Sports: Despite 4th-quarter comeback, Chargers fall short in 27-24 loss to Jets. **B1**

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HOLIDAYS

Tree lighting is drawing near

While festivities are free to attend, tickets are required for Dec. 7 event

By Christina Merino
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Long Beach's holiday festivities are underway — with the city's popular Christmas Tree Lighting merely weeks away.

The 112th annual Christmas Tree Lighting will return from 5 to 8 p.m. Dec. 7 at the Terrace Theater Plaza, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., in downtown Long Beach. The event will feature a towering tree, more than half a million lights, a fireworks show and more.

Visit Long Beach, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting the city as a destination for tourism, conventions and events, and the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center host the holiday experience each year as a way to give back to the community, organizers said. The event has grown from about 1,500 attendees to a maximum permitted capacity of 6,500.

"Over the years, thousands of residents have created memories to last a lifetime," Samantha Mehlinger, vice president of

See **XMAS** on Page A6



Long Beach's 10th annual Christmas Tree Lighting at the Terrace Theater Plaza on Dec. 4, 2024. This year's event is Dec. 7. **DREW A. KELLEY — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Coastal cities race to prepare for king tides



Crews work to repair the Long Beach Peninsula's wooden bulkhead ahead of expected king tides on Tuesday. The Peninsula area was hit during Hurricane Marie and Tropical Storm Rachel in the summer. **PHOTOS BY DREW A. KELLEY — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER**

Water levels in area expected to break records set last month

By Laylan Connelly, Michael Hixon and Christina Merino
STAFF WRITERS

The sandbags are stacked high, with hopes of being a buffer against rising seawater. Berms on the beach have been built into walls to defend against the ocean's waves. Crews and homeowners are watching, ready to jump into action if flooding starts to wreak havoc.

But even with weeks to prepare against this upcoming round of king tides — super-fueled by warm water conditions from an El Niño and other factors — will preparations be enough to hold back the mega high tides threatening the coast?

Tide levels are rising for the week, with king tides — accord-

See **PREPARE** on Page A7



Crews work to build a sand berm along the Long Beach Peninsula ahead of expected king tides on Tuesday.

What is a king tide and why are they causing significant trouble in coastal areas this year?

By Laylan Connelly
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The water rises and falls every day, a predictable measure of the ocean's tidal swing. But, especially in winter months, there are periods when tides become so high they are called "king tides."

And this year, those king tides are even higher with recent unusually warm water conditions from an El Niño and other factors that have raised sea levels even more. What was once a 7-foot high tide has reached upward 8.5 feet, even inching close to 9 feet — and that means trouble for low-lying areas along

See **TIDE** on Page A7

L.A. COUNTY

Lawsuit against sales tax dropped

Measure ER is projected to raise about $1B annually to backfill healthcare cuts over 5 years

By Steve Scauzillo
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A lawsuit filed in September that halted distribution of dollars from the one-half-cent sales tax backfilling federal healthcare cuts affecting thousands of Los Angeles County residents has been amended, and no longer challenges the voter-approved measure's legal status, the plaintiff's attorney said.

"The part about challenging the validity of Measure ER has been dismissed and dropped," said Jason Bezis, the attorney for the Libertarian Party of Los Angeles County on Wednesday.

See **MEASURE** on Page A6

PASADENA

George Takei gets honor at Vroman's Bookstore event

'Star Trek' actor, author places his hands and signature in cement

By Jarret Liotta
CORRESPONDENT

His iconic role as Mr. Hikaru Sulu on the original Star Trek series may have cemented him in the lexicon of pop culture, but George Takei — author, historian and LGBTQ+ and civil rights advocate — continues to beam up a whole new generation of fans.

On Saturday, Takei was honored at Vroman's

See **TAKEI** on Page A6

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FORECAST

TODAY	TUE.	WED.
H:70 L: 51	H:76 L: 55	H:73 L: 52

Full weather report B12

INDEX

Advice A8,10
Bridge B5
Classifieds B5
Comics A9,10 B5
Local..... A3
Nation+World..... A12
Puzzles A8,10,11
Sports B1
Start Your Day A2

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