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BEVERLY HILLS *COURIER*

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THE WEATHER, BEVERLY HILLS CA		
☁	Friday	68° 51°
☁	Saturday	67° 46°
☀	Sunday	69° 46°
☁	Monday	69° 48°
☁	Tuesday	69° 46°
☁	Wednesday	69° 48°
☁	Thursday	66° 51°

Rodeo Drive Holiday Lighting Celebration Dazzles Thousands



Photo courtesy city of Beverly Hills
Crowds converged on Rodeo Drive for the Holiday Lighting Celebration on Nov. 16.

BY ANA FIGUEROA

Rodeo Drive was bedecked, bedazzled and bejeweled for its annual Holiday Lighting Celebration on Nov. 16. As in previous years, thousands converged on the world-famous thoroughfare to enjoy an evening of

diversions, themed décor and entertainment. But it was the simple act of greeting friends on the sidewalk that provided the most holiday cheer. As Mayor Dr. Julian Gold noted last week, “Our Holiday Lighting Celebration

See HOLIDAY LIGHTING, page 12

A Ray of Hope in the Dark

BY JOEY WALDINGER

On Nov. 19 and 20, survivors of the Oct. 7 Hamas attack and their family members joined religious leaders at the Beverly Hills Towers building at the corner of Canon Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard as part of a demonstration calling for the release of 240 Israeli hostages in Gaza. Dubbed “A Ray of Hope for Every Hostage,” the demonstration featured 240 lights beaming into the sky, each representing one of the captives, and included a musical performance and speeches demanding the hostage’s release. Beverly Hills City Councilmember Dr. Sharona Nazarian addressed the crowd, which stood across the street waving Israeli flags and cheering, urging residents to contact their representatives and demand they call for the hostages to be released. “It’s been 45 days since the brutal and barbaric slaughter of over 1400 innocent

Photo by Lisa Friedman Bloch
“A Ray of Hope for Every Hostage” on display

civilians,” and the capture of Israeli hostages, Nazarian said. “Call your elected officials and demand they bring the hostages back now.” Beverly Hills Jewish Community Synagogue Rabbi Yossi Cunin told the

See A RAY OF HOPE, page 12

Sinai Temple Event Highlights Israel Solidarity

BY RYAN TOROK

Approximately 1,000 people expressed support for Israel while attending “One People, One Heart: Solidarity with Israel,” a community event held Nov. 19 at Sinai Temple in Westwood. At the Sunday evening gathering in Sinai’s Ziegler Sanctuary, participants included Sinai Temple Co-Senior Rabbis Erez Sherman and Nicole Guzik; Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles CEO and President Rabbi Noah Farkas; Consul General of Israel in Los Angeles Israel Bachar; State Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel; 14-year-old Ela Shani, an Israeli survivor of the Oct. 7 attack on Israel; and Pastor John-Paul Foster of Faithful Central Bible Church. Sinai Temple and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles co-organized the program. More than 40 days after the attack on Israel, when Hamas infiltrated Israel’s border and massacred more than 1,200 Israeli civilians and kidnapped approximately 240 people, the community was struggling with how to keep the tragedy in their hearts and minds while continuing with day-to-day life, said Farkas of the Federation. See ISRAEL SOLIDARITY, page 13

Architectural Review Approved for Multi-Family Residential Buildings

BY NATHAN ANSELL

In the midst of ongoing housing issues, two new residential complexes with a combined 20 units cleared a crucial hurdle before their construction is scheduled to begin. After briefly discussing smaller accommodations, the Architectural Commission gave its conditional approval to the

See ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, page 14



E-BLASTS

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TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS

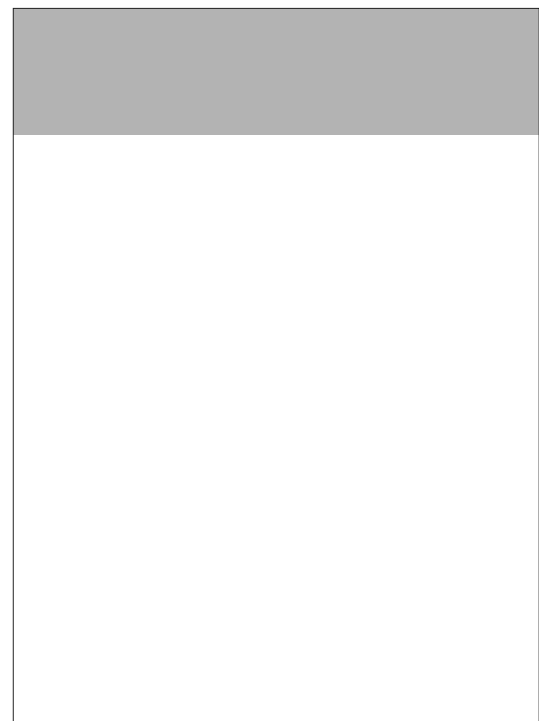
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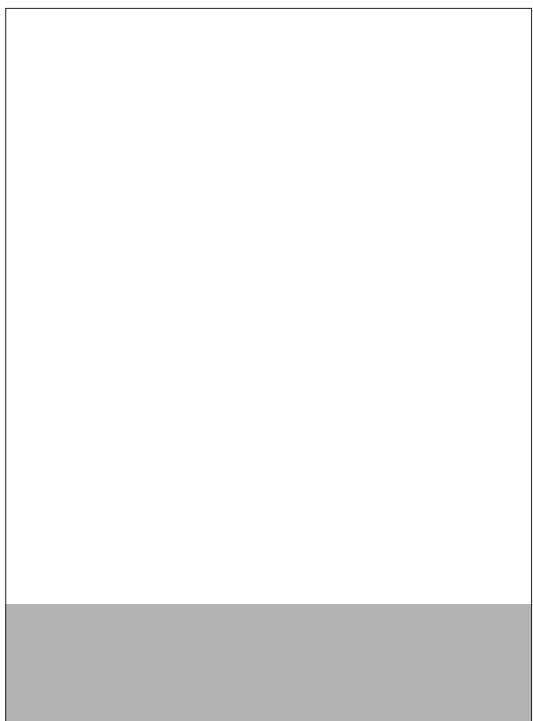
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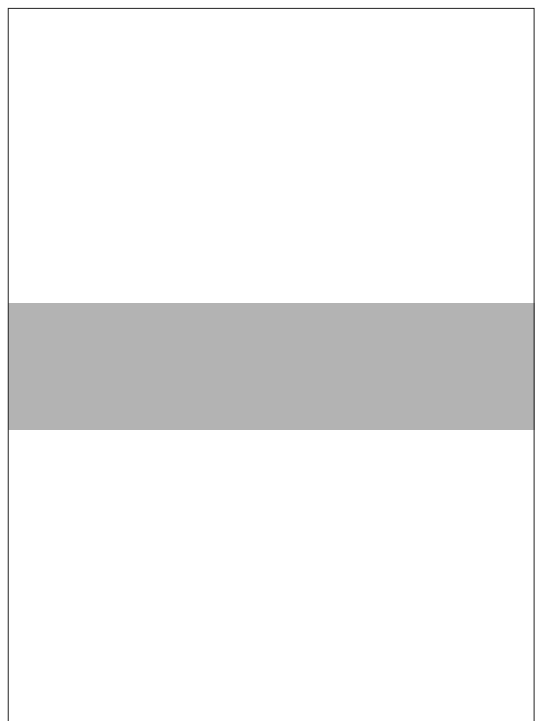
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BEVERLY HILLS *COURIER*

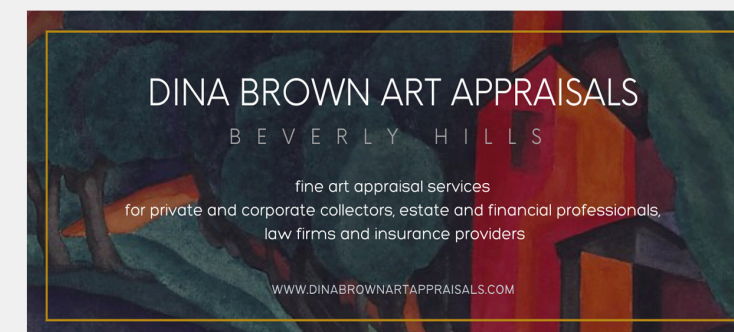
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AWARD-WINNING BEVERLY HILLS COURIER

The Beverly Hills Courier has won the following awards in 2022-2023:

1st Place

**“Feature, Business/Government,
over 1,000 words, Magazines”**

L.A. Press Club’s 2023 65th Annual California Journalism Awards,
awarded to Courier Publisher Lisa Friedman Bloch for her piece
“Nicolas Bijan: The Prince of Beverly Hills”

2nd Place

**“News Feature,
Newspapers under 50,000 in circulation”**

L.A. Press Club’s 2022 64th Annual California Journalism Awards, awarded
to Samuel Braslow for “Beverly Hills Salon Owner Recounts Her Actions in
D.C. Riot”

2nd Place

“Land-Use Reporting”

California News Publishers Association’s 2022 California Journalism
Awards, awarded to Matthew Blake for his piece
“Path Cleared for \$1 Billion Cheval Blanc Ultra-Luxury Hotel”

3rd Place

**“Personality Profile,
Politics/ Business/Arts Personalities”**

L.A. Press Club’s 2023 65th Annual California Journalism Awards,
awarded to Courier Publisher Lisa Friedman Bloch for her piece
“ANASTASIA: Beverly Hills’ World-Famous Eyebrow Queen”

1st Place

“Writing”

California News Publishers Association’s 2022 California Journalism
Awards, awarded to Courier Executive Editor Ana Figueroa for her piece
“The New Audrey Irmas Pavilion Illuminates Wilshire Boulevard Temple”

3rd Place

“Health Coverage”

California News Publishers Association’s 2022 California Journalism
Awards, awarded to Eva Ritvo, M.D. for her piece “From the Pandemic to
Ukraine: It’s OK Not to Feel OK”

1st Place

**“Personality Profile,
Newspapers under 50,000 in circulation”**

L.A. Press Club’s 2022 64th Annual California Journalism Awards, awarded
to Courier Publisher Lisa Friedman Bloch for her piece “The Beverly Hills
Idol, Lionel Richie”

2nd Place

“Enterprising Reporting”

California News Publishers Association’s 2022 California Journalism
Awards, awarded to Courier Executive Editor Ana Figueroa for her piece
“The New Audrey Irmas Pavilion Illuminates Wilshire Boulevard Temple”

3rd Place

“Writing”

California News Publishers Association’s 2022 California Journalism
Awards, awarded to Courier Executive Editor Ana Figueroa for her piece
“200 Trunks, 200 Visionaries: The Exhibit’ Opens on Rodeo Drive”

AWARD-WINNING BEVERLY HILLS COURIER

The Beverly Hills Courier has won the following awards 2020-2021:

1st Place

“Breaking News”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Shooting at Il Pastaio”

1st Place

“Writing”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Community Rallies Around Children With Rare Disease”

3rd Place

“News Photo”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Protestors Confronting Schoolchildren”

4th Place

“Investigative Reporting”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “BHPD Task Force Accused of Widespread Racial Profiling”

4th Place

“News Photo”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Protestors and the BHPD”

5th Place

“Coverage of Local Government”

California News Publishers Association’s 2021 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Court Strikes Down Beverly Hills Ordinance”

4th Place

“Business News”

California News Publishers Association’s 2020 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “With No End In Sight, Restaurants Flout COVID Restrictions”

4th Place

“Breaking News”

California News Publishers Association’s 2020 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Rally Turns Violent as Extremist Groups Take Part”

4th Place

“Protests and Racial Justice”

California News Publishers Association’s 2020 California Journalism Awards, awarded to Samuel Braslow for “Embedded with the Beverly Hills Protestors: One Reporter’s Story”

THE COURIER IN THE NEWS

New York Times 01/19/2021

“ In a video filmed in the crowd directly in front of the Capitol, Ms. Bisignano states her first and last name, place of residence and Instagram account. In a separate video, she identifies her business while speaking through a bullhorn to the crowd, according to the F.B.I. She appears to struggle with a police officer who tries to expel her and others, and later raises her fist in what appears to be a gesture of defiance, the F.B.I. said.

“We need strong, angry patriots to help our boys,” Ms. Bisignano says on video, according to the F.B.I., as she calls for gas masks and weapons. Nearby, rioters are physically assaulting police officers.

Later, she confirmed to [The Beverly Hills Courier](#) that she had entered the Capitol.”

Univision 01/19/2021

“Según el periódico *Los Angeles Times*, Bisignano ha asumido un papel principal en la organización de protestas semanales en Beverly Hills en apoyo del presidente Trump, mientras que el *Beverly Hills Courier* indicó que Bisignano fue captada en un video alentando a la gente a tomar el Capitolio desde un megáfono.

“Necesitamos estadounidenses. Vamos chicos. Necesitamos patriotas. Chicos, es la entrada”, añadió. ”

LA Times 01/19/2021

Los Angeles Times

“The description of the videos contradicts an account Bisignano gave the Beverly Hills Courier last week. In it, she acknowledged she entered the Capitol but said she was experiencing a panic attack and needed to find somewhere safe.

“I couldn’t breathe. I was having a panic attack. I needed air,” she told the newspaper. “Every time I opened my eyes, they were burning. My mouth was burning. Everything was burning, and I couldn’t breathe.

“I was caught up, I was scared, I was excited,” Bisignano told the Courier. “A guy said to say that over the megaphone. I don’t even remember saying it.” ”

CBS LA 01/19/2021

“**Bisignano owns** Gina’s Eyelashes And Skincare. Last week, Bisignano confirmed to the Beverly Hills Courier that she traveled to Washington, D.C., where she found herself among the mob who stormed the Capitol building on Jan. 6.

In a cell phone video [obtained by the Courier](#), a woman believed to be Bisignano holds a megaphone on a ledge of the Capitol and yells, “Everybody, we need gas masks, we need weapons. We need strong, angry patriots to help our boys, they don’t want to leave. We need protection.” ”

KTLA: 01/19/2021



“ The FBI also reviewed an article published in the [Beverly Hills Courier](#) on Jan. 14 in which Bisignano recalled her experiences at the Capitol.

She described the scene as a “war zone,” and said she was near a man who broke windows in the Capitol.

RELATED CONTENT

McConnell: Capitol rioters were 'fed lies' and 'provoked by the president'

FBI searched Huntington Beach home of far-right extremist who previously claimed to have attended the Capitol riot

Capitol riot: FBI investigates tip that woman took laptop from Pelosi's office with intent to sell to Russia

Bisignano told the newspaper she was unarmed and described her role in the riot as a passive one, but she ended up being pepper sprayed and experienced a panic attack.

"I couldn't breathe. I was having a panic attack. I needed air. Every time I opened my eyes, they were burning. My mouth was burning. Everything was burning, and I couldn't breathe," Bisignano said in the interview.

Upon returning to California, Bisignano said people began commenting on her business's Yelp page with photos of her at the Capitol.

“Having watched Gina at the 01/06/21 riot, I do not feel safe coming here again,” one review read.

Bisignano decided to contact the FBI herself.

"My life is over, I'm going to jail," she told the Courier. "I'm going to lose my son." "

Los Angeles Magazine 01/19/2021

“ Local eyelash salon owner Gina Bisignano, 52, was arrested in Beverly Hills on Tuesday and charged with damaging or destroying government property, obstruction of an official proceeding, and violent entry and disorderly conduct on capitol grounds, according to the U.S. Attorney’s Office. [In an interview with the Beverly Hills Courier](#), Bisignano reportedly admitted she’d entered the building, but that she left when she was stricken with a panic attack. ”

Daily Beast 01/19/2021



CAPITOL RIOTS COVID-19 CHEAT SHEET POLITICS ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA WORLD HALF FULL

“ In an interview with the *Beverly Hills Courier*, Bisignano admitted she went to the Capitol with one other person, “stating she felt called upon by President Donald Trump to travel to D.C. to change the outcome of the election, which she believes was stolen,” the complaint states.

Claiming she got “caught up” in the moment during the riots, Bisignano said she witnessed fighting during the siege—but insisted, without offering a shred of evidence, that the violence was “antifa and BLM.” ”

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CONTACTS

Artwork Submission
production@bhcourier.com

Advertising Inquiries
Beverly Hills Courier Advertising
Phone: 310-278-1322
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