

\$3.66 DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER © 2026

## Leftists push for political power in L.A.

Democratic socialists back candidates in several races. Business leaders are worried.

By SANDRA McDONALD

It's the biggest slate of democratic socialists Los Angeles has ever seen.

The L.A. chapter of Democratic Socialists of America is looking to push City Hall further left by backing candidates for city attorney and four City Council seats in the June 2 primary. Their aim, DSA leaders say, is to see the adoption of progressive policies on homelessness, rent control and public safety — and to have a socialist city attorney to make those policies stick.

"The vision is to really imagine and really try to think about the concrete steps, about making a city that works for working-class Angelenos," said Sean Wakasa, a UC Riverside graduate student who is DSA's local co-chair.

Wakasa said the group sees the city attorney's office as especially crucial. It is endorsing DSA member Marissa Roy, a deputy state attorney general, against incumbent City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto.

"Part of the reason why we're really excited about having a city attorney win and having a socialist as a city attorney is that we get to also enforce the existing progressive policy that we already have," he said.

Business group leaders and others say they are alarmed about the prospect of democratic socialists gaining more clout in City Hall. Four of the current 15 council members, including mayoral candidate Nithya Raman, were elected with DSA support. City Controller Kenneth Mejia was also recommended, although not formally endorsed, by the group.

"The city's not a better place to live than it was before," he said. [See City Hall, A7]



ERIC THAYER Los Angeles Times



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

AT TOP, a firefighter clears away brush during the Sandy fire in Runkle Canyon. Barton Richter, above, sprays down his Simi Valley property.

## State's fire season is pushing into spring

26,000 SoCal acres burned with dry fuel, winds

By Alex Wigglesworth

California has seen an uptick in wildfires, from Siskiyou County to San Diego.

Southern California has caught the brunt of the surge. Nearly a dozen fires have, together, consumed more than 26,000 acres of varied terrain in the region over the last week, in remote island chaparral as well as brushy foothills bordering neighborhoods. Six people have been injured and some 45,000 more remain under evacuation orders. At least one home has burned.

This level of activity may seem unusual for May, but experts say that, increasingly, that is no longer the case as climate change rolls back the start date of what's traditionally been considered the peak fire season.

There are currently five fires of 1,000 acres or more burning in Southern California, which UCLA professor and hydroclimatologist Park Williams described as abnormal for this time of year but not unprecedented according to a dataset of past fires he maintains.

He pointed to a study suggesting that human-caused warming has advanced the onset of the fire season by six to 46 days across most of the state, primarily by drying out vegetation. "So the fact that the fire season is beginning now in Southern California is pretty predictable, given that it's been really abnormally dry and warm."

The region hasn't seen much precipitation since [See Fires, A6]

SANTA ROSA: Fire rips through unique Torrey pine grove. CALIFORNIA, B1

## In Silicon Valley, jobless techies see brutal reality

Giants in the industry continue mass layoffs, pointing out how AI is reshaping workplace.

By QUEENIE WONG

Battered by years of mass layoffs, California tech workers were hoping the job market would rebound this year. But things are getting worse.

Now, many are redrawing their career paths. Artificial intelligence has triggered fierce competition for top talent and is also fueling tens of thousands of layoffs this year. The class divide is widening in Silicon Valley as a tiny group of employees is landing unprecedented packages for AI skills, while many others struggle to find work.

The have-nots are doing everything that used to guarantee great jobs — refreshing resumes, optimizing LinkedIn profiles and doing interviews — but companies are much more picky these days. The tech jobless are rethinking their lives. Some are taking pay cuts, others are leaving tech. Some are going back to study or launch startups. Some have retired.

Basem Istanbouli was laid off by Google more than a year ago but hasn't landed a new job in the San Francisco Bay Area despite a strong resume with years of experience as an account manager at the search giant.

"The job search has been brutal," he said. "Even though I get a lot of interviews and I make it to final rounds very often, I've just not been in the position to receive an offer."

To bolster his chances of finding a job and to socialize with others stuck in the same struggle, the 33-year-old created a community and hiking group called (un)PTO for people in career transition.

Meta Platforms is re-signing 7,000 workers to new jobs related to AI and told employees to work from home Wednesday as it began laying off 10% of its workers — roughly 8,000 people — as part of an effort to improve efficiency and "offset" its other investments in AI.

Since 2022, more than 815,500 tech workers have been laid off, according to Layoffs.fyi, a website that tracks job cuts. The tsunami of pink slips surged in 2023, when companies that had gone on hiring spree early in [See Tech, A11]



CAROLYN FONG For The Times

HIKERS with the group (un)PTO gather and chat with one another Monday at a trailhead in San José.

## Killers' manifesto shows broad hatred

Social media linked to mosque attackers idolize neo-Nazis and white nationalism.

By RICHARD WINTON AND PAIGE ST. JOHN

The gunmen who killed three people at the San Diego Islamic Center left behind a 75-page document that preached hate, anti-Islam ideology and antisemitism and promoted violence and chaos, law enforcement sources familiar with the investigation told The Times.

The manifesto was titled "The New Crusade: Sons of Tarrant" and made reference to Brenton Tarrant, who killed 51 people and injured 89 more in an attack on a mosque and an Islamic center in Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2019, according to the sources. The FBI confirmed Tuesday that it is examining a manifesto but did not verify the one circulating online that purports to be the attackers' writings.

The Times has reviewed those writings, which espoused hate toward Muslims, Jews, Black people and

Latinos and the LGBTQ+ community. The Times also identified social media accounts believed to be used by one of the shooters that idolized school shootings, the white nationalism movement and neo-Nazi terrorism and were flush with memes from the online far-right extremist community.

Investigators are trying to determine a motive for the Monday attack, which they have classified as a likely hate crime. They have been interviewing family and friends of the suspects, who died of self-inflicted wounds as police closed in on them, and investigating their digital footprint.

Authorities have identified the deceased shooters as Cain Lee Clark, 17, and Caleb Liam Vazquez, 18.

The attackers opened fire at the center Monday about 11:30 a.m., authorities [See Manifesto, A7]

### Grief and anger

San Diego community is still coming to grips with the shooting, but Muslim members say they will endure. CALIFORNIA, B1

## As Colbert goes, a late-night era wanes

The once-vital TV genre may no longer be viable for networks in the streaming age.

By STEPHEN BATTAGLIO

At Jimmy Kimmel's annual monologue to advertisers at Disney's recent up-front presentation, the ABC late-night host offered sympathy to his ousted CBS cohort Stephen Colbert.

"First, it's bad enough to lose your job," Kimmel said. "Imagine getting replaced by the owner of the Weather

Channel."

Byron Allen, the media mogul whose holdings do include the Weather Channel, laughed when the gag was repeated to him during a recent phone conversation. "I like Jimmy Kimmel a lot," he said.

Allen, never lacking in self-confidence, can afford to roll with the jokes. Episodes of his 20-year-old syndicated program "Comics Unleashed," a half-hour show featuring mostly lesser-known stand-ups sharing routines and stories, are replacing "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" on CBS in the 11:35 p.m. time

slot starting Friday.

While it's a triumph for Allen, 65, it's also a sign of how the traditional late-night talk show — one of television's most culturally influential formats — may no longer be sustainable in the era of streaming TV.

CBS said last year it canceled Colbert because it lost \$40 million a year as the late-night viewing habit among audiences has eroded in the streaming era. Many in the TV industry are skeptical of the claim, believing Skydance Media wanted to silence the relentless Trump-bashing host in order to clear the government regu-

latory path for its acquisition of network parent Paramount. (The FCC's approval of the deal came days after the cancellation was announced.)

But no one who has worked in late-night television in recent years can dispute how financial challenges are clouding the format's future. Polished after-hours programs with a live audience, large teams of writers and producers and high-priced hosts are fighting off obsolescence as traditional TV audiences get smaller and ad revenues shrink. While CBS is the first [See Colbert, A10]

## Warming ocean brings dead birds to shore

By SUSANNE RUST AND LILA SEIDMAN

For the last several months, wildlife experts have been alarmed by a large influx of dead and emaciated seabirds washing up on California beaches.

Although experts had been recording high mortality rates for brown pelicans for several years now — the result of harmful algal blooms, or "red tides" — this die-off appears different.

Now it's not just pelicans that are being affected, but other waterbirds such as Brandt's cormorants, loons,



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

A BROWN PELICAN is among dozens of emaciated, injured seabirds being nursed to health in San Pedro.

common murres and grebes.

The suspected culprit in this case is subtler and more insidious than the algal neurotoxin known as domoic acid. Experts say these recent deaths are probably tied to an extreme marine heat wave that is causing deadly changes in food availability.

Up and down the California coast this spring, ocean temperatures have skyrocketed. In some places, temperatures have climbed 4 to 8 degrees higher than average, breaking all kinds of records. For instance, in La Jolla, nearly 30% of the read- [See Seabirds, A6]

### U.S. indicts Raúl Castro in '96 attack

The former Cuban president is accused in the downing of two civilian planes flown by exiles. NATION, A4

### Barney Frank is dead at 86

The Democrat and longtime congressman was a trailblazer for LGBTQ+ rights. NATION, A6

### L.A. postpones \$30 minimum pay

Deal preserves wage hike to \$25 an hour in July and additional increments. BUSINESS, A9

### Weather

Mostly sunny. L.A. Basin: 81/59. B6



7 85944 00200 5