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THE WEATHER, BEVERLY HILLS CA		
	Friday	75° 55°
	Saturday	80° 56°
	Sunday	77° 55°
	Monday	71° 55°
	Tuesday	67° 52°
	Wednesday	68° 53°
	Thursday	70° 53°

Craig Corman Sworn in as New Mayor of Beverly Hills



Craig Corman was sworn in as mayor surrounded by his family.

BY JESSICA OGILVIE

Auditorium at Beverly Hills High School, Corman's alma mater.

The event also marked the conclusion of Sharona Nazarian's term as mayor, and

See CRAIG CORMAN, page 8

Eleven Council Candidates Gather for Chamber Forum

BY JESSICA OGILVIE

A special Government Affairs Committee election forum held at the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce on April 16 featured the 11 candidates who are running for City Council.

Three seats will be open for the election on June 2, including those currently held by Councilmembers Sharona Nazarian, Lester Friedman and John Mirisch. Nazarian and Friedman are running for reelection. Mirisch is not, having reached the end of his term limits.

The other nine candidates are Barry Axelrod, Andrew Kole, Andy Licht, Jonathan Mariande, Rebecca Pynoos, Ariel Rofeim, Clayton (Moshe) Saunders, Russell Stuart

See CANDIDATE FORUM, page 2

The Courier Interview: Adam Miller on Why He Should Be L.A.'s Next Mayor



Adam Miller

BY ANA FIGUEROA

The June 2 primary election in California is in the national spotlight with high-profile races for state and local offices that include mayor of Los Angeles. Incumbent Karen Bass is facing a tough reelection bid but leads in most polls. Neither she nor any of her 13 challengers is expected to garner more than 50% of the vote. That means Bass will likely face a runoff with the next highest vote-getter in the Nov. 3 general election.

The question is, who will that person be?

Many polls show L.A. City Councilmember Nithya Raman as the strongest contender for

See ADAM MILLER, page 21

Candidates Hold Kickoff Parties

BY JESSICA OGILVIE AND SAM MULICK

Four candidates for City Council held official kickoff parties on April 12. The Beverly Hills tradition marks the start of the campaign season and presents the opportunity for the candidates to gather supporters and potential supporters, outline their campaign platform and generally inspire enthusiasm and civic engagement. The Courier attended all four events, beginning with Councilmember Lester Friedman and Commissioner Andy Licht's morning gatherings, continuing with Commissioner Rebecca Pynoos and Mayor Sharona Nazarian in the afternoon.

See KICKOFFS, page 20

In this issue:

Courier's Red-Hot Real Estate!

BEVERLY HILLS *COURIER*



Photo by Jessica Ogilvie

City Council candidates discussed their views on the issues.

and Roger Tanenbaum.

Moderated by Howard Rosoff and David Mirharooni, the forum asked each participant to answer questions addressing issues including their campaign priorities, campaign funding, the impact of new developments, commercial development in the Southeast area of the city and the relationship between the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses.

Some questions and answers have been edited for length.

Incumbents, what would you like to do during a second or third term? Challengers, what are your priorities, including crime, homelessness and the economy ... what programs would you continue or change?

Ariel Rofeim: If you compare this city to when I was a kid at Beverly Vista and Beverly High, you cannot say it's the same. I vividly remember seeing police officers going up and down my street, almost to a laughable point. That's how secure we felt based on police visibility. Today, we have the same amount of police officers on the streets as we did when I was in eighth grade, and

that just doesn't make any sense, and that's something that I want to change.

Rebecca Pynoos: I'm the only Metro rider up here and someone who's been engaged in Metro for years. I see this as an area where all three of those things really come together. We viewed [Metro] as a threat instead of an opportunity ... we have not activated the area around La Cienega whatsoever. We're opening a station there on May 8. There's no new businesses in the area. I think that's a total lost opportunity.

Clayton (Moshe) Saunders: Security is my highest priority. I believe that all the high schools should have metal detectors, and they also need to have uniformed police in front. We're going to be spending over \$800,000 for six new police officers, and three at each Metro station. I think that's not sufficient enough.

Given the number of Builder's Remedy projects that have been green-lighted, how would you prevent further projects? How would you deal with the impact from those that have been or will be approved?

Andy Licht: I've spoken to developers

and council members and other cities, and they all tell me the same thing. Developers come in asking for the moon and expect to be negotiated down. That's how I would handle it. I spent six years on the Planning Commission. I understand developers. I've negotiated with many developers. We need to eliminate our adversarial relationship with Sacramento.

Jonathan Mariande: A charter wouldn't allow us to ignore mandates through the Builder's Remedy, but it would give us the tools to rezone and look at the Wilshire Corridor as a possible infrastructural change. We could have answered some of these mandates in that time and redeveloped those places ... it would be tough to put blame on anyone here today, because I just don't think we have the tools as a general law city to answer that.

Lester Friedman: Amongst the 11 of us sitting here, two of us have gone through Builder's Remedy ... the city has instituted rules now regarding parking, which will be a burden upon those who are building buildings that are not up to the Beverly Hills parking standards. We will continue to do that. We are looking at other options to deal with the problem. But this is not a problem that Beverly Hills created. It is a problem Sacramento created.

What are your plans for development of both residential and commercial growth outside of the Beverly Hills triangle, including Southeast Beverly Hills?

Russell Stuart: If you come to Beverly Hills on the subway less than a month from now, your first experience is the dead corner of Wilshire and La Cienega. That should have been developed. It should have stores and cafes. It should be exciting. The Southeast is the future of our city. It should be vibrant. It should be explosive. It should be happening ... it shows a brand-new view to so many people, tens of thousands of people. And right now, it's very disappointing.

Roger Tanenbaum: I'm homegrown. I would like to promote local businesses to try to come and be promoting these areas.

The more local businesses we have, the more character we have ... we need to make sure small businesses feel welcome here, and we need to make sure they're surviving in our rising-cost city, and make sure that we keep them, to make sure that we have character and keep the charm of our town alive.

Andrew Kole: The solution to the subway and that corner would have been a destination piece. Example—the Academy Film Museum. If the Academy Film Museum was up there, people would go on the subway to go there. We need to find another destination piece that can fit into that space, so people have a reason to get off the train. Second, I would take the Farmers' Market and put it on South Beverly Drive. Farmers' markets should be a driver for the community. They should not be something tucked away.

How would you work to improve the relationship between the business community and the Chamber of Commerce?

Barry Axelrod: I believe people and businesses need to get a closer relationship to the Chamber. Help the chamber expand. We're a major city in California, and we have less representation and less to do with the Chamber of Commerce than most of the cities in California ... the Chamber has an incredible opportunity to make it a major force in the direction of Beverly Hills.

Sharona Nazarian: There needs to be a direct line of communication between the city and our businesses. That is something that we have diligently been working on. I think that we've had about two ribbon cuttings a week during my term as mayor, and we have had events to encourage everyone to eat, shop, dine and stay in Beverly Hills ... to know that Beverly Hills is a globally recognized city, but it has a small-town heart, and we support our local businesses.

For additional candidate responses, see the online version of this story at beverlyhillscourier.com. ●

Arts and Culture Commission Discusses World Cup Programming

BY JORDAN POLTORAK

The Arts and Culture Commission discussed 2026 World Cup programming, Festival Beverly Hills and a new art installation, among other topics, at the April 14 meeting.

Recreation Services Manager Matthew Brown gave a presentation to the commission regarding plans for the upcoming 2026 World Cup. Reprising the presentation he gave at the City Council meeting on March 4, he highlighted an interactive soccer goal, branded photo opportunities and commemorative city of Beverly Hills World Cup pins. Brown also mentioned a community watch party at the Roxbury Park Community Center.

Multiple council members raised concerns about the location of the watch party, stating that it may lead to a smaller turnout from the community. Brown stressed that these concerns had already been discussed

during the March 4 City Council meeting, and explained the location had been determined due to “operational and logistical concerns.”

Recreation Supervisor Corrina Lesser provided updates on Festival Beverly Hills, which will take place on July 12.

“The cultural dynamism of the region projects the energy that the festival has,” she said. “We have a powerful name.”

Jenny Palo, Director of Similien Art Gallery, presented a piece of art to be placed at 8913 Olympic Blvd., and it will be visible from the street. The untitled art piece by Francesca Lalane will be 32 feet by 90 feet and engraved in brass.

The last spring Artwalk, a guided tour through the Beverly Gardens, will take place on April 26. Following a brief break, the tours will start again for the summer on June 14 and 28, coinciding with the World Cup.

The Concerts on Canon series will begin

again on June 4 and the website will go live on May 4. The series takes place weekly from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday evenings, June through August. Senior Recreation Supervisor Paul Paolone spoke about how this year's process for choosing artists has been different. In the past, he has taken inquiries throughout the

year, but this year, a webpage was created for artists to apply. The application was open for a few months, and Paolone reported that he had received nearly 50 applications. The full lineup will be announced at next month's commission meeting. ●

THE COURIER IS NOW ON APPLE NEWS!

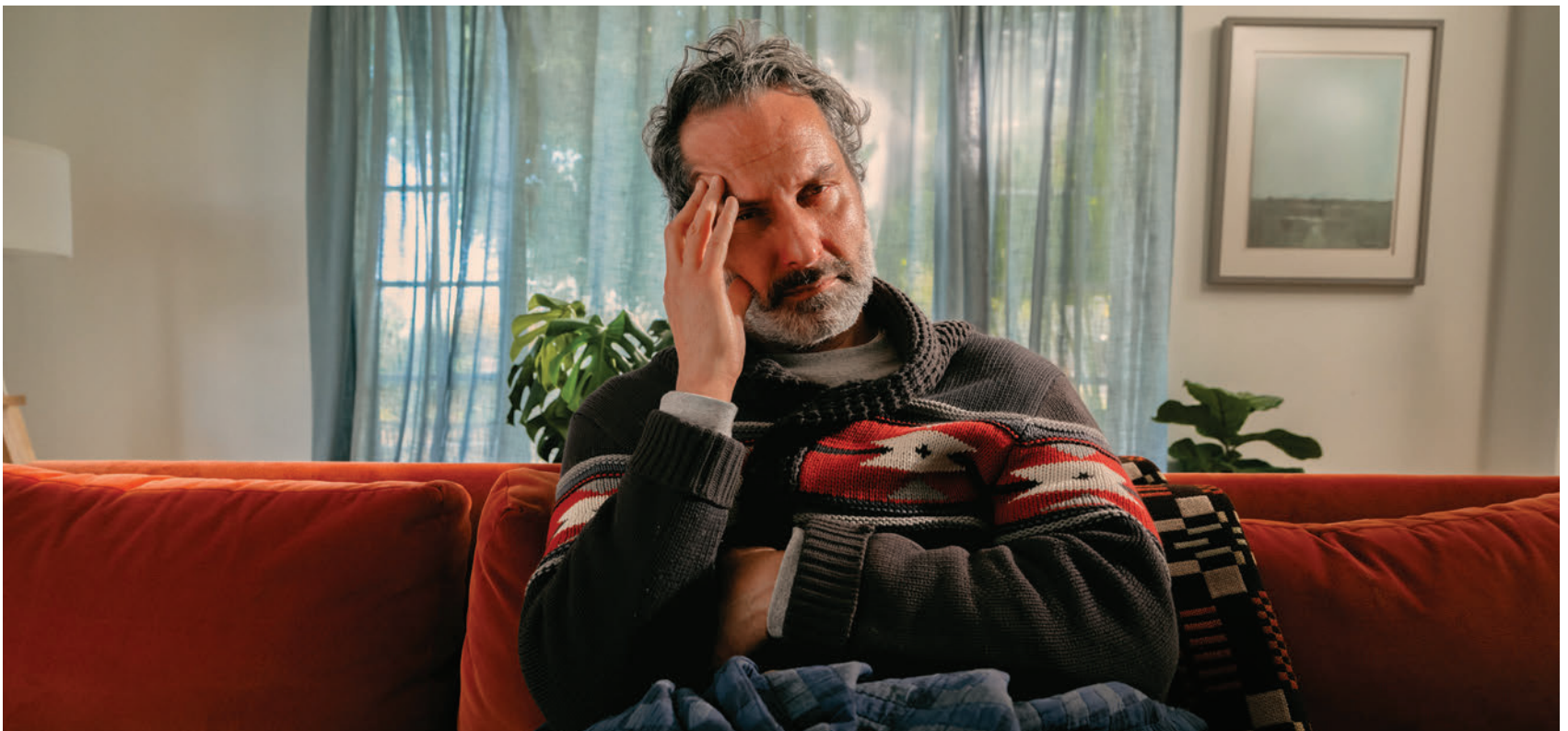


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Commission Approves Tiffany’s Construction Barricade



Rendering of Tiffany & Co. facade
Photo courtesy Gruen Associates

BY SAM MULICK

The Beverly Hills Architectural and Design Review Commission approved the architectural review for a construction barricade with graphics and signage for the new Tiffany & Co. store located at 360 N. Rodeo Drive. The construction barricade will feature four non-illuminated business signs along

North Rodeo Drive for the duration of the construction. The new Tiffany & Co. store will replace the current one located in the Two Rodeo Drive plaza and is scheduled to be completed by June 2028. The upcoming store will be located in the building that formerly housed the Luxe Hotel, which closed in September 2020, and See TIFFANY & CO., page 7

Heated Guest Policy Discussion at BHUSD Board Meeting



Photo by Sam Mulick

BY SAM MULICK

The BHUSD Board of Education discussed its guest and assembly policy. The Beverly Hills Unified School District (BHUSD) discussed proposed changes to the district’s guest and assembly policy at the April 14 meeting in the wake of a controversial student speaker. The discussions follow community outrage from a guest speaker appearance by

influencer Ben Azoulay at the Beverly Hills High School (BHHS) Jewish club on Feb. 17. In 2008, Azoulay, then 18, faced allegations of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl. According to a civil lawsuit filed by the alleged victim in 2011 and public records reviewed by the Courier, Azoulay “admitted his guilt in open court and was convicted on the charge of violating Penal Code Section

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288a(b)(1), oral copulation with a minor.” Azoulay has been highly controversial due to his posts that degrade women, encourage young people to do poorly in school and, in at least one post, appear to make light of the allegations leveled against him.

According to a district spokesperson, the visit was coordinated by a student-run club and approved at the BHHS site level, a protocol in accordance with the California Education Code. Superintendent Alex Cherniss later decried Azoulay’s talk, calling his views “abhorrent,” and said he would not have been allowed to appear if the district or principal knew of the talk ahead of time.

Board Member Amanda Stern apologized to the community for Azoulay’s appearance on April 14.

“I personally offer apologies to anyone in the community who was triggered by the visit from Ben Azoulay,” she said. “To students, parents and staff who have been victims of assault, I understand how upsetting this was ... We cannot underestimate how damaging it is when someone comes to our campus and says, ‘I can’t lie. I was an F student.’ And then you have a student who happened to film it with everyone clapping.”

Board President Judy Manouchehri also apologized for Azoulay’s appearance.

“I really do want to acknowledge that

we had a speaker that came through one of our student clubs not too long ago, and it was triggering and disappointing for a lot of our community members and I want to acknowledge that,” she said.

Assistant Superintendent Dustin Seemann proposed changes to district Policy 6145.8, the district’s visitor and assembly policy, that would require a vetting process and a final approval for each guest by the respective school’s principal, and prohibit guests from distributing any food that does not comply with board policy.

“The Superintendent or designee shall develop a comprehensive vetting process for all non-staff speakers/presenters, which must include a background check for criminal convictions, restraining orders, and any public record of conduct inconsistent with district values or missions. It is scheduled at minimum 15 school days in advance to allow for adjustment of academic schedule and provide families with information on assembly,” the proposed amendment read.

Seemann clarified that club events fall under the definition of an assembly.

“What we’re trying to say as a group is, at minimum, we are getting names submitted to us 15 days in advance. Within that, we are ensuring that all of this has been followed through. Someone isn’t just invited off the street. They have gone through Raptor

[Technologies school safety software],” he added.

Manouchehri said it was important to provide school principals with an objective standard that aligns with federal standards, which regulate limitations that school boards can impose on student organizations.

“I looked at some of the policy and I’m worried that the subjectiveness could get us into trouble with students’ rights,” she said. “This would inhibit the clubs. Dr. Seemann is categorizing a club as a special event. I just want to put this out here for everybody, this is not my opinion, but it appears to be federal law. Let’s look into it as a group so we can make sure we’re not overreaching.”

Board Member Rachelle Marcus argued that guest speakers should be scheduled outside of normal school hours to minimize instructional disruption, while Stern added it is important to enforce a policy that students don’t record guest speakers, as fallout from Azoulay’s appearance affected the district’s reputation.

Stern also claimed that district administrators should be able to make judgment calls about whether speakers are fit to speak to students.

“It took 20 seconds if you Google the person’s name to see absolutely abhorrent media,” Stern said. “This particular guy was legally okay to be on the campus, but that

doesn’t matter because he wasn’t a good fit.”

Board Member Russell Stuart challenged the phrase “public record” in the proposed amendment, arguing that a guest’s social media posts should not be considered when deciding if they are fit to appear on campus and criticized Stern’s proposed policy changes.

“Dr. Stern, according to you, I’m not a good fit either, which you made a public statement that I should never have been allowed on campus, I should never have been allowed to speak to kids and that I was a dangerous person,” he said. “According to [the amended policy], I would be blocked from coming on campus. We cannot include opinion.”

Stern previously criticized Stuart for speaking about mental health at a BHHS boys’ mental health club, claiming he was not qualified, and also criticized his social media posts, including one that read, “Cheers to my haters! Be patient. So much more is coming.”

The last amendment would mandate all cellphones and recording devices to be powered off during assemblies and students and guests would be prohibited from recording or taking photographs.

The board will review an official proposal of an amended guest and assembly policy at a later date. ●

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Photo by Jessica Ogilvie

Lester Friedman officially launched his campaign.



Photo by Jessica Ogilvie

Andy and Lisa Licht hosted supporters at a private home.



Photo courtesy of Sharona Nazarian

Sharona Nazarian speaks to supporters at her campaign kickoff.



Photo by By Sam Mulick

Rebecca Pynoos at her City Council kickoff

See KICKOFFS, page 1



23RD ANNUAL

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SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2026

9 AM TO 1 PM

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SustainableBH 



PAGE 6

BEVERLY HILLS *COURIER*

APRIL 17, 2026

TIFFANY & CO., from page 4
will feature three stories, two levels of retail, a third-floor restaurant with 53 seats and a rooftop space with an outdoor terrace. Plans for the new retail store were approved by the Planning Commission on Nov. 13, 2025.

The new store would be Tiffany’s second-largest retail store in the U.S., only behind the flagship store in New York.

The barricade will feature a blue-toned background with illustrated decorative elements and an interior facing graphic along a temporary pedestrian walkway.

“The inclusion of the interior graphic would enhance the pedestrian experience within the temporary walkway by providing visual interest and continuity with the exterior facing design,” according to the staff report. “Overall, the proposed construction barricade demonstrates a cohesive visual theme and ensures that pedestrian circulation is maintained along the frontage during construction.”

The commission approved the construction barricade and signage unanimously without discussion.

In other business, the commission conditionally approved a new single-family residence located at 265 El Camino Drive after lengthy deliberation.

The two-story property will feature a contemporary, asymmetrical design, incorporating a palette of white stucco, vertical wood siding in varying tones, and

a three-foot tall Corten steel fence. The building will also include a significant setback on the left side of the structure to accommodate a courtyard, making an L-shaped configuration.

The commission approved the residence with the conditions that the project maintains the landscape plantings that were proposed at the meeting, gray metal panels on the north elevation are changed to wood material and the first floor of the front facade is densely landscaped.

Neighbors Dr. Louis Ignarro and Dr. Sharon Ignarro expressed opposition to the project, saying the contemporary design would stand out in a neighborhood dominated by Spanish Colonial-style homes.

“I understand your commission evaluates projects on whether they contribute to the city’s image of beauty, harmony, high quality and good taste. This project does none of these,” they wrote in a letter to the commission. “If you look at the designers’ own photos of the neighboring properties, you can clearly see that this proposal in no way complements the other homes. For far too long, the needs of the south side of Beverly Hills have been neglected. Please do not allow such an eyesore to ruin the flavor and feel of our neighborhood.”

Architect Dwayne Oyler, who represented project applicant Yen Liang Lee at the meeting, detailed how Lee intends to build a property that aligns with the beauty

of the city and incorporates elements of the neighborhood.

“They’ve put extensive thought into the development of the garden and that includes both private spaces as well as the landscaping at the front along the sidewalk that we believe speaks well to the idea of the garden city,” he said. “They bought this property to build a beautiful modern home, and they’re thrilled that the city of Beverly Hills not only allows contemporary homes, but there are numerous examples. This includes one approximately 200 feet away at 261 Rodeo Drive.”

Commission Chair and Beverly Hills City Council candidate Rebecca Pynoos expressed her reservations of the project’s design but ultimately supported it.

“My feeling is just that it’s modern. It will be a change for the neighborhood,” she said. “But if there’s any way to do some changes in the choices of material, or anything to do to the front, the large massing, the front-facing facade...it’s reading like multifamily at least to my eye, but otherwise thoughtful in the L-shaped design in what you’re keeping in the property.” ●

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BEVERLY HILLS EVACUATION DRILL MEETING



DATE:
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

TIME:
6 P.M. – 7 P.M.

LOCATION:
GREYSTONE MANSION & GARDENS
905 Loma Vista Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Informational Community Meeting

The Beverly Hills Fire Department will be conducting an evacuation drill impacting residents who live adjacent to and surrounding the area of Franklin Canyon within the City boundary north of Sunset Boulevard on Saturday, May 2, 2026, from 1 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The purpose of this community meeting is to educate the community on how to be prepared to evacuate their homes. All residents are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about how to prepare for a disaster such as a wildfire requiring a large scale evacuation.

Additional information at
BEVERLYHILLS.ORG/EVACDRILL

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The City Council of the City of Beverly Hills, at its regular meeting to be held on **Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard**, in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 455 N. Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210, will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of:

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHEDULE OF TAXES, FEES AND CHARGES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027; AND

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS ESTABLISHING LIMITS FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS BY CITY OFFICIALS

The City Council will consider a resolution which will increase certain fees and service charges that are charged to the public for the various activities and services as set forth in the schedule for fiscal year 2026-2027. In some cases, fees are proposed for an adjustment of 3.6% based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to reflect the increase in the City's costs. In other cases, new fees are proposed to be established or existing fees to be adjusted to reflect a more equitable distribution of costs, or a change in service level. Most fees would become effective on July 1, 2026.

The City Council will also consider a resolution which will authorize City officials, including the Director of Finance and City Manager, to accept settlements of delinquent accounts, including waivers of penalties and interest, of up to \$10,000.

At the public hearing, the City Council will hear and consider all comments. All interested persons are invited to attend and speak or provide written comments on this matter.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Members of the public may participate in the meeting by attending in-person or telephonically and may view the meeting through live webcast or BHTV Channel 10 on Spectrum Cable.

City Council/Parking Authority meetings are broadcast on local Beverly Hills television and on other media platforms. Anyone who participates at the meeting and/or enters the City Council Chamber is subject to having their image displayed. These recordings will remain publicly accessible in perpetuity.

Public Comment Participation:

- Oral Comment/Listen only: (310) 288-2288
- Email: cityclerk@beverlyhills.org
- Video (during public comment only): <http://beverlyhills.org/comment>
- To Watch Video Live: <http://beverlyhills.org/live> or
- On-Demand: <http://beverlyhills.org/citycouncilmeetings>
- In-Person: Submit a Speaker Card to the City Clerk at the meeting

How to Submit Public Comment (Email/Video):

It is recommended that public written comments be submitted to the City Clerk's office by 12:00 p.m. on the meeting date. Public comments will also be taken during the meeting when the topic is being reviewed by the City Council/Parking Authority. Written comments should identify the Agenda Item Number or Topic in the subject line of the email. The City Clerk will read only the first three minutes (approximately 350 words) of a written comment. In the event of a large number of written comments on one item, written comments may be summarized by the City Clerk's Office. The entire written comment shall be archived in full as part of the record.

If a comment is received after the agenda item is heard, it will not be a part of the record. Public comment via video conference will be no longer than three (3) minutes per each individual comment, subject to City Council discretion based on the anticipated length in the meeting. In-person speaker cards may be submitted to the City Clerk directly during the meeting.

In-Person Participation:

Please be advised that pre-entry metal detector screening requirements are now in place at City Hall. Members of the public are requested to plan visits accordingly.

All interested persons are invited to attend and speak on this matter in person. Please see the above information on the location and time of this meeting.

The proposed Resolution will be available on the City website. For additional background information on the fees or if there are any questions regarding this notice, please contact the Finance Department's Revenue Division at **(310) 285-1000**, or by email at revenue@beverlyhills.org.

HUMA AHMED
City Clerk



If you are an individual with a disability and need a reasonable modification or accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disability Act ("ADA") please contact (310) 285-2400 or (310) 285-6881 (TTY) preferably 24-hours prior to the meeting for assistance.

NEWS

CRAIG CORMAN, from page 1

the installation of Mary Wells as vice mayor.

In his inaugural speech, Corman emphasized the importance of embracing change and opportunity. Citing new developments in the city and the opening of two new Metro stations, he said that Beverly Hills will soon see an influx of visitors and residents.

In the face of those changes, he said, residents have a choice.

"Significant change is coming," he said. "It's, what are we going to do about it? ... the future may be unknowable, but it is very much ours to create."

Metro estimates that between 6,000 and 12,000 people will eventually enter and exit each station in Beverly Hills every day, Corman said, and new housing requirements from Sacramento could result in the city's population doubling or tripling.

Corman stressed the council's attentiveness to public safety and to ensuring that residents are well-protected as the city pivots into its new era, while underscoring the fact that more visitors and residents will mean more revenue for the city, allowing the maintenance of critical services.

"They will create a rising tide of business that will also lift our ability to pay for police and fire, the parks, the schools, street improvements and building upgrades and all the other resources that make Beverly Hills so special," he said.

Addressing concerns about high-rise buildings for which applications have been submitted to the city, Corman reminded the audience of a time in the middle of the last century when many people who worked in Beverly Hills lived off of Wilshire Boulevard in less expensive housing, alongside young people who were just starting out in the city.

Stating that it would be "great to have that kind of neighborhood again," he suggested solutions to the housing dilemma such as moving required housing to the blocks around the subway station and using city-owned property to "prime the pump on development we want to see, not just what others want to build."

"If we do it right, we can create a vibrant new urban core in the Southeast that harkens back to the heyday of Restaurant Row," he said. "Who knows? One day we might even have a new Golden Circle to rival our Golden Triangle. It won't be easy, and it won't happen overnight, but we can till the soil so future City Councils can plant the seeds that will one day sprout into the landscape we envision today."

Corman also emphasized his commitment to listening to residents. He announced an initiative in which he will come to the homes of residents who gather in a group

to discuss issues affecting them.

"My door will always be open, because I believe the best solutions come when people with different perspectives work together ... so over the next year, I want to come to you ... because that's what I think public service is about," he said.

In her inaugural speech, Wells recalled her time on the Beverly Hills Unified School District (BHUSD) board of education, and her involvement in school modernization projects. She emphasized the importance of public safety, keeping lines of communication open with residents and protecting the city's financial well-being.

"The city is not just where I live," she said. "It's where I raised my family, it's where I chose and had the privilege to serve on the school board and now the city council, and that is why protecting what makes this community so very special is deeply meaningful for me."

In her outgoing speech as mayor, Nazarian highlighted her accomplishments in the realm of public safety and her work to unite the community.

"At my swearing-in last year, I spoke about unity—not a slogan, but a way to bridge differences and really bring our community together," she said. "And today, with confidence and a full heart, I can proudly say we did not just talk about unity. We built it into how we govern, how we show up and how we serve every member of our community."

Nazarian cited the agreements the city reached in Memorandums of Understanding with the Beverly Hills Police Department and the Beverly Hills Fire Department, saying, "if we expect our first responders to take care of us, we must take care of them as well."

She also highlighted the zero-based budgeting operations undertaken for capital improvement, and the creation of a new committee to prepare Beverly Hills for the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as the FIFA World Cup and other major events set to take place in and around the city.

A number of representatives from nearby cities and organizations offered their thanks to Nazarian and their congratulations to Corman during public comment.

In addition to the evening's speeches, the Beverly Hills High School Madrigals performed several songs. A reception followed the ceremony, with catering that included desserts prepared by Beverly Hills High School students.

Corman was first elected to the City Council in 2024. Previously, he served on the city's Planning Commission and Cultural Heritage Commission. ●



Photo by Jessica Ogilvie

Mary Wells was sworn in as vice mayor.



Mechanic's Lien Fraud Rocks the Westside: Legal Takeaways

BY POOJA S. NAIR

One consulting company's filings with the County Registrar-Recorder's office turned a routine property law provision into a nightmare for homeowners in Benedict Canyon. Starting in 2023, a Los Angeles woman named Rita Ortiz, operating through an entity called Ortiz Consulting LLC, recorded roughly 35 mechanic's liens against properties in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, and Riverside County. The total face value of those liens exceeds \$500 million, with individual amounts ranging from \$800,000 to \$98 million. On a single stretch of Benedict Canyon Drive, the recorded liens against ten properties added up to roughly \$317 million.

The homeowners say they never hired Ortiz, never met her, and never owed her a dollar. On Feb. 26, 2026, LAPD's Real Estate Fraud Unit arrested Ortiz. On March 3, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office charged her with 25 felony counts of knowingly causing a false instrument to be recorded in a public office, under California Penal Code section 115(a). She pleaded not guilty. Bail was set at \$700,000. If convicted as charged, she faces up to 24 years in state prison.

Beyond the headline is a cautionary tale for property owners about how the mechanic's lien system works, why it was vulnerable to this kind of abuse, and what remedies they have if a fraudulent lien lands on a title.

California's mechanic's lien law is grounded in the California Constitution and codified in the Civil Code. The purpose of the law is to protect a contractor, subcontractor, laborer, or material supplier who improves real property and goes unpaid. It allows them to record a claim against the property itself. If the owner still refuses to pay, the claimant can sue to foreclose the lien and force a sale. The system favors the contractor over the property owner by providing them with a secured interest in the property value for work completed. For legitimate contractors, it is often the only leverage they have against a nonpaying owner.

At a high level, the mechanic's lien process has four main steps. First, a contractor who lacks a direct contract with the owner must serve a 20-day preliminary notice identifying the project and the work. Second, the claimant must record the lien within strict deadlines (generally 60 to 90 days after completion, depending on whether a notice of completion was filed). Third, the claimant has 90 days from recording to file a lawsuit to foreclose on the lien. Fourth, if no suit is filed, the lien expires by operation of law.

When a mechanic's lien is presented for recording at the County Registrar-Recorder, the clerk performs only an administrative review. The clerk checks that the document has the right format, the right signatures, a notary acknowledgment, and the required statutory language. The clerk does not

verify whether the work was done, whether a contract existed, whether the claimant is licensed, or whether the amount claimed is plausible.

The trade-off is that the system relies on two backstops: the 90-day foreclosure deadline, which forces a dishonest claimant into court where the claim can be tested, and the criminal law, which punishes anyone who records a false instrument. There is no easy administrative remedy for property owners who are victims of fraud.

The Ortiz scheme exploited the gap between those two backstops. Recording a lien is cheap and fast. The document immediately clouds title, which means the owner generally cannot sell or refinance until the cloud is removed. A lien for \$24 million or \$98 million would pause any sale, regardless of whether the underlying claim has any basis. A dishonest claimant who never intends to sue can simply record, wait, and let the pressure build on the owner to pay something to make the problem go away. Even after 90 days, when the lien is legally unenforceable, it remains on the record until someone takes affirmative steps to remove it.

According to the DA, Ortiz is alleged to have recorded 24 claims of mechanic's lien and one grant deed against ten properties, claiming amounts from \$800,000 to more than \$98 million, for services such as "cleaning" and "consulting." LAPD has stated that Ortiz is not licensed by the California Department of Real Estate and was promoting herself as a real estate consultant and business coach without a license.

If a property owner discovers a fraudulent lien on their title, they have several legal remedies, though each of them requires retaining counsel and incurring fees, and may be cumbersome.

The most direct option is a petition to release the lien under Civil Code section 8480. Once the 90-day foreclosure window has passed without a lawsuit, the owner can petition the superior court for an order releasing the lien, after first giving the claimant 10 days' notice and an opportunity to release it voluntarily. This is the cleanest remedy when the claimant has simply let the lien go stale, which is often the case with a claimant who never intended to litigate in the first place.

Inside the 90-day window, an owner and their counsel can press the claimant to either file suit or release the lien, making clear that a claimant who records a lien and then fails to prosecute it exposes themselves to liability for attorney's fees, costs, and potential tort damages.

For an owner who needs to sell or refinance immediately and cannot wait for a court proceeding, Civil Code section 8424 provides a mechanic's lien release bond. A surety bond equal to 125 percent of the lien amount substitutes for the real property as security, which removes the lien from title and shifts any dispute to the bond itself. The approach is expensive, and



Photo by Lisa Friedman Bloch

at the face amounts recorded in the Ortiz matter, which ranged from \$800,000 to nearly \$100 million, the bond premium and collateral requirements may put this remedy out of reach for many owners. It remains an option worth evaluating with counsel when a transaction is at stake.

A knowingly false lien also supports a civil claim for slander of title. That cause of action allows the owner to recover the damages caused by the cloud on title, including the cost of clearing it and, in appropriate cases, punitive damages against a claimant who acted with malice. In a case involving dozens of liens recorded against unrelated owners, the pattern itself may support the malice element.

Owners should also report the matter as criminal fraud. Filing a false document is a felony under Penal Code section 115, the same statute under which Ortiz has been charged. LAPD's Commercial Crimes Division operates a Real Estate Fraud Unit, and the Los Angeles County District Attorney maintains a dedicated Real Estate Fraud Section within its White-Collar Crime Division.

Finally, every owner of Los Angeles County property should sign up for the County Registrar-Recorder's property fraud alert system, which sends a free email notification whenever any document is recorded against a property the owner has registered. The service will not prevent a fraudulent filing, but it allows the owner to learn about the filing on the day it happens rather than months later when a sale or refinance is already in motion. Early notice materially shortens the timeline for obtaining relief and reduces the transactional damage a fraudulent lien can cause.

DA Ho has said his office will seek a court order to clear title on the affected properties as part of the criminal case. That is unusual and welcome relief for these specific victims, and it suggests an increasing willingness to treat title clearing as part of the criminal remedy rather than a separate civil burden for each homeowner.

The broader question is whether California should adjust the recording system to make this kind of abuse harder. Possible reforms include requiring a sworn declaration of contract existence at recording, requiring proof of contractor licensure for lien claimants who hold themselves out as providing services regulated by the Contractors State License Board, and imposing automatic penalties when a lien claimant fails to foreclose within 90 days. However, no action in Sacramento has focused on this issue yet. Senate Bill 255, which was passed in October 2025, requires every county to establish a recorder notification program and requires that all parties to a deed, quitclaim, mortgage, or deed of trust get a notification within 30 days of those documents being recorded. That will go into effect in January 2027, but would not affect mechanic's liens.

On April 6, 2026, ABC reported that Marjorie Josaphat, one of the Benedict Canyon homeowners affected by the Ortiz scheme, was able to remove \$100 million in mechanics liens filed by Ortiz's company through a court action.

For now, the practical takeaway for Beverly Hills and Los Angeles property owners is to check title periodically and treat mechanic's liens with urgency. ●



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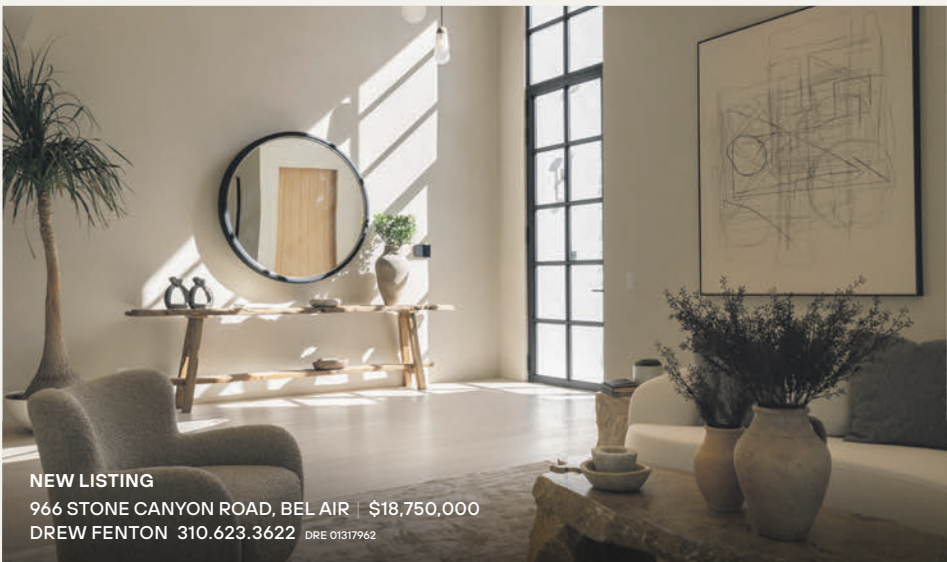
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TV: Too Much of a Good Thing Is Pretty Good

BY NEELY SWANSON

Part I of this article can be read online. The following shows have premiered more recently and, for the most part, live up to being “Too Much of a Good Thing” by being pretty darn good. Only one was a disappointment, and even that had its moments. So sit back, grab the popcorn and settle down in front of the TV.

“Vladimir”

That can’t be Oscar winner Rachel Weisz on the screen! Yes it is, and now starring as the lead in a delicious, somewhat politically incorrect new series about a professor at a small private college. A well-regarded expert on feminist literature, with one book under her belt but stalled on the next, M is the embodiment of a contradiction in terms. Life has become rather complicated because her errant husband, another tenured professor at the same college, is being investigated on sexual harassment charges. He doesn’t deny his multiple affairs with students, but he, like almost anyone else under similar circumstances, insists they were consensual.

The college has hired a new couple for the English department: Vladimir, full time, and his wife, Cynthia, as an adjunct in the same department. M is thunderstruck. Her first glimpse of the dreamy, much younger Vladimir propels her back to middle school with raging hormones. She contrives different ways for their paths to intersect. He seems to reciprocate her attractions, but then again, the camera is taking M’s point of view. And there’s the pesky wife, an effective parry to M’s thrust. Vladimir is relentlessly faithful to his wife despite the many ways that M seems to maneuver herself between them.

Most of the episodes are of the “will she, will he?” nature, but that in itself is the cat-and-mouse game we’re longing for. Occasionally breaking the fourth wall, M gets us on her side in her desire to rekindle fires she thought had died down. Even her husband, the lascivious John, sees it and would be happy for her to get a notch on her belt, something that won’t even the score but at least takes her off the high ground.

The cast is wonderful, led by the amazing Rachel Weisz as M, playing a cougar who has been blessed with a youthful appearance. She manages the “Should I? Would I? Could I?” to perfection. Her desire and ambivalence are universally appealing to “women of a certain age.”

Leo Woodall is Vladimir, the object of her affection. His deep blue eyes (not sure that they are blue, but they should be) invite you in, an invitation that is more of a tease than a solicitation. Woodall has a wide-eyed innocent look that is most effective. John Slattery plays John, M’s errant husband, to a perverse “T.”

Based on the novel by Julia May Jones, the writing is sharp, the dialogue sly and the overall effect is a delicious soap opera of dark humor. Starting a bit slowly, eventually these eight episodes fly by. You will want to binge.

Now streaming on Netflix.

“The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins”

Starring Tracy Morgan and Daniel Radcliffe, with support from Erika Alexander, “The Fall and Rise of Reggie Dinkins” takes several cliched ideas, the fallen hero and the mockumentary, among others, and somehow makes them new again.

Reggie (Morgan) was a much-loved all-pro football player who has been banished from the game for betting on himself. He is determined to make a comeback and has hired Arthur Tobin (Radcliffe), a filmmaker in need of his own redo, to make a documentary of his life, assuming that he could dictate the entire film. “That’s not how it works,” Tobin tells Dinkins and they’re off to the races. Weaving in the much younger wife, the ex-wife (Alexander) who is the agent, and the coach he disgraced, a clever cameo by Corbin Bernsen, writer/creator Robert Carlock uses some of the magic he wove in “30 Rock” in bringing together unlikely characters and scenarios and mining them for laughs. The character of Reggie is definitely in Morgan’s wheelhouse and he’s up for the game, but it works all the better because he has the absolutely delightful Daniel Radcliffe as his foil. Radcliffe shows remarkably good comedic timing. The more subtle foil to Morgan’s broad strokes, he is aided by Alexander as Reggie’s ex-wife who helps anchor the action.

This is situation comedy in the sense that Reggie creates a problem or makes one worse, the situation, and then chaos ensues, hence the comedy.

Releasing episodes weekly on NBC and streaming on Peacock.

“Bait”

Riz Ahmed has created a funny, sad, dramatic, slapstick adventure in six episodes that in many ways is a personal reflection on the life of an actor, his life as an actor, but especially the difficulties when this life is reflected through the prism of a person of color. Ahmed, who first made a splash in “Nightcrawler” and won an Emmy for his amazing performance in the HBO limited series “The Night Of,” is one of those actors who commands your attention. I willingly watch anything he’s in, regardless of the material, because he is in it. “Bait” is a very clever riff on the struggles of an actor.

Shah Latif, a strikingly handsome British Muslim actor, has the most important audition of his career. He is being considered for the next James Bond. Seeing him in a tuxedo, you have no doubt, until in the midst of the scene, he freezes. That the producers were even considering a man of color was extraordinary. Everything depended on that audition, and he’s blown it, launching him into a full-scale existential crisis. There’s a passage in “A Chorus Line” that distills what he’s going through: “Who am I anyway? Am I my resume? That is a picture of a person I don’t know. What does he want from me? What should I try to be?” The fast-moving, short (30-minute) episodes take Shah through a metamorphosis, not just as an actor but as a person—a son, a brother,



Photo by Shane Mahood, courtesy of Netflix

Rachel Weisz and Leo Woodall in “Vladimir”

a Muslim, a friend, an actor—and it’s not always pretty.

Actors, by nature and necessity, are narcissists. To succeed, they need to be focused on one thing and one thing only: getting that next job. Shah is definitely a self-centered, insecure ego on two legs, but he’s definitely being blocked. He blames everyone else, and there’s plenty of blame to go around. In his quest for the holy grail of Bond, he’s lost himself. But what he doesn’t realize initially is that in order to be what others want him to be, he, first, must find out who lies beneath the skin. The journey, filled with crazy relatives, hallucinations, double-crossing colleagues, and bad acts on his part, will put him on the path to self-awareness.

As Ahmed is well aware, the path to James Bond is littered with expectations and stereotype. People have very strong feelings about this character as judged by the racist uproar when Idris Elba’s name was mentioned. This is not the 1960s of Sean Connery or even the 2000s of Daniel Craig; that version of James Bond died, leaving plenty of room to rethink the character. “Bait” humorously balances the question of “Why” with the answer “Why not.”

Well-written, entertaining, poignant and often laugh-out-loud funny, the series is overflowing with excellent actors. This is a trip you will want to take. And the bonus is that you’ll take it with the fabulous Riz Ahmed.

Now streaming on Amazon Prime.

“56 Days”

Based on the Irish bestseller by Catherine Ryan Howard, “56 Days” intertwines the today, where a grossly decomposing body is found in the corporate apartment of Oliver, a high-flying twenty-something with a big secret to hide. Is it him? Or is it the very sexy Ciara, the object of his passion? They met in a grocery store and began their tempestuous affair 56 days before the discovery and police investigation. But Ciara, too, has her secrets and the meeting may not have been by chance.

Each episode reveals a bit more of who they are and who they aren’t as the story goes back and forth in time, but rather than unraveling the mystery, the narrative becomes more complex as we drive toward the answer to the question. Who is in the tub?

Avan Jogia as Oliver and Dove Cameron as Ciara are a good-looking couple hindered by a lack of character development that would enhance their actions. The detectives, played by Karla Souza and Dorian Missick, are all surface and no depth. They, too, have their secrets, but, in all honesty, you don’t really care.

The idea behind this series was a good one, but the execution is lacking and you end up not caring very much, even about the dead body.

Now streaming on Amazon Prime. ●



Neely Swanson spent most of her professional career in the television industry, almost all of it working for David E. Kelley. In her last full-time position as Executive Vice President of Development, she reviewed writer submissions and targeted content for adaptation. As she has often said, she did book reports for a living. For several years she was a freelance writer for “Written By,” the magazine of the WGA West, and was adjunct faculty at USC in the writing division of the School of Cinematic Arts. Neely has been writing film and television reviews for the “Easy Reader” for more than 10 years. Her past reviews can be read on Rotten Tomatoes where she is a tomatometer-approved critic.

KICKOFFS, from page 1

Lester Friedman

Councilmember Lester Friedman's campaign kickoff, which took place at his home, was attended by approximately 200 people. Guests milled around tables decorated in blue and yellow and enjoyed Pink's hot dogs.

Councilmember Mary Wells, Beverly Hills Unified School District (BHUSD) Board Members Amanda Stern and Judy Manouchehri and former Mayor Julian Gold were in attendance, along with community members.

Friedman was introduced by his wife, Simone.

"I think he will be fantastic in the third term," she said. "I know he very, very much wants to complete some of the things that he started, some of the things that never got really started during his first term ... when he was mayor during COVID. It was quite a challenge here, so I think he would be honored to do a third term and try to finish up what he feels he started and didn't get a chance to finish."

During a speech that lasted approximately 20 minutes, Friedman emphasized his deep connections in the community as a strength of his campaign. He noted that he and Simone moved to the city as a young couple after meeting at the University of California, Los Angeles, and that their four children attended Beverly Hills public schools.

"One of the things that I really believe in is that if you're going to get elected, you really need to have the support of the community, and it's not smoke and mirrors," he said. "What you see is what I am."

Friedman, who was first elected in 2017, highlighted the unique challenges he has weathered while in office, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2025 wildfires. He underscored the lessons in leadership that those experiences provided.

"As mayor during those unsettled times, I gained a level of experience that I believe is unique on council," he said.

Drawing further on his experience, Friedman stated that because of the years he has already spent in office, he understands what's needed to support the city going forward. He pointed to increased safety, finding ways to mitigate the impact of Builder's Remedy projects, continuing to fight antisemitism and supporting the business community.

He also emphasized the importance of maintaining strong relationships with other local leaders, citing his connections to city hall staff as well as Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath, Los Angeles County District Attorney Nathan Hochman, California State Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur and State Senator Ben Allen.

"Let me share something that every new councilmember ... quickly finds out: you don't know what you don't know before you join ... I think Beverly Hills is a remarkable place to live, and I promise I will do everything to keep it that way," he said.

Friedman is running for his third and final term on the City Council.

Andy Licht

Approximately 235 people attended Cultural Heritage Commissioner Andy Licht's kickoff event, which was held at a private home. Licht was introduced by his wife Lisa, whose remarks were followed by realtor Michael Libow, former Beverly Hills Mayors Nancy Krasne and Jimmy Delshad, Planning Commissioner Gary Ross and Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge

candidate David Ross. Later, former Planning Commissioner Thomas Hudnut and California State Senate District 24 candidate Brian Goldsmith also offered remarks.

Krasne emphasized her support for Licht. "We need a council with vision, that's experienced, that knows the rules and plays the games and understands what the staff is doing, what's going on," she said. "And right now, we're being run into the ground by the state with their desires and their wishes, and that's not acceptable to most of the residents here. So, for that, Andy's visionary, and he will get things done."

In an approximately 10-minute speech, Licht emphasized the ways in which he believes the city can be improved.

"I think Beverly Hills is a wonderful city," he said. "It's why I love it. But the core of my campaign is my conviction: we can do better."

The primary areas he cited for improvement were public safety, emergency preparedness, quality of life, development and city hall functioning.

With regards to public safety, Licht stated that the city needs an increased police force, improved lighting in key areas and expanded camera and drone coverage, as well as the possibility of "exploring alternative policing models that have worked in other cities."

He emphasized the importance of updating the city's technology for fire prevention, traffic signals and solar energy. Licht also mentioned the need to reduce noise pollution and crack down on party houses, which often create a nuisance for residents.

Speaking about new developments in Beverly Hills, Licht said the city must be "smarter."

"Growth must be thoughtful, plan-driven, and spread equally around the city," he said. "High-revenue, low-impact projects have to be generated here in Beverly Hills rather than dictated by Sacramento."

Such development would be aided, he said, by an expedited, simplified and modernized permitting process.

"Government is designed to serve people, not slow them down ... my commitment to the city of Beverly Hills is make streets safe, keep its parks beautiful, help our families thrive," he said. "Build a safer, saner future for our children and our grandchildren. In each of these areas, it's my conviction that we can do better."

A lifelong resident of Beverly Hills who raised three children in the city, Licht has previously served on the city's Planning Commission and its Traffic and Parking Commission.

Rebecca Pynoos

About 200 people attended Rebecca Pynoos' North Maple Drive event, during which she was introduced by former Beverly Hills Mayor Robert Wunderlich and former Beverly Hills Cultural Heritage Commissioner Rich Waldo. City Councilmember Mary Wells, BHUSD Board Member Amanda Stern, California State Senate District 24 candidate Brian Goldsmith, along with city commissioners and community members, attended.

While introducing Pynoos to the crowd, Wunderlich highlighted her experience in city commissions, where she became the youngest ever appointee to the newly formed Cultural Heritage Commission in 2012.

"Rebecca recognizes that Beverly Hills needs to be forward-looking to maintain our high level of services, to be an enticing location for new families, and to continue to make our

high level of services possible," he said.

Pynoos, who grew up in the flats and now lives in the southwest area, would be the only sitting councilmember living south of Santa Monica Boulevard, with Councilmember John Mirisch's term ending. In her address, Pynoos emphasized the need to bolster the areas near the upcoming Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) stations opening at Wilshire and La Cienega boulevards and Beverly Drive, and how she would be the only renter and representative under 50 on the council if elected.

"I'm among the only City Council candidates representing the south of the city, where we're soon going to have two Metro stations, we're entirely unprepared for," she said. "These neighborhoods have no representation, despite the fact that two-thirds of our Beverly Hills residents live in these areas. These are the very areas now facing the greatest development pressures, Metro and transit-oriented development, and yet they have been ignored for years and have no voice on council."

Pynoos shared how her family has been rooted in Beverly Hills for generations. Her great-grandfather immigrated to the U.S. in the 1920s as a cantor fleeing religious persecution in Eastern Europe.

Pynoos criticized past City Council and Planning Commission members for failing to pass a certified housing element, leading to an influx of Builder's Remedy projects in the city.

"Beverly Hills is being led very reactively instead of proactively, and nowhere is this clearer than in housing," she said. "After three failed attempts to pass a certified housing element, the city allowed this plan to lapse from 2021 to 2024, opening the door to 16 massive Builder's Remedy projects, nine of which are already approved. This was not inevitable. It was the result of failed leadership And meanwhile, Los Angeles was able to correct its own failed housing plan in just three months and has only one Builder's Remedy project, whereas we have 16."

Pynoos called for more fiscal responsibility, saying that the city relies too much on a decreasing tourist market, including hotel taxes and development revenue. She concluded her speech by calling for more civility among elected representatives in the city and promised to address alleged racism in Beverly Hills schools.

"We need different leadership that will stand up for everybody and not be afraid to speak out, but speak out respectfully," she said. "What I will bring is a perspective and philosophy that looks at issues holistically, because we may want to live in a vacuum, but we don't. All of these issues are interconnected."

Sharona Nazarian

An estimated 650 people attended Mayor Sharona Nazarian's kickoff event at a private home on Robert Lane. She was introduced by Recreation and Parks Commission Chair JR Dzubak, Cultural Heritage Commissioner Sandy Pressman, and her youngest son, Jonah Nazarian. Wells and Goldsmith, as well as BHUSD Board President Judy Manouchehri, Board Member Russell Stuart, California State Assemblymember Rick Chavez Zbur and David Hochman, the brother of L.A. County District Attorney Nathan Hochman, were all in attendance.

Nazarian began her address by marking her milestone as the first Jewish Iranian American woman mayor of any city in the United States

and was met with a standing ovation from the audience.

Nazarian focused on public safety in her speech, highlighting initiatives from her council tenure, including implementation of the Beverly Hills Police Department's (BHPD) Real Time Watch Center, 3,500 security cameras throughout the city, and the rapid deployment of drones. She also spoke on how the city is increasing safety measures with the upcoming opening of the La Cienega/Wilshire Metro station.

"Metro is coming, and it's scheduled to open on May 8. I'm proud to let you know that Beverly Hills is ready," she said. "We have budgeted for eight uniformed police officers, expanded CCTV coverage, enhanced lighting in the area. We have cleaning crews dedicated to the area, a dedicated homeless outreach I've advocated for since day one, when I was running for office ... We have a police safety center as you exit the Metro, and that's something that we promised from day one."

Nazarian added that she started initiatives to highlight businesses in the city, including Spotlight with Sharona, to boost economic activity.

"I traveled to Miami and New York for business attraction and retention meetings to encourage businesses to come to Beverly Hills," she said. "Do you know on Rodeo Drive there is a 0% vacancy? In the Golden Triangle, there is only a 6% vacancy. Compare that to other cities."

If elected to a second term, Nazarian said she will continue to fight against Builder's Remedy projects in the city.

"We all agree that we need housing that is affordable," she said. "We want to be able to also support the character of Beverly Hills. I will continue to push back on the impacts of Builder's Remedy and Sacramento's overreach to protect our neighborhoods and our city's character."

Nazarian also highlighted her efforts in supporting younger residents of the city through Sharona's Innovation Circle, and the BH Wellness Network, which provides residents with affordable medical transportation and the city's comprehensive homeless services.

Zbur told the Courier that Nazarian has been a "great partner" to him during her time in office.

"Her really incredible leadership was shown through combatting antisemitism, standing up for Iranian Americans, and what she's been doing in being a voice on a host of things, including public safety, community, and making sure the community's voices are really listened to."

Goldsmith told the Courier that he endorsed Pynoos and Andy Licht for City Council but added that multiple candidates could make a positive difference in the city.

"I am proud to be supporting my friends Rebecca Pynoos and Andy Licht for City Council," he said. "Rebecca and Andy have a great deal to offer and would bring years of experience—but also fresh perspectives—to the council. Rebecca has deep generational roots in the city and has made great contributions. Andy and his family have been pillars of the community for years, and he combines business acumen with deep institutional knowledge. Several candidates bring great experience to this race and would make a positive difference. If I am fortunate enough to win my campaign for state senate, I expect to work closely with whomever is elected."

See photos from Kickoff events on pg. 6 ●

ADAM MILLER, from page 1

that slot, followed by reality TV star Spencer Pratt. Community organizer Rae Huang and tech entrepreneur Adam Miller are polling in the single digits, but an unusually high percentage of voters are still undecided.

Miller has embarked on a multichannel informational strategy to introduce himself to the public. He launched his second TV ad this week, emphasizing his background in business, nonprofit and tech. His message: He is the only candidate with a record of results that can change City Hall.

That record is certainly extensive. Miller is the founder and former CEO of Cornerstone OnDemand (NASDAQ: CSOD). Launched on a shoestring, he spent two decades building the company into a global leader in education software with 3,000 employees in 25 global offices. After selling Cornerstone to private equity in 2021 for more than \$5 billion, he turned his attention to civic and nonprofit initiatives.

Miller co-founded Better Angels, a nonprofit that has served 12,000 unhoused, helped prevent 1,500 evictions and is developing affordable housing units. He served as Chairman of the Board of Team Rubicon for a decade, helping to scale it into one of the largest veteran-led global disaster response organizations in the country with 180,000 volunteers. He also created LA-Tech.org, which connects more than 2,000 underserved youth across South and East L.A. to internships in the tech sector.

Miller holds a BA from the University of Pennsylvania and a BS from the Wharton School of Business, as well as a JD from the UCLA School of Law and an MBA from UCLA's Anderson School of Management. He is also a CPA and passed the Series 7 exam.

The Courier recently spoke with Miller about why he may be the dark horse to bet on in the L.A. mayor's race.

Courier: With a little more than six weeks to go until the primary, you are becoming better known but are still polling in the single digits. For those who have not heard your campaign message, describe in a nutshell why you are the best qualified in this field to run the city of Los Angeles.

Miller: Our city is broken. And we need somebody who can fix it. And that's got to be somebody with operational experience, somebody that knows how to manage big budgets, somebody that knows how to lead big teams and lots of people. And I am the only candidate who has that qualification. So, I am best prepared and best able to turn the city around.

Courier: Other businessmen have been unsuccessful in this endeavor. Rick Caruso, for example, spent many, many millions of dollars and did not prevail against a career politician. What makes you think that you can do it?

Miller: So, three big differences versus 2022. Number one is just the time. The environment's very different in '22 versus '26. Number two, Karen Bass in 2022 was relatively unknown as a leader. She was known as a very effective congressperson, but not as a leader. And I view this as akin to somebody who was great at their job but got promoted to be a manager and is a terrible manager. And that's what we have here. So, in this case, she is now not unknown. She is a failed mayor and that creates an

opening. And thirdly, Caruso was viewed broadly as a Republican in a city that really only elects Democrats. And I've been a lifelong Democrat. So, I have similar business experience. I have the acumen. I also have extensive nonprofit leadership experience, which he did not have, but I'm also a lifelong Democrat.

Courier: Running a municipality is not the same as running a business. A mayor is not a CEO, and the goals of government are quite different from a for-profit enterprise. But your nonprofit work on the issue of homelessness has exposed you to the bureaucratic minefields of the city and county of L.A. Speak to how this may inform your job as mayor.

Miller: That's exactly right. And I wouldn't limit it to homelessness. The work I've done around veteran services and disaster response, in health, in workforce development and education, all of that nonprofit experience is very, very different than the corporate experience. So, I see very clearly why being a corporate CEO does not translate to running a government because as a corporate CEO, you have, in some ways, unlimited power. What you decide goes. In the nonprofit world, that's not the case. In the nonprofit world, it's all about building consensus, getting alignment, collaborating, and getting results. And that is perfectly applicable to the public sector. It's exactly the same thing.

Courier: You've been quite critical of Mayor Bass' Inside Safe program, which does claim to have reduced street homelessness. What would you do differently? Would you totally gut that program? What would you do from day one on homelessness?

Miller: Yeah, I would end Inside Safe immediately. It's very ineffective and extraordinarily expensive. We're spending over \$7,000 a month on those motel rooms that are servicing people on the street without services wrapped around those rooms, which results in a revolving door. People end up right back on the street. What I would do is manifold, but the three immediate things would be, first, allocate more funds to prevention. Better Angels now has the most effective prevention program in L.A. We've been doing eviction prevention now for a few years and have kept over 4,000 Angelenos off the street for a fraction of the money that it costs once they become unhoused. Second, I would dramatically improve the efficiency of service delivery. And third, you've got to build more housing, both interim housing and affordable housing.

Courier: Explain what you mean by "eviction prevention program."

Miller: The program is targeted to people who are below 50% area median income. These are people who are already very poor, who've had a financial shock. Something happened to them; they got into an accident, they had a health issue, something happened with a dependent. So, if they were living paycheck to paycheck, suddenly they are off track, and they've received an eviction notice. They have less than 30 days to clear out or pay up. What we do is we go in and negotiate with the landlord. We pay the landlord or the utility company directly and we keep the people housed. On average, we've been spending about \$2,100 and it's

been a very, very effective program to keep people housed. It costs 98% less than when they're on the street.

Courier: So, you keep them housed until they get back on their feet?

Miller: Yeah. And usually, they are able to get back on their feet. It's again, paycheck-to-paycheck kind of thing. They're off track for a couple of months. What we have found is that the timing of the intervention is also really important. You've got to intervene as quickly as possible after an issue so that you get the person back on their feet. The same thing, by the way, is true with people who actually become unhoused. We have a policy in the city of exclusively focusing on people who are the most acute and most chronically homeless. But the problem with that policy is we're ignoring people who are recently unhoused, and people who are recently unhoused are the easiest ones to get back off the street. We have to get the people off the street right away who fell onto hard times so that they don't become chronic. If you're only dealing with the people who have been on the street for the longest, what happens naturally given how many homeless people we have? It means that anybody newly unhoused probably ends up staying on the street for six, 12, 24, 36 months. Well, by then, they are chronic also. If you're living on the street even for two or three months, then there's a high likelihood you're going to develop an addiction and/or mental illness. That's true for all of us. And so, by ignoring the people who are recently unhoused and not getting them off the street, we are making this problem worse. We're cementing the difficulty of the problem.

Courier: Let's switch to another topic on the issue of housing, and that is Measure ULA. It has become a lightning rod of unintended consequences. Can it be fixed?

Miller: Measure ULA is a disaster. It was a very poorly drafted bill that resulted in a continued drop in net new housing builds in this city. At a time when we have an affordability crisis, where the single biggest issue related to affordability is housing, we have decided to build less housing instead of more housing. So that's insane and we can do much better. We have to make this city much more attractive to real estate developers. We have to make it much easier to build in L.A., and we absolutely must either repeal or completely rewrite ULA to exempt multifamily residential housing and exempt affordable housing projects.

Courier: Housing and state mandates are points of contention in Beverly Hills, primarily due to the Builder's Remedy and other laws such as SB 79. How do you reconcile the legitimate need for more housing with what some consider the overreach of Sacramento?

Miller: SB 79 is our punishment for not doing our job to have a plan to build housing. If you look at the regional housing needs assessment, what you would find is that L.A. is 90% below plan. We're doing 10% of what we're supposed to be doing. So of course, some external force is going to come and intervene because we are so off track. We're going to be forced to do this, but we don't want this happening. We want local control. We don't want people telling us where to put buildings or what kind of buildings or where they go. We have 99 unique neighborhoods in the city. We want to be able to preserve the character and uniqueness of those neighborhoods.

Courier: How do you propose to do that?

Miller: Different solutions should be applied in different places, and that means not that we shouldn't have more affordable housing, more workforce housing, and more market-rate housing, but that we should control where we put it and how we do it. I'm a big fan of the Livable Communities Initiative that's been proposed in places like Larchmont and Hancock Park, pushing for conversion of commercial streets with single-story retail that often is relatively dilapidated. You see that in parts of Westwood that are right near Beverly Hills. And we could easily convert that into four-plus-one units. So essentially the building has one story of retail and four stories of housing above it. If we do that, it makes the neighborhood more beautiful. It encourages better stores, restaurants, boutiques, cafes in those places, makes a neighborhood more walkable and still preserves the single-family nature of the interior while adding way more housing on the perimeter.

Courier: Realistically, do you have a path to success in this race?

Miller: We have two distinct races, right? We have the primary and then we have the general. Right now, the focus is entirely on the primary. Karen Bass will advance to the next round. She has the union support, she has the Democratic establishment, she has the existing name recognition. So even though she has a 67% disapproval rating, she still has a baseline of support that will get her into the runoff. The question is, of the remaining candidates, who is the most qualified for that one seat to run against Karen in the November election? And I have by far the most leadership experience, the most management experience, the most results across the board in all these different issue areas, and the plan to turn the city around. Nobody else has that. I also have the biggest lane. I'm running against two far left Democrats and one far right reality TV character. I have the entire middle and most of Los Angeles is in the middle. ●

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Birthdays



CAROLE DIXON
April 17



MATTIN FIROOZMOND
April 18



CONAN O'BRIAN
April 18



DAVID TENNANT
April 18



SIMU LIU
April 19



ANA LLORENS
April 19



ALI WONG
April 19

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Astrology

BY HOLIDAY MATIS

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You express the poetry of your soul through ignition. You bring the match, the first motion, the bold leap that wakes the sleeping world. Haiku: First spark in dry grass. A match laughing at the wind. Spring charges forward.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You express the poetry of your soul through devotion to the senses and the steady beauty of earthly pleasures. You make the moment feel rich and rooted. Haiku: Warm bread on the table. Slow roots drinking from deep earth. The day ripens sweet.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You express the poetry of your soul through curiosity and connection. Words, questions, laughter and ideas braid themselves through your life like wind through branches. Haiku: Two swallows weaving. Threads of gossip through the sky. Wind loves conversation.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You express the poetry of your soul through care and emotional intuition. You sense what others feel and create warmth wherever you gather people. Haiku:

Moon pulls silver tides. A quiet lantern in rain. Home glows in your chest.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You express the poetry of your soul through radiant presence. Your joy, courage and generosity invite the world to gather in the light you create. Haiku: Golden noon arrives. Sunlight wearing a crown. The world turns to look.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You express the poetry of your soul through thoughtful care and elegant precision. You notice what needs tending and quietly restore harmony. Haiku: Morning dew on wheat. A careful hand mends the seam. Order hums softly.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You express the poetry of your soul through balance and beauty. You feel the delicate mathematics of harmony in people, spaces and ideas. Haiku: Two leaves on still water. Even the breeze hesitates. Balance holds the light.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You express the poetry of your soul through depth and transformation. You move through mysteries others sense but cannot name. Haiku: Dark river moving. Secrets breathe beneath the ice. Stars shine under skin.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You express the poetry of your soul through

adventure and possibility. Curiosity sends you toward new horizons again and again. Haiku: Bootprints past the hill. An arrow chasing sunrise. Maps laugh in the wind.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You express the poetry of your soul through perseverance and quiet ambition. You climb patiently toward the vision only you can see. Haiku: Stone stair after stair. Snow listens to patient feet. The summit waits still.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You

express the poetry of your soul through imagination and brave originality. Your ideas crack open the sky of what people thought possible. Haiku: Lightning in clear air. A strange idea takes flight. Tomorrow wakes up.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You express the poetry of your soul through empathy. You can channel the experience of people, animals, nature, the wind itself. Haiku: Ocean dreaming deep. A thousand lantern fish drift. Sleep hums through the tide.



Summer Searcy is a Maltese mix that weighs 15 pounds and is about 8 years old. To inquire about Summer, please contact Shelter of Hope at info@shelterhopepetshop.org.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY MAGAZINE CROSSWORD PUZZLE
4/17/26 ISSUE

BADVERTISING

BY SAM DONALDSON / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Sam Donaldson is a law professor at Georgia State University. He recently joined the board of directors of Dogs for Better Lives, a national organization that trains and places assistance dogs. This puzzle started when he saw 57-Across on a billboard and thought that would make a poor slogan for a certain airline. Then he brainstormed other possible examples of “badvertising.” — W.S.

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82 High, wispy clouds

83 Alice of TV’s “Queen of the South”

86 Manage moguls, say

90 “____ expected”
- 92 Like many legal phrases

94 Fried Japanese fare

96 Impersonates

98 1997 Demi Moore military drama

100 Hampers

102 Fixed rate

103 Statistics tool used to find significant differences

106 Not real

107 ____ out an existence
- 108 They might be loaded or stolen

110 Headliner

113 Neutral tone

114 April or May, e.g.

115 Q3 starter: Abbr.

116 Luau instrument, in brief

117 Mme., across the Pyrenees

118 “The Bachelor” network

119 Actress Gadot

120 Foxy

Classifieds

PUBLICNOTICES

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE UNDER DEED OF TRUST Loan No.: 2025009/VERSHININA RESS Order No.: 2025-78357 A.P. NUMBER 4384-007-050 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 03/20/2025, UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that on 05/05/2026, at 10:00 A.M. of said day, In the Courtyard located in Civic Center Plaza, 400 Civic Center Plaza, Pomona, CA 91766, Alliance Portfolio, as duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to the power of sale conferred in that certain Deed of Trust executed by ALEXANDRA VERSHININA, a married woman as her sole and separate property recorded on 04/04/2025, in Book n/a of Official Records of Los Angeles County, at page n/a, Recorder's Instrument No. 20250217823, by reason of a breach or default in payment or performance of the obligations secured thereby, including that breach or default, Notice of which was recorded 12/16/2026 as Recorder's Instrument No. 20250914812 in Book n/a, at page n/a, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, lawful money of the United States, evidenced by a Cashier's Check drawn on a state or national bank, or the equivalent thereof drawn on any other financial institution specified in section 5102 of the California Financial Code, authorized to do business in the State of California, ALL PAYABLE AT THE TIME OF SALE, all right, title and interest held by it as Trustee, in that real property situated in said County and State, described as follows: That portion of Lot 4, Section 2, Township 1 S, Range 15 W, San Bernardino Meridian, according to the Official Plat of said land. Refer to Deed of Trust for full Legal Description. The street address or other common designation of the real property hereinabove described is purported to be: 9716 Oak Pass Road, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. The undersigned disclaims all liability for any incorrectness in said street address or other common designation. Said sale will be made without warranty, express or implied regarding title, possession, or other encumbrances, to satisfy the unpaid obligations secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest and other sums as provided therein; plus advances, if any, thereunder and

PUBLICNOTICES

interest thereon; and plus fees, charges, and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of said obligations at the time of initial publication of this Notice is \$1,478,789.44. In the event that the deed of trust described in this Notice of Trustee's Sale is secured by real property containing from one to four single-family residences, the following notices are provided pursuant to the provisions of Civil Code section 2924f: NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee's sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call 916-939-0772 or visit this Internet Website www.nationwide-posting.com, using the file number assigned to this case 2025-78357. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not be immediately reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Website. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. NOTICE TO TENANT: You may have a right to purchase this property after the trustee auction pursuant to Section 2924m of the California Civil Code. If

PUBLICNOTICES

you are an "eligible tenant buyer," you can purchase the property if you match the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. If you are an "eligible bidder," you may be able to purchase the property if you exceed the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. There are three steps to exercising this right of purchase. First, 48 hours after the date of the trustee sale, you can call 916-939-0772 for information regarding the trustee's sale, or visit this internet website <https://www.nationwide-posting.com> for information regarding the sale of this property, using the file number assigned to this case 2025-78357 to find the date on which the trustee's sale was held, the amount of the last and highest bid, and the address of the trustee. Second, you must send a written notice of intent to place a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 15 days after the trustee's sale. Third, you must submit a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 45 days after the trustee's sale. If you think you may qualify as an "eligible tenant buyer" or "eligible bidder," you should consider contacting an attorney or appropriate real estate professional immediately for advice regarding this potential right to purchase. Dated: 03/31/2026 Alliance Portfolio, as Trustee By: RESS Financial Corporation, a California corporation, Its Agent By: Angela Groves, Trustee Sale Officer 2420 River Road, Suite 230-620, Norco, CA 92860 (SEAL) Tel.: (951) 270-0164 or (800)343-7377 FAX: (951)270-2673 Trustee's Sale Information: (916) 939-0772 or www.nationwide-posting.com NPP0487361 To: BEVERLY HILLS COURIER 04/10/2026, 04/17/2026, 04/24/2026

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT 2026079296

The following is/are doing business as: GRACEPOINT ADVISORY 2866 Angelo Drive Los Angeles, CA 90077; ROUMAIN, INC. 2866 Angelo Drive Los Angeles, CA 90077; The business is conducted by: A CORPORATION registrant(s) has begun to transact business under the name(s) listed on April 2026: Roumain, Inc. Stephanie Roumain, Secretary; Statement is filed with the County of Los Angeles: April 10, 2026; Published: 04/17/26, 04/24/26, 05/01/26, 05/15/26 LA/CC

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT 2026076217

The following is/are doing business as: MONEE'S PROPERTIES 6320 Van Nuys Blvd. Ste 311 Van Nuys, CA 91401; MONICA M MERAZ 6320 Van Nuys Blvd. Ste 311 Van Nuys, CA 91401; The business is conducted by: AN INDIVIDUAL registrant(s) has begun to transact business under the name(s) listed on JULY 2019: Monica M Meraz, Owner; Statement is filed with the County of Los Angeles: April 7, 2026; Published: 04/17/26, 04/24/26, 05/01/26, 05/15/26 LA/CC

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18PERSONAL ORGANIZER



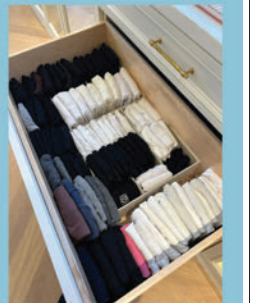
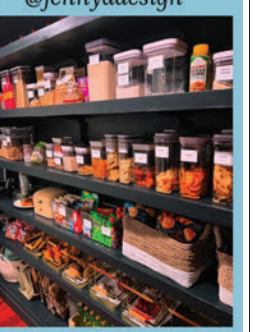
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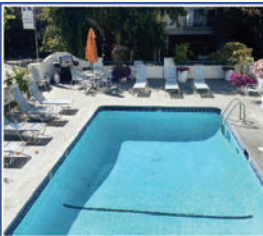


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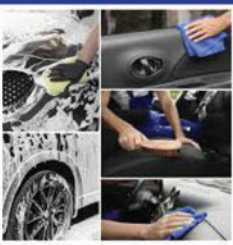
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