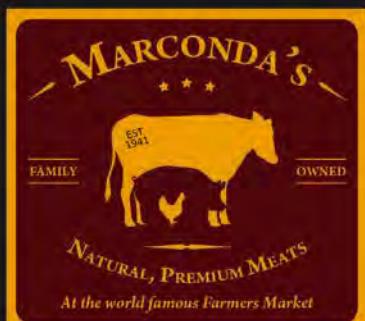


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Levain Bakery has donated proceeds from its bakery openings since 2009, and has an ongoing commitment to giving back to the local community as it continuously strives to be a force for good in each neighborhood it joins. Later this year, Levain will open a third area location in Beverly Hills. Levain is also located at 227 N. Larchmont Blvd.

For information, visit levainbakery.com.

Kimpton buzzes in with a new happy hour

Everyone knows the saying "It's 5 o'clock somewhere," but Kimpton Everly Hollywood's Ever Bar is making a case for 3 o'clock. Located just steps from the iconic Hollywood sign and Pantages Theatre, Kimpton Everly Hollywood is known for its relaxed, design-forward vibe and unbeatable views – and now, it's making a play for the best happy hour in town.

Introducing Beforehand, a new

happy hour designed to get the bar buzzing daily from 3-6 p.m. with standout drinks, bites and a little something extra for locals. From trending tinned fish to a throwback to the classic Miller High Life, the menu merges high and low in a fun playful way. Locals and regulars will also get Beforehand-branded motel key-chains, redeemable for a fun little surprise with each visit. And if happy hour turns into a longer evening, Written Hand, the hotel's new permanent Mediterranean restaurant concept, is just steps away – another reason to show up early and stay awhile.

For information, visit everlyhollywoodhotel.com or call (213)279-3532. Kimpton Everly Hotel is located at 1800 Argyle Ave.

Culver City's Shay offers two new dining options

An exciting culinary development has taken place at The Shay – a boutique lifestyle hotel in the heart of Culver City. This year,

the José Andrés Group – the restaurant group renowned for its innovative cuisine and humanitarian efforts – opened two dynamic restaurants on the property.

With the addition of Zaytinya, offering Mediterranean mezze on the lobby level, and Butterfly, serving gourmet tacos and ceviche by the rooftop pool, The Shay has quickly become a must-visit culinary destination.

To celebrate these new dining experiences, The Shay is offering an exclusive gourmet escape package, which includes a \$50 daily food and beverage credit to use at either Zaytinya or Butterfly. The package is perfect for locals looking to sample both establishments, as well as visitors on a foodie tour of L.A.

Additionally, The Shay offers room service featuring a curated selection of breakfast, lunch and dinner options from Zaytinya and Butterfly, bringing these exceptional flavors to each guest's doorstep.

For information and to book, visit theshayhotel.com or call (424)361-6700. The Shay is located at 8801 Washington Blvd., Culver City.

See page 16



photo courtesy of AC Hotel DTLA

Whether day or not, the view of Los Angeles is unparalleled at La Lo La Rooftop.

Take in the views at La Lo La Rooftop

Savor cocktails with panoramic views at La Lo La Rooftop, nestled on the 34th floor of the AC Hotel DTLA, offering a premier setting for elevated global comfort food and cocktails against the stunning backdrop of the city skyline. This Yabu Pushelberg-designed rooftop spans almost 4,000 square feet with stunning desert-inspired design touches in white, olive and gray hues – ideal for afternoon

cocktails and light bites with friends or a romantic dinner during sunset. Cocktails include the Vamos a La Playa, with La Lo La rum blend, blue curacao, coconut, lime, curry and shiso. For an appetizer, choose la quercia prosciutto and Manchego cheese with olives, membrillo and crackers. For information, visit lalolerooftop.com or call (213)789-7650. La Lo La Rooftop is located at 1260 S. Figueroa St.

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Tam O'Shanter partners with AbilityFirst community

This April, Tam O'Shanter is rallying behind AbilityFirst with a special fundraising initiative to help individuals with disabilities rebuild their lives. A portion of the funds raised by guests throughout the month will directly support AbilityFirst and its mission to empower people with disabilities to achieve their personal best.

This year's efforts take on even greater significance as the campaign will provide critical aid to 25 members of the AbilityFirst community – including both staff and participants – who lost their homes in the devastating Eaton Fire. As these members of the community work to regain stability, AbilityFirst remains a pillar of support, and Tam O'Shanter is committed to helping

ensure they have the resources needed to rebuild.

To thank guests for their generosity, Tam O'Shanter is offering exclusive perks through its VIP Rewards program. For every \$10 donation (up to \$50), VIP Rewards members will receive a \$25 bonus reward to use at any Lawry's restaurant. Non-members who donate at least \$10 and sign up for the program will also receive the \$25 reward. Tam O'Shanter will match donations and provide up to \$125 in rewards for guests who contribute a maximum of five \$10 donations.

Lawry's has a nearly century-long history of supporting AbilityFirst. In 1926, Lawrence L. Frank, co-founder of Lawry's Restaurants, established the

Crippled Children's Society of Southern California – now known as AbilityFirst – to help children and adults with developmental disabilities reach their full potential.

"My great-grandfather started this incredible organization nearly 100 years ago, and I'm honored that we can continue his legacy by supporting AbilityFirst today," said Ryan O'Melveney Wilson, CEO of Lawry's Restaurants Inc. "The Eaton Fire has deeply impacted AbilityFirst members, and we're committed to helping them recover and rebuild."

Join Tam O'Shanter in making a difference this April. For information, visit lawrysonline.com. Tam O'Shanter is located at 2980 Los Feliz Blvd.



photo courtesy of Tam O'Shanter

For over 100 years, AbilityFirst has helped those with disabilities.

Lawry's proves Restaurants Care

This April, Lawry's The Prime Rib Beverly Hills, SideDoor and Five Crowns are coming together to support food and beverage workers across California by matching a portion of guest donations to Restaurants Care, a nonprofit fund powered by the California Restaurant Foundation dedicated to providing hope and stability for hospitality professionals facing hardship.

As a "thank you" for their generosity, Lawry's is offering exclusive rewards to guests who donate. VIP Rewards members will receive a \$25 bonus reward for every \$10 donation (up to \$50 total), which

can be used at any Lawry's restaurant. Non-members who contribute at least \$10 and enroll in the VIP Rewards program will also receive \$25 in rewards. In addition, Lawry's, SideDoor and Five Crowns will match guest contributions, offering up to \$125 in rewards for a maximum of five \$10 donations.

Giving back is deeply rooted in Lawry's history. In 1981, co-founder Lawrence L. Frank made one of the first donations to help establish the California Restaurant Foundation, laying the groundwork for its ongoing mission to support those in need.

"The recent L.A. wildfires have devastated our community, and we are committed to doing our part to help rebuild," said Ryan O'Melveney Wilson, CEO of Lawry's Restaurants Inc. "By partnering with Restaurants Care, we can extend our reach and provide meaningful assistance to food and beverage workers who are the backbone of our industry."

For information and to make reservations, visit lawrysonline.com or call (310)652-2827. Lawry's is located at 100 La Cienega Blvd.



photo courtesy of California Restaurant Foundation

Food and beverage workers – and their children – benefit from the California Restaurant Foundation.

From page 15

WeHo hosts plant-based Food Day

The city of West Hollywood is inviting the community to attend Food Day in WeHo on Monday, April 7 from 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. at Plummer Park's Fiesta Hall, located at 7377 Santa Monica Blvd. The event will coincide with L.A. Climate Week and Earth Month to help inspire the West Hollywood community to learn how to live a

more healthy, environmentally friendly and sustainable life. Food Day in WeHo, produced by the Plant Based Treaty initiative, will include a full day of networking, expert panels and delicious plant-based meals, all focused on how food can drive climate action. The event is free to attend, and registration is requested via Eventbrite at eventbrite.com/e/food-day-la-climate-week-tickets-1257379268239. More information, including the day's agenda, is also available on the Eventbrite page.

Plant Based Treaty is a global initiative that encourages people, businesses and cities to support plant-

based diets and to understand how the current food system is exacerbating climate change. The landmark international treaty is the first of its kind and aims to put food systems at the forefront of combating the climate crisis to halt the widespread degradation of critical ecosystems caused by animal agriculture. It promotes a shift to more healthy, sustainable plant-based diets to actively reverse damage done to ecosystems and biodiversity loss.

Food Day in WeHo is organized by Plant Based Treaty Los Angeles and will feature a variety of plant-based foods, educational panels, raffles and guest speakers. Event

organizers are encouraging attendees to walk and/or bicycle to transit hubs and utilize transit to promote sustainability and environmentally friendly modes of transportation.

For information about Food Day in WeHo, contact Jasmine Duckworth, West Hollywood's community affairs coordinator, at (323)848-6559 or at jduckworth@weho.org. For information about Plant Based Treaty Los Angeles, contact Samantha Lau, campaigner for Plant Based Treaty Los Angeles at samantha@plant-basedtreaty.org or visit plant-basedtreaty.org.

'What They Saw: Historical Photobooks by Women' comes to Getty

Getty presents "What They Saw: Historical Photobooks by Women, 1843-1999," an interactive pop-up reading room that provides a unique opportunity for visitors to engage with photobooks.

Open from April 8-May 11, the exhibition highlights more than 100 photobooks by women dating from 1843 to 1999 and a selection of contemporary photobooks by female Southern California photographers. Unlike traditional exhibitions, the hands-on experience encourages visitors to hold the books, read and flip through pages, immersing themselves in the creative narratives captured in each work. The unconventional project is part of an international series showcasing the works described in the 10x10 Photobooks catalog "What They Saw," edited by Russet Lederman and Olga Yatskevitch.

"This project is a testament to the depth and breadth of women's contributions to the photobook medium," said Mary Miller, director of

the Getty Research Institute. "By revisiting these works, we're not just celebrating their artistry – we're ensuring that these voices remain an integral part of photographic history."

Contemporary photobook artists based in Southern California include Uta Barth, Kristen Bedford, Lauren Bon, Kaucyila Brooke, Jo Ann Callis, Elena Dorfman, Christina Fernandez, Rose-Lynn Fisher, Judy Fiskin, Jona Frank, Lauren Greenfield, Soo Kim, Mona Kuhn, Diana Markosian, Melodie McDaniel, Catherine Opie, Sheila Pinkel, Alex Prager, Randi Malkin Steinberger and Deanna Templeton.

The Getty Library houses more than 1.5 million books, periodicals, photographs, archives and special collections, focusing on the history of art, architecture and archaeology. The library is open to the public and advances the understanding of the visual arts and their diverse histories.

The installation is curated by

Isotta Poggi, associate curator at the Getty Research Institute, Marjorie Ornston, photography council member at J. Paul Getty Museum and 10x10 Photobooks co-founders Russet Lederman and

Olga Yatskevitch.

On April 11, a panel on photobooks by women will feature artists Catherine Opie and Melodie McDaniel, with Lederman and Poggi, discussing the unique medium of the photobook and its potential for collaboration, storytelling, self-expression, identity and resilience.

For information, visit getty.edu. The Getty is located at 1200 Getty Center Drive.



photo courtesy of Getty

The interactive reading room invites visitors to flip through photobooks created by women between 1843-1999.

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.

'Rock the Kasbah' for dinner and drinks

BY Tabor Brewster

A Moroccan escape recently opened in Hollywood, bringing a buzz to Sunset Boulevard on weekends. The new restaurant complements Members Restaurant and Club – a Mediterranean-inspired space that's lively until the early morning hours. Dining at Kasbah by Members serves elegant cuisine and provides a perfect place for a date or a night out with friends.

In cities across North Africa, earthy stone structures come together to form a Kasbah – a fortified citadel that evokes a sense of ancient wonder. Throughout history, Kasbahs have protected noblemen, wealthy merchants and royals. The Kasbah of Marrakesh in Morocco stands apart as the country's most famous – an ancient and historic district that still hosts the country's king when he visits the city. Luckily, you don't have to be a king to enter this Kasbah – you'll just have to show your ID.

Kasbah by Members draws on the rich culture of Morocco with its decor. Visitors are guided through a

long, mysterious hallway lit entirely red, then through a curtain revealing the ornate dining room. Gold cloth drapes every surface of the restaurant – even the ceiling – creating a relaxing atmosphere that seems a world away from Los Angeles. Plush wraparound booths and deep-seated lounge chairs invite guests to savor every moment, and soft light flows warmly from Moroccan lanterns at every table. The visual grandeur of the restaurant couples with modern dance music from Africa and around the world to provide a curated experience for guests.

The dining room sits adjacent to Members' larger restaurant and club space, accessible through the aforementioned hallway. Kasbah acts as a private and intimate retreat amid the larger, brighter, more boisterous Members room. However, guests at Kasbah are invited to enjoy the club atmosphere of Members following their dinner. Additionally, on the Saturday night that we dined at Kasbah, a talented dancer performing "Raqs Sharqi" – or what we westerners might call

belly dancing – made her way between both spaces, enchanting guests with elegantly fluid movements accented by a shimmering outfit.

The menu at Kasbah features authentic Moroccan cuisine, an extensive wine list and North African-inspired cocktails. I tried the Mansour, a hefty drink made with Makers Mark bourbon, dates and black walnut bitters – a combination similar to an old fashioned, but with a rich and aromatic twist. Other cocktails include similarly unique combinations of beloved spirits – Don Julio Blanco and Tanqueray, for example – with ingredients you might find at a market in Morocco – hibiscus, elderflower, rose water, smoked rosemary and olive oil.

The food at Kasbah is nothing short of spectacular. Unpretentious and remarkably straightforward, the menu features Moroccan staples like lamb, couscous and harira – three items that our server insisted we try.

We started with the harira, a thick soup served piping hot in a large and intricately patterned clay



photo by Tabor Brewster

Gold cloth drapes every surface of Kasbah by Members, creating an intriguing atmosphere.

tagine. The harira is made from tomatoes, vegetables and robust herbs, while tender chickpeas provide a subtle texture and flavor to complement the rich stew.

Next, we were served warm khobs – a traditional soft Moroccan bread – with a quartet of accompaniments for dipping and spreading. The marinated olives, roasted eggplant dip and Moroccan salad were all fantastic, but the star was the Shakshuka – a luxurious combination of tomatoes, roasted red peppers and bright Moroccan spices. The Shakshuka is best enjoyed spread atop the khobs – a perfect appetizer and introduction to North African cuisine.

For the main course, we were delighted with chicken skewers and lamb couscous. The tender morsels of chicken are marinated in a mix-

ture of fresh herbs and a Moroccan spice blend, served alongside charred peppers and onions on a wooden board. The lamb was perhaps the best I've ever had. Fall-off-the-bone tender, the exceedingly succulent lamb rests delicately atop a heaping bed of couscous in a generously sized tagine, and breaks apart effortlessly with the touch of a fork. Mixed together with roasted vegetables, the lamb couscous was a perfect bookend for our night at the Kasbah – and the leftovers were a delectable lunch the next day.

Next time you're in Hollywood, "Rock the Kasbah" for an unforgettable dining and entertainment experience.

Kasbah by Members is located at 7627 Sunset Blvd. To reserve a table, visit members.love/kasbahbymembers.

L.A. Get Down Festival returns to Greenway Court Theatre

Greenway Court Theatre welcomes back the L.A. Get Down Festival in April.

The annual hip hop and spoken word celebration is held in observance of National Poetry Month and includes hip hop ciphers, poetry slams, performances and workshops.

The L.A. Get Down-Hip Hop Cipher event featuring the Neighborhood Kids and a freestyle challenge session will be held on Friday, April 4, from 8-10 p.m. The Opening Ceremony featuring Figgy Baby will take place on Saturday, April 5, from 8-10 p.m. Additional events are planned throughout the month.

The program is supported in part by an arts grant from the city of West Hollywood. Greenway Arts Alliance unites communities

through art, education and social enterprise. With professional theatre productions, educational programs and the weekly Melrose Trading Post, Greenway is building a vibrant artistic community.

The Greenway Court Theatre is



photo courtesy of Greenway Court Theatre

The festival features hip hop ciphers, poetry slams, performances and workshops.

Master Chorale invites public to 'Sacred Spaces'

The Los Angeles Master Chorale will launch its inaugural "Community Series: Sacred Spaces" concert series, led by Kiki and David Gindler Artistic Director Grant Gershon, with two upcoming performances at All Saints' Beverly Hills on April 6, and Saint Andrew Church in Pasadena on April 11. The special series embraces the rich acoustics and spiritual resonance of the beloved spaces while making the beauty and power of world-class choral music accessible to a wider audience.

Blending tradition with innovation, "Sacred Spaces" celebrates

the meaningful connection between music and place. Each concert highlights the Master Chorale's unparalleled sound and versatility in settings that have long served as centers of community and reflection. Featuring a diverse repertoire that spans centuries – from traditional hymns and spirituals to contemporary works by today's most visionary choral artists – the performances invite audiences to experience the transformative power of the Master Chorale in communal spaces.

"Sacred Spaces" is part of the Master Chorale's ongoing com-

mitment to engaging new and diverse audiences, fostering a deeper appreciation for choral music, and strengthening connections within the Los Angeles community. The Master Chorale recently launched Youth Chorus LA, its after-school choral education program open to all young people regardless of musical background or financial means.

For information and tickets, visit lamasterchorale.org. All Saints' Beverly Hills is located at 504 N. Camden Drive. St. Andrew Church is located at 311 N. Raymond Ave., Pasadena.

Brandt Beef Tallow available at Marconda's Meats

Marconda's Meats at the Original Farmers Market is offering Brandt Beef All Natural Tallow, made from 100% natural, sustainably raised Brandt Beef. Perfect for frying, roasting and baking, it adds rich flavor and a golden crisp to everything from fries to seared steaks. With a high smoke point and simple ingredients, Brandt Beef Tallow guarantees delicious, reliable results every time.

"It's very popular. It's a very sought-after item," Marconda's

Meats owner Lou De Rosa said. "It's very healthy and it has a clean flavor. You can use it in a skillet on the stove or in a deep fryer. It's essentially used in place of cooking oil. It's much healthier than seed oils."

Brandt Beef All Natural Tallow is sold in 16-ounce containers, which are \$11.98 each. Marconda's Meats is located in Stall 514 at the Farmers Market, 6333 W. Third St. For information, call (323) 938-5131, visit marcondas.com.



photo courtesy of Marconda's Meats

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Local college's student paper wins major awards

Santa Monica College's student-run media outlet The Corsair and its staff won 22 state awards this month from the Journalism Association of Community Colleges, plus 10 honors from the Associated Collegiate Press and 15 awards from the California College Media Association, including several first-place awards. The awards were announced at the 2025 National College Media Conference held March 6-8 in Long Beach.

Corsair photojournalist Gregory L. Hawthorne was also announced as the JACC student president for 2025, representing journalism students across the state. Hawthorne has won multiple photojournalism awards from JACC.

Additionally, on March 22, the Press Photographers Association of Greater Los Angeles honored fall 2024/spring 2025 Corsair photo editor Jake Crandall as "Student Still Photojournalist of the Year" and honored former Corsair photo editor Danilo Perez as runner-up. Crandall received a \$1,500 check and a Nikon camera and lens from the Nikon-sponsored contest. Perez received a \$1,000 check and glowing reviews from the professional judges. Crandall and Perez join the ranks of SMC Corsair photo-



photo by Gerard Burkart
The spring 2025 Corsair staff have won dozens of journalism awards.

phers who have dominated the competition since 2005.

"Photojournalism allows me to get as close as you possibly can to history," said Crandall, a journalism major who hopes to transfer to UCLA or Cal State Long Beach. He moonlights as a video news intern and a photojournalist's assistant. "I like going where the action is. I never wanted a normal life."

The Corsair advising team includes journalism instructor Sharyn Obsatz, photojournalism instructor Gerard Burkhardt and social media journalism instructor Samantha Nuñez. The Corsair staff

produces a newspaper in the spring and fall semesters, currently available on issuu.com/corsair.website, and publishes news content online at thecorsaironline.com.

"The Corsair students put their hearts and souls into the news coverage they produce for our community. It is always so beautiful to see their hard work recognized," Obsatz said. "The Corsair newsroom is a family, with many other editors and staff working behind the scenes as well."

For information about SMC's journalism department, visit smc.edu/journalism.

Girls to Greatness Teen Summit uplifts youth

The EmpowHer Institute is holding the annual Girls to Greatness Teen Summit on Friday, April 4, from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Los Angeles

Convention Center. Sponsored by Edison International, the event aims to empower more than 600 young women in the 7-12th grades by pro-

viding the tools, inspiration and mentorship necessary to become the next generation of leaders.

Malika Andrews, ESPN journalist and host of "NBA Today," and Dr. Charity Chandler-Cole, CEO of CASA Los Angeles and advocate for equity and justice, will give keynote speeches at the Girls to Greatness Teen Summit. The event will also include celebrities and special guests, and will be emceed by actress Ciara Riley Wilson. Rising Star honorees include environmental and animal rights activist Genesis Butler, philanthropist and activist Amarianna "Mari" Copeny (aka "Little Miss Flint") and Ileana McDonald, chapter development lead at Girls Learn International.

Attendees will enjoy performances by the Divas of Compton, soul artist Tia P and DJ Midi Riperton. The summit will also fea-

Foundation's report offers model for opening schools after-hours

The Los Angeles Parks Foundation has released an in-depth evaluation of the Community School Parks program, a strategic initiative to expand equitable access to recreational space across Los Angeles.

The report was released as Los Angeles grapples with persistent inequities in access to safe and accessible public spaces. Prompted by a 2023 motion authored by Los Angeles City Councilwoman Nithya Raman, 4th District, the program has led to the opening of 10 new Community School Parks, offering residents expanded access to playgrounds, sports fields and courts outside of traditional school hours. The Community School Parks program is currently implemented at Harvard Elementary School, Camellia Avenue Elementary School, Garden Grove Elementary School, Leo Politi Elementary School, Mary McLeod Bethune Middle School, Northridge Middle School, Obama Global Prep Academy, Open Magnet Charter School, Pio Pico Middle School and Ramona Elementary School.

The report provides a comprehensive assessment of the interagency partnership between the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Department of Recreation and Parks, and offers recommendations to use the model to meet the city's growing demand for equitable open space. Michael Shull, an L.A. Parks Foundation Board member and

former general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, is the primary author of the study. He collaborated with fellow foundation board member and former Department of Recreation and Parks Board commissioner Joseph Halper. The findings highlight the Community School Parks program's effectiveness in expanding access to recreational spaces, particularly in neighborhoods where residents lack a public park within a half mile of their homes.

"With the launch of this report, our hope is that the information and critical findings detailing the robust collaboration between the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles United School District and Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks will serve as a cornerstone for building park equity across Los Angeles," L.A. Parks Foundation president and CEO Tony Budrovich said. "With the launch of this report, our hope is that the information and critical findings detailing the robust collaboration between the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles United School District and Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks will serve as a cornerstone for building park equity across Los Angeles."

The Los Angeles Parks Foundation works to enhance, expand, preserve and promote public recreation, parks and open spaces. For information, visit laparksfoundation.org.

Women business leaders will mentor attendees, offering guidance, sharing experiences and fostering connections.

EmpowHer Institute is an L.A.-based nonprofit dedicated to uplifting marginalized girls in middle and high school. The Los Angeles Convention Center is located at 1201 S. Figueroa St. For information, visit empowher.org/g2teens.



photo courtesy of the EmpowHer Institute
The Girls to Greatness Teen Summit helps teens develop into leaders.

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UCLA guest speaker discusses 'eDiscovery'

On Wednesday, March 17, University of California, Los Angeles alumnus and associate professor Bobby Rimas – of the American Legal Systems course at California State University, Los Angeles' Downtown L.A. campus – had guest lecturer and attorney Ariel Flores Mena speak with his students regarding the significance of electronic discovery, also known as eDiscovery, and how it continues to change the legal landscape.

Rimas explained that eDiscovery is electronic evidence, such as emails, texts and memorandums, that legal teams obtain on behalf of their clients that may be submitted to court. Rimas then introduced guest speaker Mena, an associate at the Larson LLP law firm. Mena went into detail regarding eDiscovery and how important it is

to the legal field. More specifically, Mena spoke about how eDiscovery is often utilized in connection with sensitive and confidential information of a legal case. Mena then indicated that eDiscovery can also be utilized for the process of producing documents, evidence, proving various aspects of a case, which varies depending on the specifics of each legal matter. Such a process can be important in litigation because it can assist with proving a defense or lack thereof.

Mena then spoke of various eDiscovery software that law firms and corporations utilize that include a cloud-based database which gives users the option to do keyword searches to streamline the document search and reviewing process. Mena emphasized that all legal team members must have a com-

prehensive understanding of a case to create effective keywords and search terms to ensure document searches are more efficient and manageable. Mena indicated that cost efficiency is always a key consideration in eDiscovery, especially when thousands or millions of documents are hosted within an eDiscovery database. Mena then discussed how artificial intelligence is increasingly being utilized in eDiscovery. He went on to state that everyone involved with utilizing AI in eDiscovery must review the work in detail to ensure accuracy within AI-assisted processes.

Rimas indicated that Mena's presentation was "well received by students who were enthusiastic to hear about his various hands-on approaches, perspectives and significance of eDiscovery."

Beverly Hills High School celebrated in board meeting

During the March 25 Beverly Hills Unified School District Board of Education meeting, the "Teacher/Staff/Student Spotlight"

segment featured a powerful showcase of achievement from Beverly Hills High School, celebrating student success, staff recognition and

school-wide progress.

The BHHS SkillsUSA Teams were recognized for their standout performance at the recent regional competition. Students earned top honors across multiple categories – including audio production, baking and pastry arts, video news production and customer service – demonstrating technical expertise, leadership and career readiness. Several students will advance to the upcoming state competition.

The BHHS School Counseling Department was honored for



photo courtesy of Bobby Rimas

Ariel Flores Mena was welcomed by professor Bobby Rimas.

achieving the American School Counselor Association's prestigious RAMP Certification, a national distinction awarded to schools that deliver comprehensive, data-driven and student-centered counseling programs.

Principal Drew Stewart and English teacher and Western Association of Schools and Colleges coordinator Barbara Nealis also presented an update on BHHS's WASC accreditation

process, highlighting the school's commitment to continuous improvement, reflection and academic integrity.

"These recognitions reflect the depth of talent and dedication at BHHS – from students applying real-world skills to educators leading with purpose and vision," Interim Superintendent Jason Hasty said. "This is educational excellence in action."

For information, visit bhhs.org.



photo courtesy of BHUSD

Beverly Hills High School students were recognized by the BHUSD Board of Education for their achievements at a recent SkillsUSA competition.

SpcaLA summer camp registration for children 9-14 opens April 7

Registration begins on Monday, April 7, at noon for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles Friends for Life Summer Camp. The camp is for children 9-14 years old.

Friends for Life Camp begins on June 23 at the spcaLA P.D. Pitchford Companion Animal Village and Education Center in Long Beach. Seven one-week sessions are available. Each session is broken into two age groups: "Beagles" ages 9-11 and "Boxers" ages 12-14. Campers learn about pet

responsibility, kindness to animals and positive reinforcement dog training. The cost is \$400. Register online at spcalasummercamp.com.

Friends for Life Camp started in 2004 and is beneficial to the community in and out of shelters. Campers learn valuable lessons about animal related topics while providing socialization and basic training to dozens of shelter dogs each summer.

For information, visit spcalasummercamp.com or contact spcaLA at (562)216-2545.

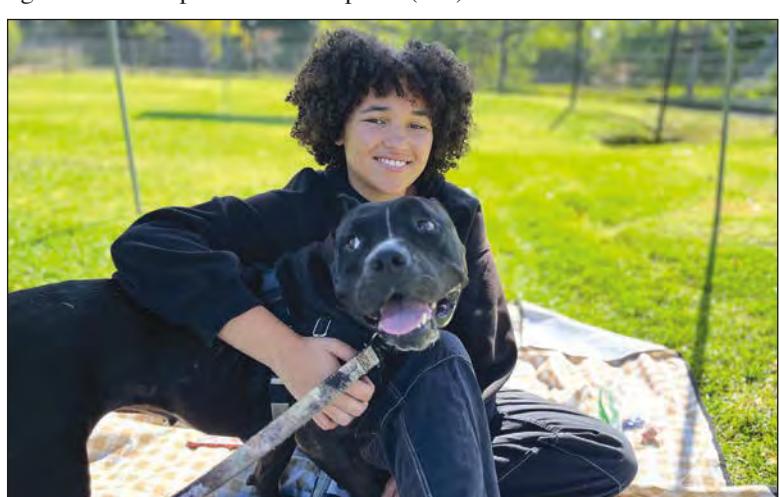


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The summer camp will teach children ages 9-14 about pet responsibility, kindness to animals and positive reinforcement dog training.

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BHHS hosts college fair

Beverly Hills High School welcomed representatives from more than 50 colleges and universities for

the annual college fair, held in the Media Center and B1 Patio on March 26. The event was open to



photo courtesy of BHUSD

Students met with university representatives from across the country to learn about the college experience.

all BHHS students and families, offering a valuable opportunity to connect with schools from across the country.

Whether students were just beginning to explore options or preparing to apply, the fair provided personalized guidance on everything from academic programs and campus life to admissions and scholarships.

"This event was about helping students take the next step with confidence," BHHS Principal Drew Stewart said. "We want every student to feel informed, inspired and supported as they look ahead to life after high school."

The fair included a wide variety of institutions, including public and private universities, liberal arts colleges and out-of-state schools. College representatives were available throughout the day to answer questions, provide materials and support students on the journey toward higher education.

For information, visit bhuds.org.

Join IndyCar driver Pato O'Ward at the Petersen Automotive Museum

The Petersen Automotive Museum will welcome NTT IndyCar Series driver Pato O'Ward on Wednesday, April 9. Students under 18 will receive free admission during the special Driver's Day celebration sponsored by Mission Foods.

O'Ward will motivate race enthusiasts of all ages and will join a Q&A session to share inspiring stories from his IndyCar career and his role as a McLaren Formula 1 reserve driver. Hundreds of visitors are expected to join the celebration and engage with O'Ward. Exclusive activities designed specifically for students will be offered.

O'Ward has posted seven career IndyCar victories and 24 top five finishes in 73 starts. He is originally from Mexico and grew up in San Antonio.

The Petersen Automotive Museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Blvd. For information, visit petersen.org/events/drivers-day-pato-oward-2025.



Driver Pato O'Ward will discuss his career on April 9.

UCLA gala supports research for LGBTQ+ communities

The UCLA School of Law Williams Institute's 2025 annual Gala is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, at the 1 Hotel in West Hollywood. This year's gala is dedicated to the power of research in addressing the most pressing issues facing LGBTQ+ communities. It will also honor some of the remarkable individuals who champion the work, including Niecy Nash-Betts (Visionary Leadership Award), Admiral Rachel Levine (Impact Award) and Selendy Gay PLLC (Corporate Ally Award). Jessica

Betts will perform.

The research is more urgent than ever as the country grapples with and responds to the onslaught of federal policies and state laws that attempt to erase LGBTQ+ communities. Each guest's presence will make the event truly extraordinary, and their support will directly benefit the essential work of the Williams Institute, helping to make sure its research continues to address current issues and positive impacts LGBTQ+ communities.

The rapidly changing U.S. policy

landscape requires research that meets the moment. For nearly 25 years, the Williams Institute has provided valuable insights that empowers policymakers, lawyers, judges and the public with facts about LGBTQ+ communities, which is more important now than ever.

Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., followed by a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. A gourmet seated dinner and program will start at 7 p.m. For information and to register, visit law.ucla.edu/events/williams-institute-legacy-gala.

Experience 'Vilna: A Resistance Story' at The Ebell

Holocaust Museum L.A., in partnership with The Ebell of Los Angeles, presents a performance of the inspiring musical "Vilna: A Resistance Story," on Sunday, April 6, at 3 p.m. at The Ebell.

"Vilna: A Resistance Story" is a new musical about Vitka Kempner, a 19-year-old Jewish girl who inspired the heroic Jewish resistance movement in the Vilna ghetto during the Holocaust. After the Nazis invade Poland, a fierce and fearless Vitka escapes to the free,

bohemian city of Vilna, Lithuania, where she meets a group of young artists and inspires them to form a resistance.

With a vibrant klezmer-influenced pop score by composer-lyricist Kevin Cloud, "Vilna: A Resistance Story" features songs that have been called "melodic and memorable, ranging from elegiac and melancholy to stirring and triumphant." The book is by award-winning playwright Lisa Kenner Grissom, with additional

story by Allison Cloud. The show is directed by Hannah Ryan, with music direction by Brad Gardner and casting by Jamibeth Margolis.

The performance will be presented as a staged musical. Admission is free, but reservations are required.

The Ebell is located at 743 S. Lucerne Blvd.

For information, visit holocaustmuseumla.org/event-details/vilna-a-resistance-story-2.



rendering courtesy of Crayon Collection

Schools will create artwork to be displayed on banners throughout the Pacific Palisades.

Pacific Palisades decorated with 'Banners of Hope'

Pacific Palisades nonprofit Crayon Collection announced the launch of the "Banners of Hope Project," a community-driven project to support the 11 schools in Pacific Palisades affected by the devastating fire that began on Jan. 7. The initiative aims to restore a sense of color, spirit and unity to the community, while uplifting its residents in the wake of tragedy.

Students at each participating school are presently working on creating one unique artwork representing their school and selecting three words that describe the future of the Palisades. The works will appear on banners installed on all 59 light poles throughout the Pacific Palisades this summer.

"Over the past three months, our world has been upended. The loss of our beloved Pacific Palisades is something we're still struggling to fully grasp. We remember all that once was and

wonder if it will ever be the same again so we felt it was time for our own community members to express themselves with art and creativity," said Sheila Morovati, founder of Crayon Collection, whose mission is to inspire a commitment to environmental consciousness and the infusion of art education in underfunded schools.

Crayon Collection will also replenish the schools' art supplies in August, in honor of #NationalCrayonCollectionMonth, ensuring that students are equipped for the new school year. The effort aims to bring smiles and joy to community members navigating unimaginable loss.

"The Banners of Hope Project serves as a powerful reminder that hope and creativity can flourish even in the most challenging times," LAUSD Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho said.

For information, visit crayoncollection.org.

CHLA patients visited by Portman

Actress Natalie Portman visited Children's Hospital Los Angeles to support the hospital's 10th annual Make March Matter campaign on March 31. The longtime CHLA supporter brought joy to young patients with a special visit, reading with patients at their bedside and participating in activities from shopping at an imaginary



farmers market to being challenged to a pitching contest with Velcro balls and a target. She also joined in on arts and crafts including wax bead art projects and playing video games in the playroom.

CHLA is located at 4650 Sunset Blvd. For information, call (323)660-2450 or visit chl.org.

photo courtesy of Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Natalie Portman participated in the 10th annual Make March Matter campaign.

KCCLA art exhibition celebrates Korean national liberation

Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles, in collaboration with the National Academy of Arts, Republic of Korea, presents a special exhibition marking the 80th anniversary of Korean national liberation running from April 10–May 15 in the center's art gallery.

Founded in 1954, the National Academy of Arts, Republic of Korea is the nation's premier institution for cultural and artistic advancement. Following the enactment of the Cultural Protection Act in 1988, the academy has continuously supported the creative and scholarly endeavors of Korea's most accomplished artists across various fields including literature, fine art, music, theater, film and dance.

Since 2017, the academy has held international exhibitions of members' works to introduce the roots of contemporary Korean art to the world. The L.A. exhibition presents a rare opportunity to view the

artistic legacy of Korea's master artists alongside works by current academy members.

The exhibition features 17 members of the academy's Visual Arts Division, including Jongsang Lee, Sukchang Hong and Cheoljoo Lee (Korean painting); Myeungro Youn, Heeyoung Yoo, Kwangjin Park, Souckchin Kim, Sanghwa Chung and Hyungdae Kim (Western painting); Lojin Jeun, Jongtae Choi, Taijung Um and Euisoon Choi (sculpture); Shinja Lee (textile); Chankyun Kang (metalwork); Junghyun Cho (ceramics); and Seungjoong Yoon (architecture). The exhibition also includes works by the late members Kyungja Chun and Se-ok Suh (Korean painting), and Whanki Kim (Western painting), offering visitors a comprehensive look at the past and present of Korean modern art.

"This marks the first time that works by Korea's most distin-

guished senior artists will be presented in Los Angeles. I hope this exhibition allows local art enthusiasts and the Korean American community to fully experience the passion and artistic vision of these masters, who have upheld the traditions of Korean art while forging their own creative paths," NAA president Soojung Shin said.

"We hope this special exhibition will serve as a meaningful opportunity to share the beauty and significance of Korean art with the Southern California community while fostering cultural exchange through art," KCCLA director Sangwon Jung added. "As we commemorate the 80th anniversary of Korea's liberation, this exhibition invites us to reflect on the identity and future of Korean art."

An opening ceremony will be held on April 10 at 6:30 p.m. in KCCLA's second floor art gallery. The event will be attended by NAA president Shin; Choi, chair of the Fine Art Division; and Um, a member of the Fine Art Division.

KCCLA is located at 5505 Wilshire Blvd. For information, visit kccla.org.

WeHo offers variety of events for Poetry Month

The city of West Hollywood is celebrating National Poetry Month with a display of street pole banners honoring poets and the art of poetry, a WeHo Reads event featuring Barack Obama's inaugural poet Richard Blanco and a Poetry Scrabble writing workshop from current West Hollywood City Poet Laureate Jen Cheng.

National Poetry Month, inaugurated by the Academy of American Poets in 1996, is the largest literary celebration in the world, with tens of millions of readers, teachers, librarians, booksellers, curators, publishers and – of course – poets, marking poetry's important place in culture.

Through April 22, West Hollywood will honor more than 50 living poets by featuring selections of their poetry on street pole banners along Santa Monica Boulevard. Each year the West Hollywood City Poet Laureate selects two additional poets to honor. This year's honorees are KB Brookins and Teresa Mei Chuc.

Brookins is a Black queer and trans writer, educator and cultural worker from Texas. Brookins' chapbook "How To Identify Yourself with a Wound" won the Saguaro Poetry Prize, a Writer's League of Texas Discovery Prize, and a Stonewall Honor Book Award. Their debut collection Freedom House won the American Library Association Barbara Gittings Literature Award and the

Texas Institute of Letters Award for Best First Book of Poetry. Brookins' memoir "Pretty" won the Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writers Award.

Mei Chuc (also known as Tuệ Mỹ Chúc) was born in Saigon, Vietnam after the Vietnam war and grew up in Pasadena and Altadena. Mei Chuc was the Altadena Poet Laureate, editor-in-chief from 2018-20 and has been the Pasadena Rose Poet since 2016. Mei Chuc is the author of "Invisible Light," "Keeper of the Winds" and "Red Thread." Her most recent poetry chapbook, "Incidental Takes," was published in 2023. Mei Chuc is a public school English teacher, sits on the Beyond Baroque Board of Trustees and is on the board of directors for the San Gabriel Valley Community Land Trust.

On Monday, April 7 at 6 p.m., at the regular meeting of the West Hollywood City Council, the West Hollywood Poet Laureate Jen Cheng will debut a new poem, "Eternity," and will receive a commemorative National Poetry Month proclamation. The presentation will be viewable on the city's WeHoTV YouTube Channel.

On Wednesday, April 16, from 6:30-8 p.m., as part of the city's WeHo Reads series, there will be a virtual event: "WeHo Reads: Richard Blanco and Kim Dower." The inspiring National Poetry Month discussion features two celebrated poets whose work explores

the intersection of identity, culture and human connection. Cheng will open the event with the reading of a poem. The event is free to attend, and RSVPs are requested at weho.org/wehoreads.

Blanco is the fifth presidential inaugural poet, selected by President Obama, and a National Humanities Medal recipient. Dower is a former West Hollywood poet laureate.

On Saturday, April 19, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the West Hollywood Library Community Meeting Room, located at 625 N. San Vicente Blvd., Cheng will present a poetry writing workshop and interactive poetry art installation called Poetry Scrabble. Attendees are invited to play with the word magnets to discover phrases that inspire new writing. No writing experience is needed. Participants are invited to stay after class from 1-2 p.m. for a light reception. This is a free event. To RSVP visit go.weho.org/poet.

Throughout the month of April, with the support of an arts grant from West Hollywood, Greenway Arts Alliance will present the ninth annual LA Get Down Festival at the Greenway Court Theatre, located at 544 N. Fairfax Ave. in Los Angeles. Past years' programming has included open-mics, workshops, poetry slams and performances. Information and links to purchase tickets for the LA Get Down Festival can be found at greenwaycourttheatre.org/2025-la-get-down.

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art presents "Line, Form, Qi: Calligraphic Art from the Fondation INK Collection." The exhibition examines experimental works by 34 modern and contemporary calligraphic artists including Fung Ming Chip, Gu Gan, Inoue Yūichi, Lee In, Henri Michaux, Nguyễn Quang Thắng, Qiu Zhijie, Tong Yang-Tze, Wang Dongling, Wei Ligang and Xu Bing. This is the second in a series of exhibitions of works from LACMA's Fondation INK Collection, a 400-piece collection of contemporary art in the spirit of ink.

For information, visit lacma.org/press/line-form-qi-calligraphic-art-fondation-ink-collection. LACMA is located at 5905 Wilshire Blvd.

'INK' art draws into LACMA



Contemporary art made in the "spirit of ink" highlights the "Line, Form, Qi" collection.



photo courtesy of KCCLA

Kyungja Chun's "Portrait of a Woman" (1985) is included in the exhibition at KCCLA.

VINTAGE PARKLABREA NEWS

Fremont branch library reopens on Melrose



Los Angeles City Council president John Ferraro, second from left, Mayor Richard Riordan, Councilman Mike Feuer and L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky celebrated the opening of the newly refurbished John C. Fremont Branch Library on Melrose Avenue in this photograph from the March 28, 1996, issue of the Beverly Press and Park Labrea News. The library building was closed from 1990-96 for seismic upgrades. A new multi-purpose room and updated technology were included, including an automated circulation system and computerized catalogues. The Hollywood High School Sheiks Marching Band performed at the reopening ceremony.

The John C. Fremont Branch Library, located at 6121 Melrose Ave., has been undergoing facility maintenance and repairs since January and is scheduled to reopen on Friday, April 4. For information, visit lapl.org/branches/john-c-fremont.

POLICE BLOTTER

The following crimes occurred in West Hollywood, Beverly Hills and the areas patrolled by the LAPD's Wilshire and Hollywood divisions between March 23 and March 29. The information was compiled from crimemap.com. To report a crime, call local law enforcement agencies: Los Angeles Police Department, Wilshire Division (213)473-0476, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department West Hollywood Station (310)855-8850, and the Beverly Hills Police Department (310)550-4951.

Beverly Hills Police Department

March 23

At 5:20 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 9900 block of Durant.

An arson fire was reported in the 9600 block of Wilshire at 8 p.m.

At 8 p.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 9600 block of Wilshire.

March 24

At 11:15 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a commercial burglary in the 8300 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 300 block of N. Cañon at 12:50 p.m.

At 8:49 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 400 block of S. Spalding.

March 25

A vandalism incident was reported near Santa Monica and Wilshire at 12:57 a.m.

At 1 p.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 100 block of S. Crescent.

An unknown suspect committed a commercial theft in the 300 block of N. Cañon at 4:30 p.m.

March 26

At 5:50 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 8500 block of Wilshire.

March 27

At 1 a.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 100 block of N. Hamilton.

A vandalism incident was reported in the 400 block of N. Oakhurst at 1:30 p.m.

At 4:30 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a commercial burglary in the 300 block of N. Cañon.

March 28

At 2:53 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 9500 block of Wilshire.

An unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 300 block of N. Cañon at 4:02 p.m.

At 3:30 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 9600 block of Wilshire.

A vandalism incident was reported in the 600 block of N. Alta at 4 p.m. An additional vandalism incident was reported in the same area at 5 p.m.

At 8:30 p.m., an unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 100 block of Hamel.

A vandalism incident was reported in the 600 block of N. Sierra at 10 p.m.

At 10:40 p.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 400 block of N. Cañon.

March 29

At 2:54 a.m., a vandalism incident was reported in the 700 block of N. Arden.

West Hollywood Sheriff's Station

March 23

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 7700 block of Santa Monica at 12:51 a.m.

At 1:30 a.m., a suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 600 block of N. Robertson.

An unknown suspect pickpocketed a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica at 1:45 a.m.

At 2:57 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 8500 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 8200 block of Fountain at 4 p.m.

At 8 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 8300 block of Sunset. An additional vehicle burglary was reported in the area at 8:57 p.m.

An unknown suspect stole a vehicle parked in the 300 block of N. Crescent at 8 p.m.

March 24

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1200 block of N. Sweetzer at 12:30 a.m.

At 1 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

A suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 8900 block of Santa Monica at 2:04 a.m.

At 1 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 8200 block of Fountain.

An unknown suspect robbed a victim in the 1100 block of N. La Brea at 11:43 p.m.

At midnight, an unknown suspect committed a petty theft in the 800 block of Westmount.

March 25

At 3 p.m., an unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 900 block of N. Genesee.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1100 block of N. La Cienega at 9:05 p.m.

At 10 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 500 block of N. Orlando.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 900 block of N. Hammond at 11:30 p.m.

March 26

At 2:55 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 600 block of N. La Cienega.

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1300 block of N.

BHPD reminds motorists to drive sober

The Beverly Hills Police Department's Traffic Bureau will conduct a sobriety and driver's license checkpoint on Friday, April 11, from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. the following day at North Santa Monica Boulevard and Crescent Drive.

All traffic will pass through the checkpoint and motorists will be stopped and contacted by uniformed officers, who will check for alcohol and drug-impairment. Officers will also make sure all drivers have a valid license.

"Impaired drivers put others on the road at significant risk," BHPD Chief Mark Stainbrook said. "Any prevention measures that reduce

the number of impaired drivers on our roads significantly improves traffic safety."

The BHPD reminds the public that impaired driving is not just caused by alcohol. Prescription medications and over-the-counter drugs may interfere with driving, as well as marijuana. Drivers charged with a first DUI face an average of \$13,500 in fines and penalties, as well as a suspended license.

Funding for the checkpoint is provided by the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



photo courtesy of the BHPD
Officers will check drivers for impairment and valid licenses.

Beverly Hills man gets lengthy sentence for fraud

A Beverly Hills man was sentenced on March 26 to 25 years in federal prison for stealing more than \$17.7 million from investors using fake businesses supposedly operating in hemp-related industries. The crimes occurred while the defendant was completing a sentence for a prior criminal case.

United States District Judge Fernando L. Aenlle-Rocha sentenced Mark Roy Anderson, 70, and scheduled a restitution hearing on June 4. Anderson pleaded guilty in April 2024 to two counts of wire fraud and has been in federal custody since May 2023.

"The magnitude of the fraud is breathtaking. Many [victims] have lost their life savings reflecting decades of hard work," Aenlle-Rocha said. "The public must be protected from him for as long as possible."

Anderson engaged in two separate but related schemes that defrauded victims, committed shortly after his release from federal prison but while serving the rest of a prison term on home confinement and supervised release for a previous fraud conviction.

"The defendant stole more than \$18 million from dozens of investors by promising quick returns on their investments into hemp farms and other exotic invest-

ments." Acting United States Attorney Joseph McNally said. "[The] sentence takes him off the street so that he cannot harm other victims."

In one scheme, perpetrated from June 2020-April 2021, Anderson tricked investors into providing funds for Harvest Farm Group, a company he claimed harvested hemp grown on his farm, and processed it into medical-grade cannabidiol (CBD) isolate. He claimed the CBD would be sold for a substantial profit, authorities said.

Anderson convinced investors to invest in Harvest Farm Group by falsely representing that, through the company, he owned and operated a hemp farm in Kern County, authorities added. He also falsely told investors that he had already completed successful and profitable hemp harvests from the farm, and that he was using his own machinery and equipment to convert the hemp into CBD isolate and Delta 8, a psychoactive substance that could be used in consumer products such as olive oil and body cream.

Anderson hid the fact he had multiple prior fraud convictions, prosecutors said. Anderson was previously convicted of mail fraud, wire fraud, grand theft, forgery, preparing false evidence and money laundering.

In a second scheme from April 2021-May 2023, Anderson deceived investors by soliciting money for Bio Pharma and Verta Bottling, two fake companies, by claiming the businesses successfully manufactured, bottled and packaged commercial products.

Specifically, Anderson falsely told investors Bio Pharma manufactured and sold products infused with CBD including avocado oil, olive oil, pain cream, gummies, tequila and chili oil. Anderson also claimed that Verta Bottling manufactured and sold beverages and food products. Prosecutors said he falsely stated that his bottling companies owned and possessed millions of dollars in assets, and that he had at least \$10 million in purchase contracts from suppliers. He drafted fake legal and business documents with fabricated purchase order contracts purporting to show agreements with third party companies to purchase tens of millions of dollars in products, authorities said.

Instead of investing victim funds as promised, Anderson used the money on personal expenses. As part of his guilty plea, the defendant agreed to forfeit 15 cars including a Ferrari, and property in Ojai. In total, Anderson stole more than \$17.7 million from 45 victims. The FBI investigated the case.

D.A. appoints new leader in Bureau of Investigation

Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan Hochman announced on April 1 that he has appointed law enforcement veteran Tony Lee, who currently serves as interim chief of the Ventura Police Department, as chief of the office's Bureau of Investigations.

Lee, who becomes the first Korean American and Asian American individual to lead the bureau, has more than 30 years of law enforcement experience, previously spending 26 years at the Beverly Hills Police Department. Lee also served for six years as

chief of police at the University of California, Los Angeles. Lee will start the new position in early June.

"Tony brings more than three decades of law enforcement experience and has demonstrated exceptional leadership, a profound knowledge of how law enforcement operates and an unwavering commitment to the pursuit of justice," Hochman said.

"The work that our investigators do is vital to protecting the communities we serve. Tony is the ideal choice for this esteemed position and his leadership will bring renewed focus in

our efforts to hold offenders accountable, ensuring every investigation is conducted with the highest standards of fairness and professionalism."

"I am honored and humbled to step into this role as bureau chief for one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the nation," Lee said. "I recognize that my leadership is not just about breaking barriers but a commitment to the bureau and the residents of Los Angeles County that we will work to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and public service."

burglary in the 900 block of Westbourne at 5:17 a.m.

At 10 a.m., a suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 7300 block of Santa Monica.

At 11:15 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 7300 block of Santa Monica.

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

An unknown suspect committed a burglary in the 1300 block of N.

Hayworth at 4 p.m.

At 8 p.m., an unknown suspect committed a grand theft in the 7900 block of Santa Monica.

An unknown suspect burglarized a vehicle in the 1200 block of N. Hayworth at 11 p.m.

March 28

At 12:03 a.m., an unknown suspect committed a residential burglary in the 9000 block of Santa Monica at 5:57 p.m..

Dorrington.

An unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 9000 block of Sunset at 1:24 a.m.

March 29

At 7:40 a.m., an unknown suspect assaulted a victim in the 8900 block of Santa Monica.

A suspect assaulted a victim during a domestic violence incident in the 7000 block of Santa Monica at 5:57 p.m..

'Novocaine' genre bends for hilarious, gory thrills

A body-horror action comedy. Now, that's a rare feat. Meet "Novocaine," an entirely entertaining flick that's perfect for a night out. Ya know, if you can stomach the brief barrages of brutality.

Nate (Jack Quaid) has a unique condition. He can't feel pain. This seems like a superpower, but it actually hinders this lovely bank worker from doing much of anything, fearing he might unknowingly injure himself. So it's a life of smoothies in case he inadvertently bites his tongue and three-hour timers to prevent bladder issues. No time for much else.

Then he meets Sherry (Amber Midthunder). They hit it off rather

quickly, sharing their most intimate vulnerabilities with each other. Nate finds a renewed interest in life, even chancing solid foods. Too bad some bank robbers don't share his optimism when they make away with a whole lotta cash and Sherry as their hostage.

Rather than await the authorities, Nate chases after them alone. When he catches up, a series of hilarious fight sequences unfold as expert criminals can't figure out why this random guy feels nothing with each punch and kick. Nate, nicknamed "Novocaine" once upon a time, might just be a superhero after all, though most might need to look away when he's in action.



photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

Jack Quaid and Amber Midthunder are great together in "Novocaine."

Get 'Goofy' for anniversary event

Tickets for a special 30th anniversary screening of Disney's "A Goofy Movie," presented by Disney+, are now on sale. The special showing, scheduled for April 12, at the El Capitan Theatre also includes an exclusive panel with Bill Farmer, the voice of Goofy,

director Kevin Lima and more special guests, and is moderated by Don Hahn. Plus, guests can channel their inner Powerline at a DJ Dance Party before the movie.

There are three special ticket packages available for the screening. A general ticket is \$30 and

Wake up to 'Easy Mornings' at Gloria Molina Grand Park

In the spirit of Earth Month, Gloria Molina Grand Park invites Angelenos of all ages to uplift their spirits and ease into the weekend in the heart of Downtown L.A. with two Saturday mornings filled with free activities and workshops that will inspire them to reconnect with the healing power of the natural world and each other. Gloria Molina Grand Park's Easy Mornings will help rejuvenate the mind, body and soul following the devastating wildfires in Los Angeles.

This year's events, which take place on April 5 and 19 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., include family yoga, theater and dance, arts and crafts, nature-inspired activities and an eclectic marketplace filled with local organizations, artists and microbusinesses dedicated to recovery and healing. The market-

place will be curated by Smorgasburg L.A., which will also offer a selection of delectable bites and treats for purchase. On-site picnicking is highly encouraged.

Gloria Molina Grand Park, powered by The Music Center, is also partnering with the Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control to highlight the importance of advancing the well-being of animals and residents. The partnership will connect residents with expertise, resources and professional services to promote, strengthen and inspire the humane care of animals, and will feature a dog adoption fair, offering loving animals the chance to find forever homes.

Gloria Molina Grand Park is located at 200 N. Grand Ave.

For information, visit grandpark-la.org/easymornings2025.



The Saturday morning programming includes family-friendly activities.

ON SCREEN

WITH
TIM POSADA

This is hardly top-tier material, but it's fun. Like Netflix's "Carry-On," it stands out because of its modest goals. One mission, a few confrontations, one unique angle. And if "Carry-On" is modest with a \$47 million budget, this one's \$18 million makes it seem even more special.

As for that gore, it's more laughable than gross-out. We're playing fast and loose with the idea of body horror, but it helps explain what happens to Nate's body in 110 minutes. Think protrusions, a hand in a fryer and other moments that might evoke the occasional "oh no!"

"Novocaine" peaks during four lengthy fight sequences. Quaid handles the fight choreography with comedic flair as over-the-top gore mixes with the hero's accidental victories.

Quaid is low-key and having a good year: "The Boys" season four last summer, wrapping voice work on "Star Trek: Lower Decks" in December, horror flick "Companion" in January and now this. He's done well with a very specific type of performance.

Quaid's Nate feels like his other

roles: clumsy, insecure, rambles when he's nervous. That's not a point of criticism. Like father like son, he does one thing rather well. No shame in that. It contrasts the film's graphic bits nicely.

As for his co-stars: Midthunder ("Prey," FX's "Legion") needs to be in more things — same goes for Ray Nicholson, who plays banker robber Simon. Familiar faces like Jacob Batalon (latest "Spider-Man" trilogy), Matt Walsh and Betty Gabriel ("Get Out") do their thing, though none truly stand out.

Directors Dan Berk and Robert Olsen ("Significant Other," "Villains") take a break from horror here, though the violence certainly feels like well-treaded territory for them. May they never do a more

straightforward film. Peculiarity suits them.

Maybe the pickings are just too slim right now. We know this story at its fundamental elements. But "Novocaine" stands out amidst a tiresome number of expensive films that fail to earn back their over-stuffed production costs. Small-stakes thrills are a splendid cure for mind-numbing excess.

If only more folks flocked to films like this. But that ain't happening right now. Until nature heals, sleeper hits like "Novocaine" will remain overlooked, perhaps breaking even and earning revenue on streamers later on. Pity for most, but a select few will have a grand ol' time if they stumble upon this one.



photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

Jack Quaid portrays Nate, a bank worker who has a unique condition that prevents him from feeling pain, in "Novocaine."

roles: clumsy, insecure, rambles when he's nervous. That's not a point of criticism. Like father like son, he does one thing rather well. No shame in that. It contrasts the film's graphic bits nicely.

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Directors Dan Berk and Robert Olsen ("Significant Other," "Villains") take a break from horror here, though the violence certainly feels like well-treaded territory for them. May they never do a more



"A Goofy Movie" premiered in 1995.

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USPS thanks Betty White for being a friend

The U.S. Postal Service is celebrating beloved entertainer Betty White's mischievous wit, saucy persona and tireless advocacy for animals with a new stamp, which was unveiled at a ceremony at the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens on March 27.

White's sprightly smirk will smarten up the day for any recipient of First-Class Mail bearing the new Forever stamp.

"Betty White was an American treasure," said Amber McReynolds,

chairwoman of the USPS Board of Governors. "With this stamp, we honor and remember the beloved 'First Lady of Television' and the enduring mark she left on our American culture."

Also at the event was Dale Stephanos, the artist who worked on the stamp. He described how the tiniest detail in his design came to him at breakfast.

"I was absent minded drawing instead of eating my eggs and looking back down at the mess I had

been making in my sketchbook, I saw that at some point, I had drawn a paw print," said Stephanos. "I had a bit of a eureka moment and thought, what if I just give Betty an earring that's in the shape of a paw print?"

Other ceremony participants included Richard Lichtenstein, who co-chaired the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association's board of trustees with White; Ellis Hall, a jazz musician and friend of White; and Danny Romero, a meteorologist at

KABC-TV 7 Eyewitness News who acted as emcee.

White, who died at the age of 99 in 2021, was one of the most well-known actresses in television history, starring in the sitcoms "Life With Elizabeth," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "The Golden Girls" and "Hot in Cleveland." She also made a mark on the big screen, with film roles including "Advise and Consent," "Lake Placid" and "The Proposal." White was also a tireless advocate for animals, and worked closely with the L.A. Zoo for many years.

For information and to order stamps, visit.usps.com/store/product/betty-white-stamps-S_486604.



photo courtesy of USPS

Betty White has been immortalized with her own stamp.

to be touched, moved and felt.

Larger-than-life installations by 21 artists are on display, including Filthy Luker, Tadao Cern, MyeongBeom Kim, Ouchhh, SpY, Max Streicher, Karina Smigla-Bobinski, Michael Shaw, ENESS, Roman Hill, Quiet Ensemble, Rub Kandy, Cyril Lancelin, Sila Sveta, Camilla Falsini, MOTOREFISICO, Alex Schweder, Hyperstudio, Mauro Pace and Sasha Frolova. A fan favorite is "Mariposa," a piece designed by Oakland-based LED artist Christopher Schardt that is illuminated with more than 39,000 full-color LED lights.

Tickets are \$39 for adults; \$29 for children. The Balloon Museum is located at 1601 E. Sixth St. For information and tickets, visit tickets.balloonmuseum.world/lets-fly-los-angeles.

'Let's Fly' exhibition soars high at Balloon Museum

Due to an overwhelming reception, Balloon Museum has extended its critically acclaimed show "Let's Fly" through April 13 at Ace Mission Studios, located near Downtown Los Angeles. Visitors are invited to experience a one-of-a-kind fusion of art, design and technology.

"We are beyond grateful for the incredible response from the Los Angeles community," said Roberto Fantauzzi, president of Lux

Holding, which organized the exhibition. "The enthusiasm and energy surrounding 'Let's Fly' surpassed our wildest expectations, and it was a clear-cut decision to remain open. We are delighted to extend our limited run and allow more time for people to explore and engage with this one-of-a-kind experience."

Balloon Museum has captivated audiences with larger-than-life installations, interactive exhibits and awe-inspiring inflatable artworks. "Let's Fly" takes visitors on a journey through sights and sounds and puts them at the center of the experience, directly interacting with art in which "air" is a distinctive element. More than 250,000 people have attended the exhibition since it opened on Oct. 30, enjoying contemporary art and sculptures meant



The Balloon Museum's immersive "Let's Fly" exhibition enables viewers to directly interact with the art.

'Glow in the Dark Groundlings' offers illuminating comedy experience

The Groundlings Theatre presents "Glow in the Dark Groundlings," a new side-splitting sketch show from the Main Company. Directed by H. Michael Croner, the highly anticipated production features original sketches and outrageous characters that have made the Groundlings a comedy institution.

The show has previews on April 5 at 9:30 p.m., April 12 and 19 at 7:30 p.m., and April 25-26 at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. The show runs through June 21, with performances on Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

"Glow in the Dark Groundlings" guarantees a night of laughter and excitement found only at the Groundlings Theatre. From sharp satire to ridiculous absurdity, the show's unique combination of sketches and characters keeps audiences on the edge of their seats. Each performance showcases the Groundlings' signature blend of irreverent humor and expert performance. The show features Main Company cast members Erin Berry, Lauren Burns, David Crabb, Anthony Guerino, Chris Kleckner, Kara Morgan, Andres Parada,

Jessica Pohly, Chase Rosenberg and Gaby Sandoval.

Following each 7:30 p.m. performance, a new play workshop titled "Got a Light?" will be held at 9:30 p.m., providing audiences with a

unique opportunity to see original works in development.

Tickets start at \$27. The Groundlings Theatre is located at 7307 Melrose Ave. For information, visit groundlings.com.



photo courtesy of the Groundlings Theatre
Main Company cast members introduce outrageous characters in original sketches during the new show at the Groundlings Theatre.

The Broad presents Jeffrey Gibson installation

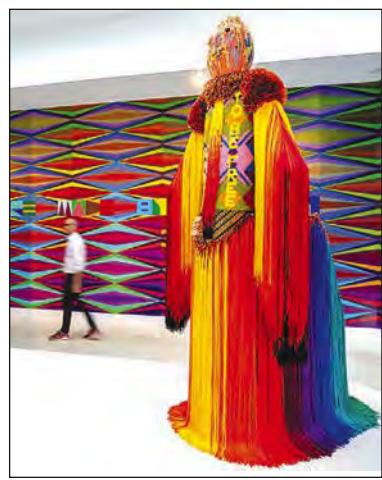


photo courtesy of The Broad
The installation is on display May 10-Sept. 28.

Tickets are now available for "Jeffrey Gibson: the space in which to place me" opening May 10 at The Broad.

The kaleidoscopic installation, adapted from its celebrated debut at the 60th Venice Biennale, an international art exhibition in Venice, Italy, marks Gibson's first solo museum show in Southern California.

Gibson made history as the first Indigenous artist to represent the United States with a solo exhibition at the Biennale. Visitors can experience his vibrant and immersive world in Los Angeles. The Broad's first-floor galleries will be transformed by prismatic murals,

bold paintings and sculptures and an electrifying video installation, all reflecting the artist's radical vision.

The show will highlight Gibson's distinct use of geometric design and saturated color alongside references to 19th- and 20th-century foundational American documents.

The exhibition will be on view from May 10-Sept. 28.

Tickets are \$15 and available at ticketing.thebroad.org/events/5051214b-9e97-aeb0-30bc-6395835990c4?_kx=NLZRCi1Gjkl1L1Ctsxs0B6vYbq-DUsK0ujOXpdCWIA.Ukf95.

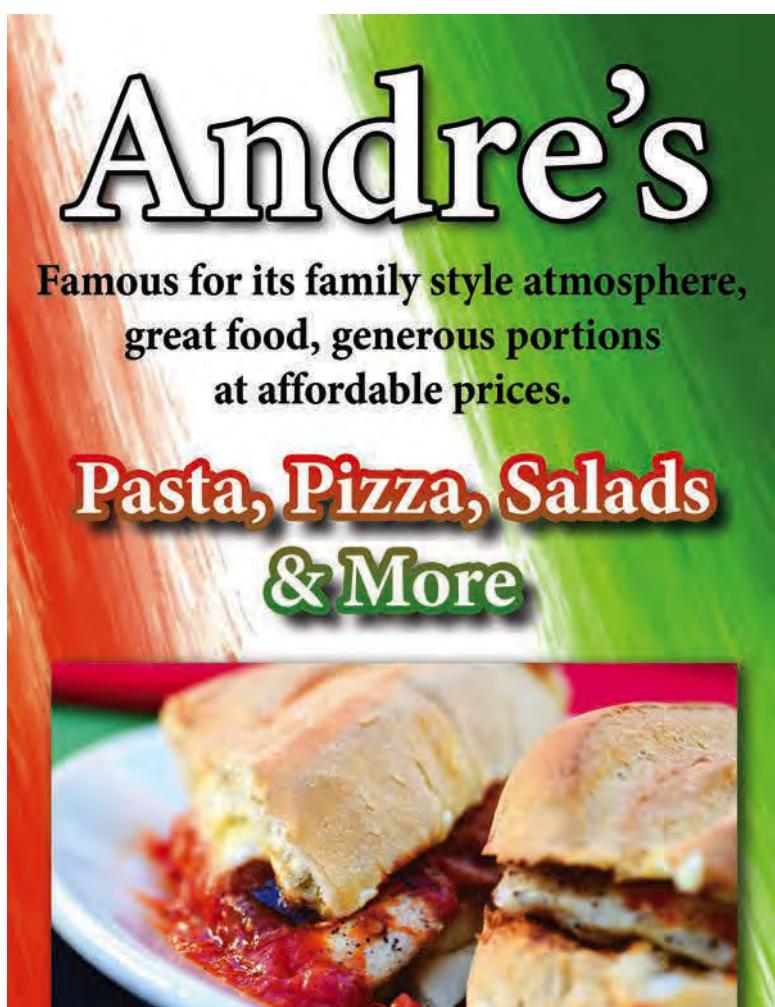
The Broad is located at 221 S. Grand Ave.

KABC-TV 7 Eyewitness News

who acted as emcee.

White, who died at the age of 99 in 2021, was one of the most well-known actresses in television history, starring in the sitcoms "Life With Elizabeth," "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "The Golden Girls" and "Hot in Cleveland." She also made a mark on the big screen, with film roles including "Advise and Consent," "Lake Placid" and "The Proposal." White was also a tireless advocate for animals, and worked closely with the L.A. Zoo for many years.

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Nazarian sworn in as Beverly Hills mayor

From page 1

I have served the community for over 25 years," Nazarian said shortly after being sworn in by her family. "Today I stand before you as the first Iranian American woman to serve as the mayor of Beverly Hills. My journey to this moment has been a long one. I am an immigrant. English is my third language. I came to this great nation due to religious persecution. No one was there to be my voice, and things didn't always come easily. But I refused to have a victim mentality. You see, I believe that hard work and dedication are key to getting things done, and I promise to work hard for you."

In her speech, Nazarian announced a flurry of initiatives and programs ranging from public safety to community activities. Among the initiatives are BHTV Live Link – new software that will allow residents to track the status of their calls to the Beverly Hills Police Department. Nazarian also announced that with pending authorization from Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan Hochman, the city will prosecute state misdemeanors.

"This proactive step will ensure that Beverly Hills will never be the target of unwarranted attacks again," Nazarian said. "So if you're even thinking about committing a crime in Beverly Hills, you'd better think twice."

In the wake of the January wildfires, additional public safety initiatives include updated fire evacuation policies and a voluntary city-wide fire evacuation drill later this year. A new system called BH Fire Watch will use "cameras and other tools to detect early signs of fire before it spreads," Nazarian said. The mayor also announced the BHFD Wellness Network, a new membership-based service through the Beverly Hills Fire Department that will provide "emergency medical services" and "proactive care" for a "minimal fee."

Several of the announcements include community-focused endeavors, such as "Straight Talk with Sharona" – a recurring town hall meeting; "In the Know with Mayor Nazarian" – a social media segment highlighting "hidden gems" across the community; "Spotlight with Sharona" – local business outreach events in partnership with the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce; "Sharona's Innovation Circle" – a panel of residents between the ages of 18-28 who will provide input directly to the mayor; and "Sunday Socials with Sharona" – engaging activities that will unite youth and senior citizen residents.

"Straight Talk with Sharona" will begin Thursday, May 8, at 6 p.m. at City Hall. The first "Spotlight with

Sharona" will be held on Wednesday, April 23, from 5:30-7 p.m. at Novikov, a Mediterranean restaurant located at 257 N. Canon Drive.

Nazarian said more information on the programs will be announced in the coming weeks.

Throughout her speech, Nazarian expressed a commitment to ensuring fiscal responsibility, promoting social justice through peace and tolerance, supporting the Beverly Hills Unified School District, maintaining local control over land use while building more affordable housing, combatting antisemitism and preserving reproductive rights.

"We are a united community regardless of race, religion or cultural background. I couldn't be more proud to represent our amazing community as we build a safer, stronger and more united Beverly Hills," Nazarian said.

The installation also marked the first time in Beverly Hills two vice mayors were sworn in at the same time. The unique occurrence was a result of the city's rotating mayorship schedule, the city's election schedule and Mirisch facing term limits in 2026. In February, the council agreed to split the vice mayorship between Mirisch and Corman.

Mirisch was sworn in by District Attorney Hochman and Hochman's chief deputy Steven Katz – two of his lifelong friends – in addition to his family. In his speech, Mirisch announced several goals, including – in the form of an April Fools' joke – sanctioning Qatar.

"I would like for Beverly Hills to establish a sister city relationship with Doha in Qatar. April Fools. The fact of the matter is, when it comes to Qatar – which owns the Maybourne Hotel and which has its consulate in Beverly Hills – we're dealing with a rogue country whose defense minister and deputy foreign minister said, 'we are all Hamas,'" Mirisch said. "Jew hating racists and genocidal sponsors of terrorism are not welcome in our city or in our community."

Mirisch has previously criticized Qatar and the Maybourne Hotel at City Council meetings.

Mirisch also expressed a desire to explore the possibility of turning Beverly Hills into a charter city, as opposed to its current general law city designation. Mirisch argued that by being a charter city, Beverly Hills might have more control over its procedures and laws.

Mirisch will serve as vice mayor until Oct. 1, when Corman will take over.

While Mirisch's speech focused on potential policy changes, Corman's speech emphasized the importance of nonpartisan local government during "turbulent" times.

"The genius of America – what's enabled us to endure for 250 years – is our flexibility to adapt to changing times and changing values without coming apart. And through all the storms past and present, there's always been one safe harbor – one port of relative refuge. That's local government," Corman said, shortly after being sworn in by his family.

He added that it is essential Beverly Hills continues to ensure public safety, a clean and healthy environment and cultural enrichment, among many other services, despite uncertain times.

The City Council members

expressed their gratitude toward outgoing Mayor Lester Friedman, who will remain a council member. In a speech and video package, Friedman highlighted his achievements – including hosting the 2024 Mayors Summit Against Antisemitism, the expansion of the BHPD's Real Time Watch Center through Beverly Hills Connect and the city's response to the fire emergency in January.

"As I continue my work at a different place on the dais, but still as a council member, I pledge to always do what's best for our beloved city," Friedman said. "Beverly Hills is positioned for a bright future, and the best is yet to come."

Several public officials and consul generals were present at the installation event. Los Angeles County Assessor Jeff Prang and Santa Monica Mayor Lana Negrete expressed congratulations to the council, while the council also received congratulatory messages from the offices of Assemblyman Rick Chavez Zbur (D-Los Angeles), State Sen. Ben Allen (D-Santa Monica), Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, 3rd District, and West Hollywood Mayor Chelsea Byers.

The ceremony featured several performances, including by the Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy Choir and the USC Trojan Marching Band.

Although the mood within the event was celebratory, many hopeful attendees were disappointed to be turned away at the door. Within minutes of the start of the ceremony, the Bram Goldsmith Theater at the Wallis had reached its 500 seat capacity. A long line of dozens of attendees stretched from the building's entrance on North Santa Monica Boulevard around the side of the building on North Crescent Drive. Most of the individuals in the line were told that no further guests would be admitted, with the exception of consul generals and those with reserved seats. Upon the announcement, many people crowded the building's entrance, some insisting that they had reserved seats while others attempted to push their way in.

Although event organizers said the venue had reached capacity, a small number of seats were visibly empty within the theater during the ceremony.



photo by Edwin Folven

CicLAvia brought thousands of people to Hollywood last August.

CicLAvia takes over streets from Hollywood to Koreatown

From page 1

Presbyterian Church, the Gaylord Apartments, the Wallis Annenberg GenSpace, the Wilshire, Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Capitol Records and – of course – the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"It's always a good time [with] all ages, demographics out moving around on foot, bikes, roller skates and skateboards," Lane said. "A rare car-free opportunity to be in the community with each other and see the neighborhood from a new perspective."

For information, visit ciclavia.org.

Beverly Hills High production is 'supercalifragilisticexpialidocious'

Beverly Hills High School Theatre presents "Mary Poppins: The Broadway Musical" on April 10-12 at The Saban Theater. With unforgettable choreography, heart and the timeless score, the production showcases the creative excellence of BHHS students.

Opening night will include a special guest appearance by a BHHS alum who is related to the Sherman Brothers – the legendary composers behind the original Mary Poppins

music.

"This production reflects the heart of who we are at BHHS – creative, collaborative and rooted in excellence," Principal Drew Stewart said.

Performances are scheduled on April 10 and 11 at 7 p.m., and April 12 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$45 for VIP, \$20 for general admission and \$15 for students, and are available at bhhs.bhusd.org/theatre. The Saban Theatre is located at 8440 Wilshire Blvd.

GLAAD Awards celebrate LGBTQ+ community

From page 6

invoked the importance of the moment.

"It's a luxury to be depressed, to give up, to say there's nothing we can do," Allred said. "We don't have that luxury. So, I spend every waking moment fighting for vic-

tims, and that's what I have devoted my life to do. I will continue to do it because it's needed now more than ever. We are fighting through lawsuits. We are doing a lot of confidential settlements for individuals who have been victimized and

denied their rights. I go to the streets, do protests. I've sat in. I've been thrown out, and it doesn't matter, because each one of us must use our voice and go to court to protect our rights. Now more than ever."

WeHo holds Rainbow Key Awards on April 6

The city of West Hollywood and its LGBTQ+ Commission will host a ceremony of the annual Rainbow Key Awards to recognize people and groups who have made outstanding contributions to the LGBTQ community.

This year's Rainbow Key Awards Ceremony, which will honor the awardees selected in 2024, will be held in-person on

Sunday, April 6, at 6 p.m. at West Hollywood's City Council Chambers/Public Meeting Room, located at 625 N. San Vicente Blvd. The awards ceremony will be immediately followed by a reception and afterparty on the Respite Deck at the West Hollywood Park Aquatic and Recreation Center, adjacent to West Hollywood Library.

Additional information for the free event, including registration details, is available by visiting the city's website at weho.org/rainbowkey. For those unable to attend, the event will also be livestreamed and recorded for replay viewing on the city's WeHoTV channel on YouTube at youtube.com/wehotv.



photo courtesy of Takpro

Sharona Nazarian is the first Persian woman to be sworn in as mayor of Beverly Hills.

The City Council members

County charts new course on homelessness

From page 1

success of Housing for Health, a proven model that serves the sickest of the sick. I have never been more hopeful that we will create the change that is long overdue, change that I know we are capable of delivering for people experiencing homelessness and all 88 cities and unincorporated communities of Los Angeles County."

LAHSA, a joint powers authority between the city and county of Los Angeles, has faced criticism for its tracking of how funds are spent and a lack of methods to ensure that services are being delivered by providers. Under the new plan, 14 county departments currently operating under the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority will move under the direct oversight of the board of supervisors and the county's new department.

"Let me be clear, we cannot simply build our way out of homelessness," Barger said. "Real solutions require sustained investments in treatment beds and supportive services. This new department will build on the proven success of our Health Department's Housing for Health program, strengthening and expanding what already works. We are not starting from scratch. I am confident that we can achieve this while maintaining a strong partnership with the city of Los Angeles and our other 87 cities."

Mitchell said she believes more time and consideration should be given before implementing the changes. She called for a later operational start date for the new department, but her amending motion was not approved by the board.

"A six-month timeline feels incredibly rushed, from my perspective, with the creation of a new county department of homelessness," Mitchell said. "Merging the Homeless Initiative and Housing for Health programs, which together have over 700 staff and \$1 billion per year in funding, I think requires

deliberate time."

It is unclear how big the impact will be on LAHSA, which also receives federal and state funding, as well as funds from the city of Los Angeles. The Los Angeles City Council is currently considering creating its own department to provide homelessness services. LAHSA said results of the 2023 Homeless Count found the number of unsheltered homeless individuals decrease significantly, showing its programs work, and they expect a similar decrease when numbers from the 2024 Homeless Count are released later this year.

"With unprecedented alignment and collaboration, we've made unprecedented progress in reducing unsheltered [homeless individuals] in two consecutive years and creating a more efficient rehousing system," LAHSA CEO Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum said. "We could not have achieved this progress without the dedication and sacrifice of the team at LAHSA. LAHSA will work to ensure a smooth transition, allowing our clients to continue on their path to permanent housing as seamlessly as possible. We urge the county to hire as many of LAHSA's dedicated staff as possible while remaining committed to pursuing the coordination and alignment that have led to two consecutive years of decreases in unsheltered homelessness."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and Councilwoman Nithya Raman, 4th District, chair of the council's Housing and Homelessness Committee, sent a letter to the board of supervisors prior to its vote urging members to consider the impact the changes will have on homelessness services.

"Dismantling LAHSA will deprive the city of Los Angeles of essential resources, including recent voter-approved Measure A funding, and would severely stunt the city's ability to oversee existing

programs that provide holistic solutions to individuals with complex needs," Bass and Raman said in the letter. "Real people rely on these resources every day and this move puts that life-saving care in jeopardy. This action would create a monumental disruption in the progress we are making and runs the serious risk of worsening our homelessness crisis, not ending it. It will signal a surrender that street homelessness is a permanent fixture in Los Angeles – and as leaders here in the city, we disagree with that assumption."

Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky, 5th District, was among a delegation of City Council members who spoke during the board of supervisors' meeting.

"We all share the same goals. We want a functioning system that quickly and cost-effectively moves people off the streets and prevents homelessness in the first place. Despite a challenging and often frustrating and inefficient LAHSA, we have made real progress together, and that progress is at risk because regional challenges require regional solutions," Yaroslavsky said. "If you significantly defund LAHSA too quickly without working with us to provide for what's next, I worry that our shared constituents, who rely upon us to work together, will suffer."

Horvath said the board and the new department will continue to work with the city of Los Angeles and the other 87 cities in the county as the process moves forward, and the goal remains to end homelessness.

"I want to be clear that this is not more government, it is better government," Horvath said. "The gold standard exists right here in the county's Department of Health Services – it's called Housing for Health, and it is the cornerstone for the new proposed department."

Dodger Stadium offers lots of new options for fans

With the start of the new season, the Dodgers have revealed new offerings and advancements for all fans to enjoy.

There are several new additions to the Centerfield Plaza area. Two pitching cages will be available for fans of all ages to use at no extra cost beginning every game when gates open. The "In the Dugout" virtual reality booth returns with favorite players available to choose from for a free photo. An oversized 2024 World Series trophy will be available for photo-ops, and an oversized 2024 World Series ring will also be available for photos in the plaza.

New displays celebrating Dodger Hall of Famers, Legends of Dodger Baseball and the 2024



The new Dodgers season features a variety of memorabilia, concessions and fan experiences.

World Series will be implemented around the stadium.

Uber, the official rideshare partner of the Dodgers, has moved its pickup and drop-off location from Lot 11 to Lot 1. Ubers and other ride-hailing vehicles will now enter through Gate B to decrease Gate A congestion.

This season, in partnership with Fanatics, the Dodgers are launching a new Frontline Heroes of the Game initiative. In 2025, recognitions will focus exclusively on firefighters who fought the recent Los Angeles County wildfires, and honorees will be recognized on the field at pregame ceremonies throughout the

season.

The Dodger team stores will have numerous new items, including jerseys, caps, sweatshirts and T-shirts highlighting the gold jerseys and caps worn by the Dodgers during the first two games.

For hungry fans, Archer Meat snacks are available at select concession stands. Fresh Brothers Pizza is conveniently located at Field Section 28, Loge Section 130 and Reserve Section 3. Nikaido Shochu, the official shochu of the Dodgers, can be found at various concession locations. Dodger Stadium is located at 1000 Vin Scully Ave. For information, visit dodgers.com.



photo courtesy of the city of Beverly Hills
Team Beverly Hills stresses leadership and community involvement.

Council congratulates 2024-25 Team Beverly Hills members

On March 26, Councilman Craig Corman, Vice Mayor Sharona Nazarian, Mayor Lester Friedman and Councilwoman Mary Wells congratulated 40 members who completed the 2024-25 Team Beverly Hills program.

Team Beverly Hills is an interactive and educational program that informs community members about local government representatives, departments and pro-

grams, community associations and current community issues. The vision of Team Beverly Hills is to develop and maintain an informed, energetic and diversified resource for community involvement and leadership roles.

The application process for Team Beverly Hills opens each summer and sessions run from November through March.

For information, visit beverlyhills.org/teambeverlyhills.

Prosecutor removed from case

From page 1

May 9, 2024, with six counts of tax evasion, among other charges. A grand jury alleged that Wiederhorn hid taxable income from the federal government and used funds for himself – buying vacations, jet travel, a Rolls-Royce and other luxuries. At the time, Wiederhorn's attorneys denied the accusations.

"These charges are wrong on both the facts and the law. Mr. Wiederhorn consulted and followed the advice of world-class professionals in all of his business dealings. He has led an extraordinarily successful company that has performed beyond expectations since the merger of FAT Brands and Fog Cutter Capital in 2020," said Nicola Hanna, a partner at the law firm Gibson Dunn. "We look forward to making clear in court that this is an unfortunate example of government overreach – and a case with no victims, no losses and no crimes."

Since then, Wiederhorn's lawyers have pushed for the case to be dropped, although the U.S. Department of Justice said on March 31 that "the criminal case is still pending."

According to opensecrets.org, Wiederhorn has donated thousands to the Republican National Committee, Trump's presidential campaign, the Republican Party of California and a conservative PAC called Save America, dating back to 2019.

Both Fatburger and Johnny Rockets have prominent footprints in the Los Angeles area. Fatburger has a popular location at 6450 Santa Monica Blvd. in West Hollywood, while Johnny Rockets has busy hubs at 100 N. La Cienega Blvd. and 6801 Hollywood Blvd., inside Ovation Hollywood.

In response to an inquiry, Fat Brands Inc. said, "We have no comment."

JFSLA receives FireAid grant

JFSLA received a \$250,000 grant from the FireAid benefit concert, which raised \$100 million for wildfire relief efforts in Los Angeles County. The grant recognizes JFSLA's critical work in supporting survivors of the Palisades and Eaton fires.

"As Los Angeles' oldest social services provider, JFSLA is proud to continue our tradition of providing essential services to those looking for hope, healing and a place of community," JFSLA CEO Eli Vietzer said. "We're honored to receive this FireAid grant, which allows us to better serve our city's most vulnerable, especially in the aftermath of these devastating fires, when more people than ever need a helping hand."

The FireAid funding enhances

JFSLA's efforts to provide social services and trauma-informed care. The grant will be used to hire social workers and address tangible immediate needs such as food insecurity. JFSLA works closely with older adults, people with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence and those at risk of becoming homeless.

Services include the SOVA Community Food and Resource Program, senior programming and community dining centers, mental health counseling and shelter and support for survivors of domestic violence.

The FireAid grant will support efforts to connect people with counseling, help them rebuild, find community and receive social-emotional support.

For information, visit jfsla.org.

Answers From Page 27



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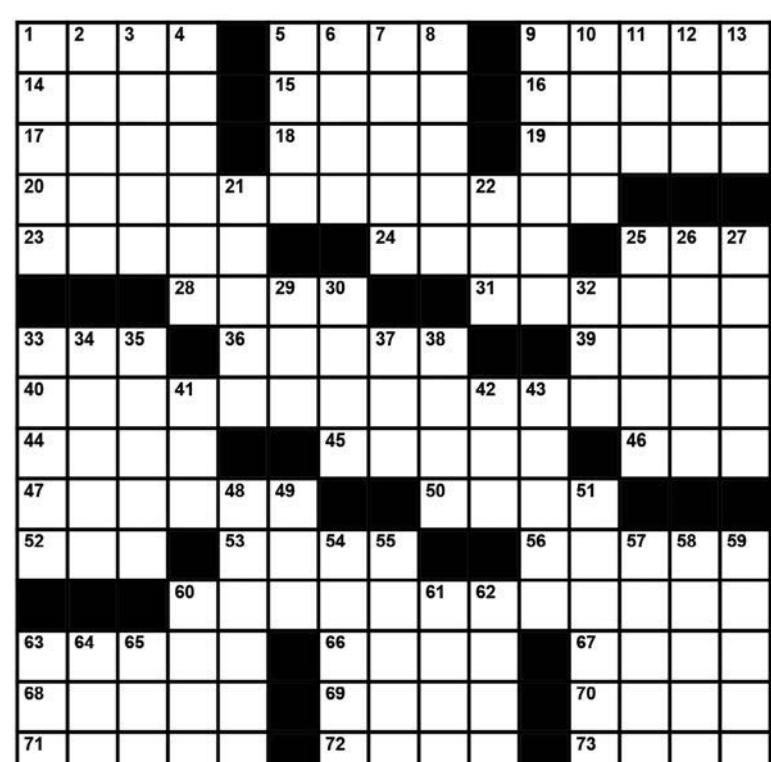
Crossword Puzzle by Myles Mellor

Across

- Hotel amenities
- Slant
- Inexpensive wine choice
- This might be red
- Result of overexercise
- Loathe
- Hand cream ingredient
- Whirl
- Literature Nobelist Hermann
- Beef Wellington is one of his famous dishes
- Declivitous
- Way
- Peony pollinator
- On Soc. Sec., maybe
- Bottled water brand
- Civil War side, abbr.
- Country
- Kind of carpet
- Ossobuco alla Milanese was one of her favorite dishes
- Subject of some treaties
- Black, in the insect world
- Court fig.
- Pacific Northwest airport nickname
- Sassy one
- Cygnet's mother
- Lodge letters
- Speech outline
- Smoked salmon pizza is one of

Down

- Some deer
- Stove light
- Really like
- Farmer, at times
- Shade of red
- Cake finisher
- Tons
- Alabama civil rights city
- "That's funny!"
- Follow
- Hesitant sounds
- Shipwreck signal
- Poetic preposition
- Met offering
- Basic version, abbr.
- State of Brazil
- Make law
- Black billiard ball
- Place to unwind
- Ring result



- Nine-digit ID
- Catch
- Yes or no follower
- Madison Avenue worker
- "__ was saying"
- Former Fords
- Suffix for a believer
- Electronically charged atom
- Blowing away
- Cancels
- Pfc. superior
- Depart abruptly
- Handy
- Night flier
- Bridal veil material
- Conspicuous success
- Make a figure eight
- Distort
- "Sesame Street" shopkeeper
- Wall Street Journal subj.
- University conferral
- "__ the ramparts ..."
- Taoism founder, __-tzu

answers on page 26

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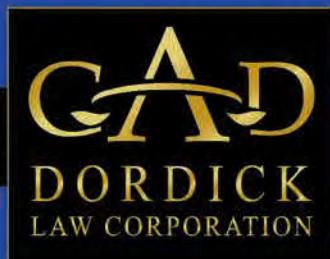
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