

LONG BEACH  
BUSINESS JOURNAL

An edition of the Long Beach Post



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

Gantry cranes sit inactive at the ITS and SSA terminals at the Port of Long Beach.

# LA, Long Beach ports shut down due to worker shortage amid labor negotiations

By Brandon Richardson

Nearly all container terminals at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles had to close for two days in the first week of April after union workers failed to show up to work. Workers didn't return to the docks until the afternoon of April 7, officials said.

The work stoppage came in the midst of labor negotiations between one of the state's

most powerful unions, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and their employers, represented by the Pacific Maritime Association.

In LA, all seven container terminals were closed April 7, port officials said in an email to the Business Journal. In Long Beach, meanwhile, officials told the Business Journal four out of six terminals were closed, including International Transportation Service on Pier G, Pacific Container

Terminal on Pier J, Long Beach Container Terminal on Pier E, and Total Terminals International on Pier T.

According to an April 6 statement from the Pacific Maritime Association, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 13, workers did not show up to shifts that night.

"A majority of the jobs for last night's shift went unfilled, including all jobs for cargo-handling equipment operators needed to load and unload cargo," the statement read. "The workers who did show up were released because there was not a full complement of ILWU members to operate the terminals."

The PMA stated workers again did not show up for shifts on the morning of April 7, effectively shutting down the ports.

As of 1:30 p.m. that day, there were roughly 24 cargo vessels of varying size within the San Pedro Bay port complex, according to marinetraffic.com, which provides

real-time tracking of all ship types.

According to a statement from ILWU, longshore workers at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach remained committed to moving the nation's cargo.

The union attributed the dockworker shortage to union members attending its monthly meeting and observing religious holidays.

"On the evening of Thursday, April 6, International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 13 held its monthly membership meeting as its contractual right," the statement read.

At the meeting, outgoing President Ramon Ponce de Leon swore in incoming President Gary Herrera, with several thousand union members in attendance.

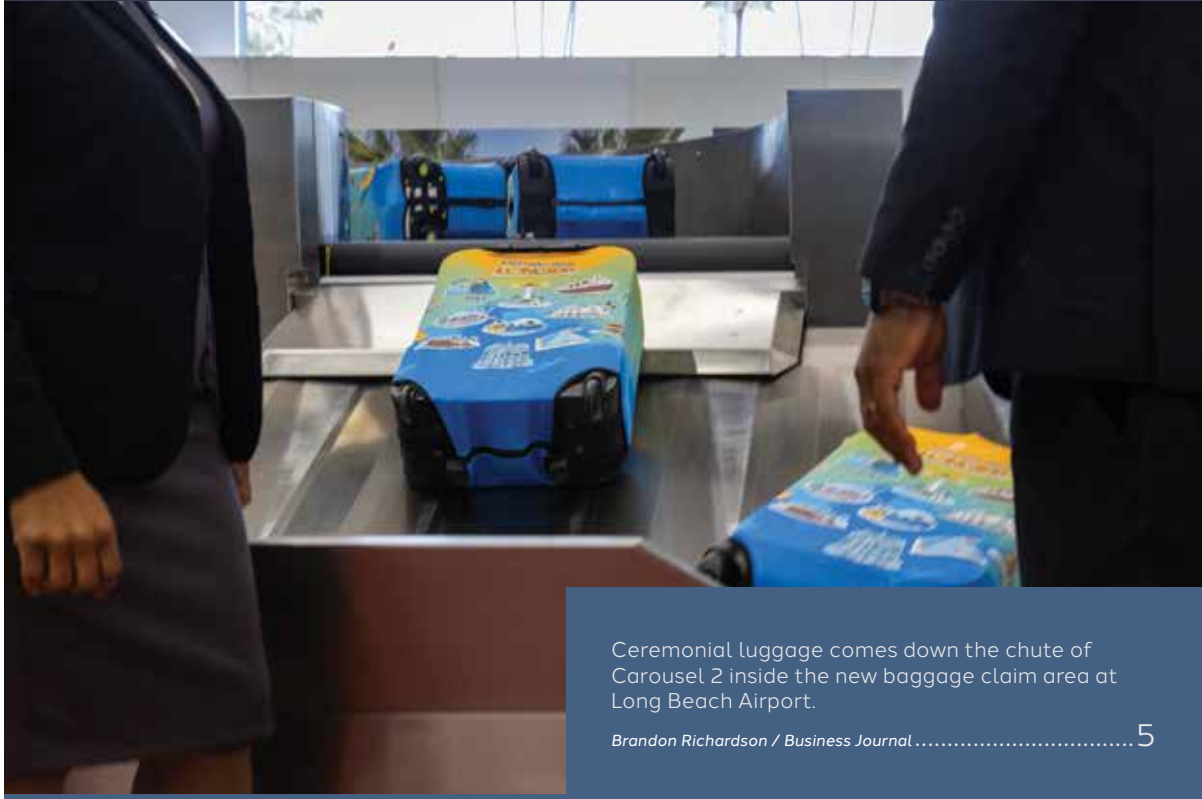
"On Friday, union members who observe religious holidays took the opportunity to celebrate with their families," the ILWU statement read. "Cargo operations are ongoing as longshore workers at the ports remain on the job."

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Ceremonial luggage comes down the chute of Carousel 2 inside the new baggage claim area at Long Beach Airport.

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# Prolonged port closure could cost billions of dollars across regional supply chain

By Alicia Robinson

The twin ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles haven’t seen a major strike in years, and the work stoppage earlier this month may end up being a minor hiccup on the way to a new contract for dockworkers. But past labor disputes have had an undeniable impact on L.A.-Long Beach port operations and revenues, sometimes causing billions of dollars in losses and snarling goods movement.

“The supply chain slows down, stuff doesn’t move—that’s always the big issue,” said Geraldine Knatz, who worked at the ports for three decades and served as executive director of the Port of Los Angeles from 2006 to 2014.

This month’s work stoppage took place after 11 months of talks between the International Longshore and Warehouse Union and their employers, represented by the Pacific Maritime Association, have failed to produce a new contract. Both sides have declined to speak with media while negotiations are ongoing.

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Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

A dockworker drives a container stacker at the Port of Long Beach’s ITS terminal.

# Nasdaq suspends Virgin Orbit stock trading

By Brandon Richardson

Less than one week after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, Virgin Orbit was notified by the Nasdaq stock exchange that its common stock and warrants to purchase common stock would be suspended as of the opening of business on April 13, according to the company.

In addition to the bankruptcy filing, Nasdaq also stated the company is out of compliance with listing rules due to its failure to file its annual Form 10-K for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2022, the Long Beach-based company announced earlier this month.

Virgin Orbit is appealing the decision but stated it can “provide no assurances” it will be successful.

“Pursuant to Nasdaq’s listing rules, such appeal will not impact the upcoming suspension of trading in the common stock and warrants, and such suspension will remain in effect unless Nasdaq determines to reinstate



Courtesy of Virgin Orbit

Virgin Orbit executives celebrate the company’s debut on the Nasdaq stock exchange in January 2022.

the securities as part of the Company’s appeal,” the company stated.

If the appeal is unsuccessful, Richard Branson’s small satellite launch company expects Nasdaq to file a Form 25 with the U.S. Securities

and Exchange Commission, which would remove the common stock and warrants from listing and registration on the stock exchange.

Virgin Orbit went public in January of last year, with a stock price of just over \$4 per share. Since

then, however, the share price has been on a steady decline.

On March 15 of this year, the share price was \$1.01. That same day, the company announced it would pause operations and put almost all its roughly 750 employees on unpaid leave while it worked to secure additional funding. At opening the next day, the stock had plunged to 70 cents.

The struggling stock reached back up to 80 cents by March 28, but over the next four days, it would plummet to 37 cents.

On March 30, the company announced it would lay off 675 employees, or 85% of its workforce. The stock took another dive from 33 cents to 20 cents.

The company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on April 4, and the stock closed that day at 14 cents per share. The fewer than 100 remaining employees are working to sell off the business, the company stated at the time.

As of the closing bell on April 12, each share of Virgin Orbit stock was worth a meager 7 cents. ■



# Aquaculture is crucial in fight against climate change, but lack of public awareness is a major hurdle to its future

By Brandon Richardson

For thousands of years, humans have used aquaculture to raise aquatic animals and plants—and now, research has shown that the practice can help increase the worldwide food supply with low greenhouse gas emissions. Oral histories date aquaculture to 4000 B.C., according to a lesson from North Carolina State University’s Sea Grant program. The first known written record of aquaculture dates back to the fifth century B.C., with the practice likely originating in China.

The practice has existed in what is today the United States for thousands of years, Peter Kareiva, president and CEO of the Aquarium of Pacific, noted.

“Native Americans had clam gardens, where they terraced the coast, and native Hawaiians had special fish ponds,” he said. “It’s an old technology, but more recently with modernization, it’s the fastest growing food sector in the world.”

Modern fisheries raise various species in large enclosures in bodies of water, Kareiva said. Other operations farm algae and shellfish—mostly clams, mussels and oysters, which require less equipment and work because they remain stationary and do not require feeding by the farmers.

For decades there has been a stigma associated with seafood farming, Kareiva said, including diseased fish escaping and infecting wild fish as well as concerns about efficiency.

“Often they were being fed fishmeal,” Kareiva said. “So you’re catching fish to feed fish, and the amount you had to feed them to get new fish meat was not that efficient.”

Advances in the industry, however, have made aquaculture much more sustainable and efficient, Kareiva said, which is important because in the fight against climate change, it should play a major role due to its resistance to unusual weather phenomena on land and the massive amounts of emissions generated by land-based food production. But a lack of public education continues to shroud seafarming in outdated misconceptions.

### Aquaculture’s benefits

In a paper called “A 20-year retrospective review of global aquaculture” published in March 2021 by the scientific journal Nature, researchers noted that aquaculture sustainability saw major gains from 1997 to 2017. The same group published a paper in Nature in 2000 that was critical of the practice.

From 1987 to 1997, farmed fish



People snorkel near fish farm enclosures.

Courtesy of NOAA Fisheries

production increased from 10 million metric tons per year to 29 million metric tons, with about 300 species of animals, plants and algae being cultivated worldwide. By 2017, that figure ballooned to 80 million metric tons of fish and shellfish and 32 million metric tons of seaweeds, with over 425 species being cultivated.

During that time, as production nearly tripled from 2000 to 2017, researchers noted that the annual catch of forage fish to make fishmeal and fish oil decreased from 23 million metric tons to 16 million metric tons and the global production of fishmeal from capture fisheries and trimmings decreased from 6.6 million metric tons to 4.8 million metric tons.

“Cattle have been domesticated for 10,000 years, so we’ve had 10,000 years to get better at it,” Kareiva said. “We’re just at the beginning of getting good at growing seafood.”

As seafood and plant farming continues to progress, Kareiva said aquaculture will not only help solve worldwide food production shortages but also the climate crisis. He noted that the raising of cattle and other land animals as food uses far more resources—namely water—and produces an exorbitant amount of greenhouse gases.

It takes 1,847 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of beef, according to Denver Water. This takes into account the water consumed directly by cattle as well as water



Seaweed produced at a farm.

Courtesy of NOAA Fisheries

used to produce the various grass, corn, grains and soybeans they eat. A 1,200-pound cow yields about 723 pounds of beef products, according to the University of Tennessee—which equates to 1,335,381 gallons of water.

When it comes to greenhouse gases, methane—which is 28-times more powerful than carbon on a 100-year timescale, according to the EPA—is of significant concern. A single cow produces between 154-264 pounds of methane gas per year, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Mixing in certain types of seaweed into cow feed, however, lowers cow

methane production significantly, the agency notes: red seaweed could lower methane emissions by as much as 98% in cattle with only a 0.2% addition to animal feed per day. Other types of seaweed have been shown to lower cattle methane emissions by 67% with only a 1% seaweed mix.

Studies have shown that aquaculture, however, has a much smaller carbon footprint.

In the face of climate change, Kareiva noted that aquaculture is also immune to unprecedented weather phenomena and drought that threaten land-based food production. And aquaculture, he

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# New baggage claim building opens at Long Beach Airport



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

Dozens of people gathered at Long Beach Airport to celebrate the long-awaited grand opening of the new baggage claim area.

Passengers started collecting their luggage from the new 11,500-square-foot consolidated facility Thursday, April 13.

By Brandon Richardson

Streamers flew through the air as ceremonial luggage dropped down the chute of Carousel 2 as dozens of people celebrated the long-awaited grand opening of the new baggage claim area at Long Beach Airport Thursday, April 13.

The \$25 million facility consists of two carousels inside a 11,500-square-foot, open-air, pavilion-style building. The facility consolidates baggage claim, which used to be in two locations—north and south of the historic terminal building.

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# Lawsuit alleging Visitors Bureau chief retaliated against whistleblower can proceed, judge says

By Jeremiah Dobruck

A judge earlier this month refused to drop Long Beach's top tourism official from a lawsuit alleging he misspent over a million dollars in public funds and then engineered a conspiracy to fire a whistleblower who complained about it.

In his lawsuit, Paul Falzon, the former finance director for the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, alleges he uncovered \$1.3 million that was improperly spent on extravagant furniture, decorations and other unauthorized purchases at the convention center.

According to Falzon, that spending was orchestrated by Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau president and CEO Steve Goodling, whose organization promotes the convention center and tourism in Long Beach.

Those purchases—including items like crystal chandeliers, giant stuffed animals and a \$3,800 set of Italian leather chairs—were wasteful and potentially fraudulent, according to Falzon, who said many of the items could not be located at the

convention center, never arrived or were sitting broken or unused in storage.

When Falzon refused to reimburse Goodling's organization for the purchases, Goodling got him fired, the lawsuit alleges. Goodling was able to do this, Falzon alleges, because of the political clout he had in Long Beach, which he was going to use to get the convention center operator's lucrative contract with the city extended.

"Goodling managed, operated and ran the Convention Center and its Funds like it was his own personal checking account," Falzon's lawsuit says. "In that capacity, Goodling acted unlawfully and displayed the power and authority of a mafia-like Godfather."

The judge's decision doesn't weigh in on whether any of Falzon's accusations are true, but it is a blow to Goodling, who was trying to extricate himself from the lawsuit in its early stages—before a jury could decide on the facts of the case.

Because Goodling runs the Convention & Visitors Bureau, a separate entity from the city-owned convention center, his attorneys argued he couldn't be held responsible for

Falzon's termination. (The convention center's private operator, ASM Global, which directly employed Falzon, is also named as a defendant.)

Goodling "vehemently denies" Falzon's accusations, his attorneys wrote in court papers, but even if they were true, Goodling shouldn't be held responsible because there's nothing illegal about influencing Falzon's employer to fire him.

Judge Elaine Lu ultimately disagreed. If Falzon's accusations prove to be true, she wrote, "Goodling was misappropriating public funds and when [Falzon] reported such conduct, Goodling utilized his connections and sway over [Falzon's] employers and directly participated in terminating Plaintiff in retaliation."

Her decision also left in place the possibility that Goodling could be held liable for potentially lucrative punitive damages.

An attorney representing Goodling declined to comment.

Goodling's supporters have maintained his purchases were legitimate, and part of a strategy to position the Long Beach convention center as a unique, boutique

destination in a competitive market.

When the city of Long Beach hired an accounting firm to investigate Falzon's complaint, auditors were soon stymied by the convention center's lax record-keeping, which they said allowed Goodling's organization to make unauthorized purchases outside the normal budgeting process.

City officials, however, decided against expanding the scope of their probe, instead relying on the available records to conclude the purchases in question were appropriate.

The convention center's operator, ASM Global, committed to quickly tightening its financial controls, but a city spokesperson said earlier this month that there's been a delay in that process.

"City staff are working with ASM Global to ensure the final corrective actions are feasible within the business operations of ASM Global and also meet the City's standards," spokesperson Jennifer De Prez said in an email.

Until ASM and the city agree on how to make those fixes, she said, the city won't authorize any spending from the publicly funded account in question. ■

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Crane Inspections and Repairs	WD-23-081	04/20/2023
Paint and Paint Supplies	WD-23-080	04/20/2023
Software & Implementation Solutions for Customer Self-Service Web Portal	TI-23-202	04/25/2023
On-Call Professional Hydrogeological Services	WD-23-082	04/26/2023
ReEntry Achievement Program	HE-23-213	04/27/2023
Locksmith Services	PR-23-228	05/02/2023
Enterprise Land Management and Permitting Consulting Services	TI-23-201	05/04/2023
Water Main Lining Pilot Project MC-5174	WD-23-061	05/04/2023
R-7207 Long Beach Police Training Academy Project 3005010029	PW-23-221	05/04/2023
Construction Management Services for Water Main Lining Pilot Project MC-5174	WD-23-072	05/05/2023

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# Virgin Orbit files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy

*After laying off 675 employees, the company is working to maximize its value as it attempts to sell off its business and assets.*

By Brandon Richardson

Long Beach-based Virgin Orbit filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on April 4.

The petition came days after Richard Branson's satellite launch company announced mass layoffs after failing to secure additional funding following a failed launch attempt in January. The company laid off 675 employees, most of whom worked in Long Beach, which is about 85% of its workforce.

The company ceased operations on March 16, putting almost all employees on unpaid leave.

The company is using Chapter

11 to maximize the value of its business and assets, according to a statement released April 3.

"While we have taken great efforts to address our financial position and secure additional financing, we ultimately must do what is best for the business," CEO Dan Hart said in the announcement, adding that Chapter 11 is the "best path forward" for the company.

"We believe that the cutting-edge launch technology that this team has created will have wide appeal to buyers as we continue in the process to sell the Company," he said.

Virgin Orbit went public on the Nasdaq exchange in January of last year, with a stock price of over \$8 per share. Since then, the share price has steadily decreased. On April 4, the stock took another 26% plunge from 19 cents to a low of 14 cents as of 8:20 a.m.

Two years ago, the public company was valued at more than \$3 billion. As of closing price April 3, Virgin Orbit had a value of \$65 million.

To help fund the process, the company has received \$31.6 million in new money from Virgin Investments Limited, according to

Continued on page 9

# Long Beach School for Adults to debut new resource center



An ESL student participates in an Easter activity at the Long Beach School for Adults.

By Tess Kazenoff

The Long Beach School for Adults will be introducing a new resource center in the coming months in an effort to better support student success.

For the over 800 students who study at the adult school—which offers resources like English as a second language classes, high school equivalency test preparation courses, high school diploma programs and employment programs—a resource center is a piece that has been missing, according to new principal Nicole Lopez.

The center will serve as a centralized location for students to connect to community resources, use a food pantry and clothing closet, attend wellness and educational workshops ranging from yoga to financial management, use computers, and just connect with each other. While work is currently underway to set up the facility, and staff have already begun collecting clothing, Lopez hopes that the center will "soft launch" in the fall.

This type of facility has been needed for some time, but the timing wasn't quite right until now, Lopez said, because this was an accreditation year for the school, which involved a self-study. Based on Western Association of Schools and Colleges criteria, an accreditation year offers an opportunity to determine where the barriers are for the students, Lopez said.

Plus, since the pandemic, there's been an added urgency to meeting students' needs—a sentiment that has been echoed across the Long Beach Unified School District with the recent implementation of wellness centers across district high schools, Lopez said.

While the future resource center won't look exactly like the high school's wellness centers, all of the site's offerings are intended to support student success, said Lopez.

"If people don't feel good, if people don't have basic needs met or what they need, then how can they do well in school?" she said.

**Challenges for adult students**

While the school serves adults of all ages, most are between the ages of 40 and 55, and some have not been in a school environment in decades, Lopez said.

As part of the LBUSD, the school looks and operates much like a K-12 school, which can be more welcoming to an adult who may be intimidated by a college atmosphere, after being out of school for 30 or 40 years, Lopez said.

"It's not an institutional feel like a college feels, where people don't know who you are," Lopez said.

Ideally, some students complete a program within a year, but some spend a decade in and out of school, Lopez said.

"It's not that they aren't being successful. It's that life gets in the way, and they have to stop coming," Lopez said. "They're here because they're new to our country learning

## Port Closure

Continued from cover

Herrera told the Business Journal during a Friday afternoon call that workers were expected to be back at the terminals in full Friday night and through the weekend.

Other union officers did not respond to calls for comment.

The ILWU, which represents 22,000 dockworkers up and down the West Coast, and PMA have been in contentious labor negotiations for 11 months. Early in the negotiations, the groups agreed to a media blackout during the talks. The groups also assured stakeholders that there would be no slow downs, work stoppages or strikes—promises that appear to no longer be in effect.

The contract expired in July of last year.

During a March 24 ceremony celebrating \$110 million in funding for a supply chain worker training campus, Ponce de Leon, then ILWU president, boasted about the reliability of West Coast dockworkers, criticizing shippers for shifting cargo to East and Gulf coast ports.

Long Beach and Los Angeles, once the busiest ports in the nation, have been slipping in national rankings since fall of last year. Numerous times in 2022, the Port of New York and New Jersey moved more cargo than the twin ports, a feat that was all but unthinkable prior to the coronavirus pandemic.

New York-New Jersey closed out last year as the second-busiest container seaport in the country, beating out Long Beach for the first time. Los Angeles was able to hold onto the number one slot but that could change this year.

In February, New York-New Jersey moved more shipping containers than Long Beach or Los Angeles by

a wide margin. The East Coast port moved 823,256 20-foot-equivalent units (the standard measure of a shipping container) compared to 543,675 TEUs in Long Beach and a dismal 487,846 TEUs in LA.

Year-to-date, New York-New Jersey has moved nearly 1.5 million TEUs to just over 1.2 million and 1.1 million in LA and Long Beach, respectively.

"We have been reliable from day one," Ponce de Leon said during the event last month. "All you press out there, hear me out: This is reliable. The West Coast is moving cargo, bring it back over here."

But Ponce de Leon's words seem to be at odds with recent actions taken by union workers as negotiations drag on.

In mid-March, the PMA accused Local 13 of using lunch breaks to cause delays at the San Pedro Bay ports. Employers stated workers previously took staggered lunches as outlined in the now-expired labor agreement. For weeks now, however, workers have been taking their unpaid lunch breaks at the same time each shift, effectively halting operations for three hours every day.

Union officials have not confirmed or denied that workers purposely started taking their lunches together. They also have not responded to questions as to whether these two recent actions are related to ongoing negotiations or if they are precursors to a full-blown strike.

All terminals reopened on April 8, but before they did, union leaders did not confirm that assertion.

"These actions undermine confidence in West Coast ports, and threaten to further accelerate the diversion of discretionary cargo to Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports," the PMA statement reads. "The health of the Southern California and state economy depend on the ability of the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to stem this market share erosion." ■

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# Free harbor tours return to Port of Long Beach

*The Port of Long Beach will once again host free harbor tours beginning in May, offering the public a chance to visit the sights and sounds of the nation’s largest seaport complex, port officials announced.*

City News Service

The Port of Long Beach will once again host free harbor tours beginning in May, offering the public a chance to visit the sights and sounds of the nation’s largest seaport complex, port officials announced on

April 3.

The 90-minute narrated tours will teach riders about how the Port of Long Beach impacts local residents, regional and national economies, get close to some of the biggest ships in the world, learn about the port’s zero-emissions operations and take pictures of machinery and local marine life.

Registration online began April 17 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. for the opportunity to receive a free harbor tour in May. The port uses an online lottery sign-up system for reservations.

Reservations will open on the third Monday of the month for tours the following month. The online reservation system provides a 12-hour window to register for an available tour the next month. A random drawing will select participants, who may reserve up to four seats each. Tours are scheduled four times a month, twice at 10 a.m. Saturday mornings and twice at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. Tours this year will be held May through August. ■

# Sugar Taco and new vegan deli to open next month in Downtown Long Beach

By Kat Schuster

In almost every sense, a deli—or any type of butcher shop—is hardly the place for those who abstain from animal products. Come next month, though, Long Beach vegans will finally get that counter experience, where they can peruse a whole gamut of meatless meat and cheeseless cheese.

Italian sausage, maple bacon, carne asada—even pepperoni and beyond—will all be made daily from scratch and offered at The Plant Butchers, a vegan deli that will open Downtown beside Los Angeles-based Sugar Taco at 500 W. Broadway in early May, Nia Gatica Campos, co-founder of both vegan ventures, told the Business Journal.

Sugar Taco helped feed the powerful vegan Mexican taco craze across Los Angeles when it opened on Melrose in 2019. In 2020, the team opened another location in Sherman Oaks. This spring, Long Beach will become home to the third location, along with the very first location of the brand’s newest project, The Plant Butchers.

Its arrival comes on the heels of Cena Vegan’s debut in Long Beach last month, which opened a few years before Sugar Taco as a small taco stand offering Mexican street food in Highland Park.

“I’m half-Mexican, and I am really big on showing people that you can still have all of your favorite cultural foods without the cruelty and without the same environmental impact,” Gatica Campos said.

Gatica Campos first transitioned to a vegan diet in high school, but she has been a vegetarian since she was 10.

“I’ve felt a deep connection with animals my entire life,” she said, adding that she has rescued hundreds of animals throughout the years.

Currently, she’s fostering dogs, cats, rabbits, a snake and a squirrel that her 2-year-old son named Mono Mono.

Six years ago, Gatica Campos, who was pregnant and single at the time, remembers hanging out with her friend Jayde Nicole in her apartment one evening when they started swapping gripes about their professional lives. The conversation took a rapid turn, and they were suddenly drawing up the basic framework of what Sugar Taco would become.

“I was a longtime vegan, and she no longer wanted to be participating in a business that was directly harming animals,” she said. “We were like, ‘Let’s do it,’ and we both quit everything else we were working on and just started coming up with this concept.”

The concept was first sketched as a way to bring traditional, albeit plant-based, Mexican recipes to Angelenos. Beyond that, they envisioned an environmentally conscious company backed by women owners.

Soon, Gatica Campos and Nicole would rope in a third co-founder, Tina Louise. To help fund their new venture, they were successfully able to round up a star-studded cast of female investors. Alicia Silverstone, Daniela Monet, Lindsey Pelas and several others soon agreed to hop onto the project.

Since 2019, Sugar Taco’s team has grown considerably and now includes Gatica Campos’ newlywed husband, Alan Campos. They

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Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

Vegan Mexican food restaurant Sugar Taco is expected to open next month on the ground floor of the Magnolia residential building on the corner of Broadway and Magnolia Avenue in Downtown.

## Baggage Claim

Continued from page 5

“Today is an exciting day,” airport Director Cynthia Guidry said during the event. “This is another thing that builds upon Long Beach Airport’s reputation as being one of the coolest, easiest airports to navigate in the country.”

The space features terrazzo flooring and numerous digital displays that will highlight local attractions and other information for travelers. A 60-foot-long by 12-foot-tall video wall will wrap around the corner of the building beginning this summer to also highlight local attractions, events and other creative content.

The new building is part of the broader \$122 million Phase II Terminal Improvement program, which encompasses numerous projects. In April of last year, the new \$26 million ticketing lobby opened to the south of the historic terminal building, along with a new 6,545-square-foot checked baggage inspection facility.

The historic terminal building, original to the airport’s 1941 opening, is currently undergoing extensive renovations, upgrades and restorations as part of Phase II. The ground floor of the building previously served as the ticketing

lobby but will serve as the new home for car rental companies when it’s completed early next year.

Now that the new baggage claim area is open to travelers, the old facility will be demolished to make way for a new baggage service office, bathrooms and concessions available to pre-security guests, including those there to pick up passengers. That project is slated for completion next year.

“We have a streamlined experience already, when you get into the concourse and our new ticketing lobby, and now we have this beautiful experience that will round out the trip,” Mayor Rex Richardson said. “Our award-winning airport is a valuable asset to the city.”

Richardson highlighted the fact that the slew of airport improvements, including the “big upgrade” for baggage claim, were not paid for using general fund dollars, but rather airport revenue and federal grants.

“This project almost didn’t happen,” City Manager Tom Modica said, noting that work began amid the coronavirus pandemic, which slashed airport revenue to a fraction of normal levels, with flight activity plummeting over 80% for several months.

Airport staff were constantly reviewing revenue against budgeted costs for the projects, with timelines



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

City leaders celebrated the grand opening of the new baggage claim facility at Long Beach Airport. Pictured from left: 5th District Councilmember Megan Kerr, airport Director Cynthia Guidry, Mayor Rex Richardson, 4th District Councilmember Daryl Supernaw and City Manager Tom Modica.

being pushed back to account for the loss of incoming money. Last year, the City Council approved the issuance of up to \$130 million in bonds to pay off existing debt and cover imminent improvement expenses.

Having overcome these challenges, city leaders were ecstatic last week. They all agreed: The airport is a gem, and the recently completed and forthcoming

improvements will only make it better—for residents, for the city and for the region.

“Long Beach Airport is a priceless resource for members of our community to conveniently travel,” 4th District Councilmember Daryl Supernaw said. “In both direct and indirect ways, it creates jobs, attracts investment and supports our local economy.” ■

## Bankruptcy

Continued from page 6

the filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The funding will allow Virgin Orbit to continue operating with less than 100 employees as it continues to sell off its assets.

The investment company already purchased a \$10.9 million senior secured convertible note to assist Virgin Orbit in paying off an estimated \$8.8 million in severance payments and employee benefits costs, and \$6.5 million in other costs primarily related to outplacement services and WARN Act exposure.

Under the WARN Act, U.S. corporations with 50 or more employees are required to provide 60-day notices before mass layoffs.

In the statement, Hart boasted about his team’s innovative launch vehicle. Dubbed LauncherOne, the rocket is deployed from under the wing of a modified Boeing 747 while in flight, as opposed to traditional rocket launches from the ground.

After a failed first launch, which is common in the industry, Virgin’s LauncherOne had four successful missions in which it delivered 33 satellites to orbit. Its sixth mission, the company’s first from international soil and the first orbital

launch from United Kingdom soil, failed due to a faulty fuel filter that became dislodged, shutting down the second stage.

“I’m incredibly grateful and proud of every one of our teammates, both for the pioneering spirit of innovation they’ve embodied and for their patience and professionalism as we’ve managed through this difficult time,” Hart said in his statement. “Today my thoughts and concerns are with the many talented teammates and friends now finding their way forward who have been committed to the mission and promise of all that Virgin Orbit represents.”

When the company announced layoffs, Long Beach officials were caught off guard, having no advance notice, a city spokesperson told the Business Journal.

The city announced a Rapid Response Team from Pacific Gateway, Long Beach’s workforce development arm, would work with affected Virgin Orbit employees to ensure they knew about available resources, help them obtain unemployment benefits and connect them to other job opportunities in Long Beach’s burgeoning space sector.

The team is expected to host federally funded sessions in partnership with the California Employment Development



Courtesy of Virgin Orbit

An aerial view of Cosmic Girl, Virgin Orbit’s modified Boeing 747.

Department, Pacific Gateway Executive Director Nick Schultz told the Business Journal.

“Today, I convened our Economic Development Department and our Pacific Gateway Workforce Innovation Network to discuss the path forward to ensure all impacted by the layoffs at Virgin Orbit can quickly access the resources needed for re-employment,” Mayor Rex Richardson said in an April 4 statement. “We are committed

to retaining this incredible pool of talent in Long Beach and are grateful for the outpouring of support from other companies in Space Beach.”

In an email on April 4, Schultz said Pacific Gateway is working with former Virgin Orbit employees to set up orientations. “It’s the city’s top priority to have the services available to the impacted workers immediately.” ■

LBBJ

LONG BEACH LIST

REAL ESTATE

Are you a real estate agent in Long Beach?

The Business Journal’s Long Beach List, is a free business directory, and we’ll be highlighting local agents in our next print edition.

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DEADLINE:

04.21.2023



### Adult School

Continued from page 7

to speak English, or they're here because high school didn't work for them ... something got in the way. Then sometimes things get in the way now, because they're adults that have responsibilities."

This year, about 1,300 people have been involved in an adult school program in some capacity, although enrollment is only set at about 850, Lopez said. She estimated that about 80-90% of adult school students would be considered "Title I," a K-12 designation for students that are low-income, she said.

At the adult school, ESL and high school classes are all free to students, however, there is a cost involved for the high school exam, Lopez said. But scholarships are available.

Providing everything the students need, though, can be difficult. Although the adult school is part of the school district, it is largely grant-funded, which can be challenging, Lopez said.

To compensate, the adult school heavily relies on partnerships with other community groups, such as Goodwill, the Salvation Army, Pacific Gateway, among others, and even more community outreach will be needed to implement the upcoming food pantry in particular, Lopez said.

"Nobody's giving us money to build a student center," Lopez said. "We're doing it because it's the right thing to do for our students."

#### Moving forward from its past

Over the years, funding for the school has fluctuated, Lopez said. For instance, while the adult school has served as a community resource for nearly 100 years, its present form has been around since the mid '90s, when it stopped relying on average daily attendance—or ADA—funding, Lopez said.

A lot of education funding is "political," she added, as it is often reliant on state and federal funding, and about 10 years ago, the School for Adults was close to shutting down due to lack of funds.

Financial support ultimately came through, keeping the school's doors open. But since then, the School for Adults has been shuffled between multiple locations before returning to its original home, where Lopez hopes the school will stay, she said.

"Other programs started coming in and took precedence," Lopez said. "That doesn't really help with morale of a program."

As a result, Long Beach School for Adults teachers haven't always felt the most valued by the district, Lopez said.

However, the tides have started to turn for the Long Beach School for Adults, as it has started to become more of a priority, Lopez said. One example is with the custodial class—while employment classes in general

*"If people don't feel good, if people don't have basic needs met or what they need, then how can they do well in school?"*

- Nicole Lopez, Principal at the Long Beach School for Adults

have not been free for students, this one will become district-funded starting next year.

"In working with the teachers, I think collectively, we feel like we've been given a seat at the table," Lopez said.

Prior to Lopez beginning her role as principal, the school was instead led by an assistant principal, Lopez explained.

As principal, Lopez is now able to make decisions that an assistant principal couldn't, in the best interests of students, such as changing a schedule or adding a course, without navigating through the same "bureaucratic red tape" facing a K-12 school or even a college, Lopez said.

"It does make a difference what your title is," Lopez said. "I think the district making this spot a principal was a move in the right direction to say, 'OK, I we need to look at this a little bit differently.'"

#### The future of the Long Beach School for Adults

Since joining the school, Lopez has been on a mission to "put the Long Beach School for Adults on the map," and the student center is the first step.

"There's great value in what we do at adult school," Lopez said.

Data shows that roughly a quarter of Long Beach's population—about 125,000 residents—could benefit from adult education services, whether it's ESL, obtaining a diploma or employment assistance, Lopez said.

"We're not hurting for enrollment. We have waiting lists for our programs—that's really not what it's about," Lopez said. "But it's about making sure that we have a strong representation of Long Beach School for Adults out in the community."

Further strengthening community partnerships will also be a step in the right direction, she said. While many organizations currently contribute to the school's success, she envisions a "one-stop shop" one day being offered onsite, she said.

The adult school shares a site with Reid High School, meaning the first step to creating a resource center involves "going over real estate," said Lopez, although she already has a potential site for the resource center in mind, with hopes of having it confirmed within the next month.

Some day, she hopes for the school to have its own campus, which will

allow the programs to grow even further, Lopez said.

While it will take increasing funds to be able to have even more teachers and classes, there is a significant community need, she said.

"We positively affect lives, in the sense that these adults are able to be better contributors in our society because they've been provided with either workforce skills or an education to get them a job or a better job, or learning how to speak English," Lopez said.

But in the meantime, apart from providing access to crucial resources, Lopez hopes that the center will become a space for students to convene and connect.



Tess Kazenoff / Business Journal

A teacher speaks with a student in a Long Beach School for Adults classroom. The school offers ESL as well as high school courses, as well as employment programs, and plans to open a resource center for students later this year.



Tess Kazenoff / Business Journal

Students typically convene on benches in between Long Beach School for Adults classrooms, but in the fall, principal Nicole Lopez hopes students will have a resource center to utilize as well.

## Long Beach to create program to help ‘legacy businesses’



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

A customer walks out of Santa Fe Importers, a popular Italian store and restaurant that's been open on the Westside for 75 years.

By Jason Ruiz

Long Beach will begin looking at how it can create a program to support and preserve legacy businesses in the city, which could include providing grants, eviction defense and other services to longstanding businesses.

The request to develop a legacy business program came from Mayor Rex Richardson and Councilmembers Mary Zendejas and Cindy Allen, whose committees will consider the issue as city officials work to develop a program.

The three asked city management to work with Long Beach Heritage, a local historic preservation group, and city departments to create a registry for legacy businesses, which are businesses that have operated in Long Beach for at least 35 years.

Businesses could qualify as legacy businesses with less time in the city (25 years) if they contribute to "a

sense of history," have distinctive architecture or landscaping or support the cultural life, diversity or identity, according to the request.

"They may want to know where hip hop was created at VIP Records, or go to the incredible Joe Jost's, where they've seen a T-shirt somewhere around the world and want to check it out," Richardson said, referencing two of the city's iconic businesses, one of which (Jost's) is currently recognized by Long Beach Heritage as a legacy business.

Joe Jost's opened in 1924 and is one of the oldest continually operating bars in the Western United States. The bar has poured countless schooners of beer, which are branded on T-shirts that people snap pictures of themselves wearing in locations across the globe for the bar to post on its walls.

VIP Records on Pacific Coast Highway, however, has moved multiple times and was engaged in a brief fight with the city and its

landlord over who owned its iconic whistler sign before reaching an agreement in 2017.

Helping legacy businesses with issues with their leases, conflict resolution with their landlords, eviction defense and helping older owners transition to an employee-ownership model instead of selling the business are things the city could look at with the new program.

While the city does have existing programs to assist businesses with things like facade improvements, permitting and other grant opportunities, it's unclear how the city will fund a program specifically for legacy businesses.

The issue is expected to be sent to the City Council's Arts, Culture and Tourism Committee and its Economic Development and Opportunity Committee before returning to the full council for approval.

Long Beach Heritage has operated in the city since 1980 and launched

its legacy business program in 2022, modeling it after San Francisco's preservation group that began its registry in 2013 and now has dozens of historic San Francisco restaurants, bars, specialty stores and other destinations mapped out and organized on its site.

The site features businesses in a daily spotlight that includes a brief history of the location's importance as well as an address and link to the business's website. Help with marketing is one of the things that the legacy business program could provide to those that are eligible to join.

Long Beach Heritage currently features 16 businesses on its legacy business map, including community staples like Santa Fe Importers, Outer Limits Tattoo and Jongeward's Bake N' Broil in Bixby Knolls.

Inclusion on its list comes with branded signage and a wall plaque as well as promotional assistance and help with existing city services for small businesses.

Manuel Valenzuela, acting director of Long Beach Heritage, said the program could be a good economic development tool that's cost-effective for the city, though he said his group has run into hesitancy from eligible businesses to get enrolled. He's hoping the city's support can help overcome that.

Elsa Tung, a land use program manager with Long Beach Forward, told the council that this was a big opportunity to go above and beyond to preserve longstanding businesses in Long Beach.

Tung pointed to the closures of Cambodia Town staples like KH Market and La Lune in 2021 as things that could be avoided if there were help for businesses to navigate relocation or a way for the city to step in and help with commercial evictions.

"We can really use this as an opportunity for protection to make sure our small businesses don't get displaced," Tung said. ■

2023 | Best Places to Work








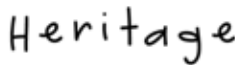






LONG BEACH BUSINESS JOURNAL

Nominate Your Company

What makes your company one of the best places to work in Long Beach?

Business owners, leaders, employees and former employees are all eligible to nominate their workplace. Winners will be announced in the June 13 edition of the Long Beach Business Journal.



LONG BEACH BUSINESS LIST: GREEN BUSINESSES					
LOGO	COMPANY + SERVICES	WEBSITE + STREET ADDRESS	YEAR	LEADERSHIP	PHONE + EMAIL
	business name: LB Holistic Tree	street address: 548 W. 5th St. Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 2017	name(s): Ben Fisher	phone number: 562-822-7024
	service provided: Tree Preservation, Planting, Growing and Advocacy			title(s): President	website: lbholistictree.com
How is your business green?: focussed on the preservation and growth of trees and canopy cover					
	business name: Native Sol	street address: 2018 E. 4th St. Long Beach, CA 90814	year founded: 2005	name(s): Tyrone Ward and May Salem	phone number: 562-277-0224
	service provided: Retail			title(s): Owners and Designers	website: nativesol.etsy.com
How is your business green?: clothing & accessories handmade with organic materials, plus vegan foods					
	business name: Studio T-SQ2, Inc.	street address: 115 Pine Ave. Suite 425 Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 2005	name(s): Henry Tong, Chris Bystedt, Chek Tang, Chris Lee	phone number: 562-436-3624
	service provided: Architecture Firm			title(s): Principles	website: studiot-sq2.com
How is your business green?: designing buildings with the lowest possible negative impact on the surrounding environment by using sustainable materials and energy sources in construction					
	business name: Yuji America Corporation	street address: 3711 Long Beach Blvd. Suite 5031 Long Beach, CA 90807	year founded: 2006	name(s): Leo Zhang	phone number: 510-396-9522
	service provided: Lighting Manufacturer			title(s): General Manager	website: yujichemtech.com
How is your business green?: LED technologies for a sustainable future.					
	business name: Green Wisdom Apothecary & Herb School	street address: 702 Cedar Ave. Long Beach, CA 90813	year founded: 2010	name(s): Julie James	phone number: 562-591-8700
	service provided: Professional herbalist and apothecary			title(s): Owner	website: greenwisdomherbalstudies.com
How is your business green?: In-bulk, organically-grown herbs and natural products, ethically-sourced					
	business name: Burke Mercantile	street address: 435 E. 1st St. Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 2017	name(s): Maggie Stoll	phone number: N/A
	service provided: Sustainable clothing, accessories and gifts			title(s): Owner and Curator	website: burkemercantile.com
How is your business green?: Green Business Certified with products from sustainable brands					
	business name: Environ Architecture, Inc.	street address: 100 Oceangate Suite P200 Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 1992	name(s): Alan Burks	phone number: 562-495-7110
	service provided: Architecture, interior design, planning, project management			title(s): President, Owner, Architect	website: environarch.com
How is your business green?: Certified Green Business through the Long Beach Office of Sustainability					
	business name: Heritage	street address: 2032 E. 7th St. Long Beach, CA 90804	year founded: 2020	name(s): Lauren Pretty	phone number: 562-343-1068
	service provided: Restaurant			title(s): Owner	website: heritagerestaurantlb.com
How is your business green?: Green and Blue Certified; zero-waste kitchen; grown on-site foods					
	business name: BYO Long Beach	street address: 431 E. 1st St. Long Beach, CA 90802 & 3805 Atlantic Ave. Long Beach, CA 90807	year founded: 2017	name(s): Julie Darrell	phone number: 562-435-3069
	service provided: Eco-friendly products and refill shop			title(s): Owner	website: byolongbeach.com
How is your business green?: Certified Green Business with refillable nontoxic personal care and cleaning products					
	business name: Cookies by Design, Long Beach	street address: 5205A E. Pacific Coast Highway Long Beach, CA 90804	year founded: 1998	name(s): Renee Kim	phone number: 562-961-9161
	service provided: Custom cookies for every occasion			title(s): Propreitor	website: cookiesbydesign.com
How is your business green?: Minimal plastic and use of eco-friendly office/janitorial products					
	business name: Sacred Roots Holistic Healing Center	street address: 2841 E. Broadway Long Beach, CA 90803	year founded: 2013	name(s): Jocelyn Fee Miller	phone number: 562-265-1810
	service provided: Holistic healing and self-care			title(s): Founding Mother	website: sacredrootsholistichealing.com
How is your business green?: Promoting community sustainability and eco-friendly office practices					
	business name: Algalita Marine Research and Education	street address: 148 North Marina Drive Long Beach, CA 90803	year founded: 1994	name(s): Katie Allen	phone number: 562-598-4889
	service provided: Environmental education learning center			title(s): Executive Director	website: algalita.org
How is your business green?: A Long Beach Green Business with a mission revolving around protecting the environment					
	business name: Commerce Technologies	street address: 3738 Bayer Ave. Suite 205 Long Beach, CA 90808	year founded: 1999	name(s): Jay Scott	phone number: 800-477-5363
	service provided: Payments, POS, ERP and payroll business services			title(s): Director of Sales and Business Development	website: commercetech.com
How is your business green?: Housed in a building with a green-first mission; offering environmental days for employees to help nonprofits					
	<b>The Long Beach Business List</b> , an industry-specific directory of local businesses, is a feature exclusive to the print edition of the Long Beach Business Journal. Subscribe today to get 26 issues a year delivered to your home or office, plus unlimited digital access to the local business news you can't find anywhere else.				
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LONG BEACH BUSINESS LIST: GREEN BUSINESSES					
LOGO	COMPANY + SERVICES	WEBSITE + STREET ADDRESS	YEAR	LEADERSHIP	PHONE + EMAIL
	business name: California Eco Design	street address: P.O. Box 15041 Long Beach, CA 90815	year founded: 2010	name(s): Kai Craig	phone number: 562-279-6713
	service provided: Landscape design, installation and maintenance			title(s): Owner	website: calecodesign.com
How is your business green?: Low input landscapes that promote biodiversity and watershed health					
	business name: Feel Good Salsa Kitchen	street address: 712 Orange Ave. Long Beach, CA 90813	year founded: 2018	name(s): Dina Feldman	phone number: 310-561-5879
	service provided: Shared food facility			title(s): Founder/Owner	website: feelgoodsalsakitchen.com
How is your business green?: Certified Green an Blue Business; Foam Free LB; composting					
	business name: SOLAR SOURCE, Inc.	street address: 2954 E. 14th St. Long Beach, CA 90803	year founded: 2008	name(s): Jarrod Osborne	phone number: 562-852-5626
	service provided: Residential and commercial solar installation			title(s): President	website: solarsourceinc.com
How is your business green?: Installing green solar technology					
	business name: SomaticWise	street address: 512 Redondo Ave. Suite A Long Beach, CA 90814	year founded: 2011	name(s): Andrea Bell, LCSW, SEP	phone number: 562-243-9963
	service provided: Somatic trauma therapy, Ecopsychology			title(s): Somatic Psychotherapy, Ecological Psychology	website: somaticwise.net
How is your business green?: In every aspect.					
	business name: Yellow 108	street address: Remote Office	year founded: 2010	name(s): Lauren Lilly	phone number: 562-491-6400
	service provided: American Hat Company			title(s): Founder/CEO	website: yellow108.com
How is your business green?: Ethical sustainably sourced salvaged & recycled textiles, woolmark certified / zero waste vertical knit mfg, and wind/solar powered leather mfg					
	business name: Long Beach Community Foundation	street address: 400 Oceangate, Suite 800 Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 1996	name(s): Marcelle Epley	phone number: 562-435-9033
	service provided: Philanthropy			title(s): President/CEO	website: longbeachcf.org
How is your business green?: CA Green Business Network certified since 2020					
	business name: Coastal Living By Kelly	street address: Remote Office	year founded: 2004	name(s): Kelly Corsino	phone number: 714-227-0712
	service provided: Gen X Realtor			title(s): Retirement Real Estate Facilitator	website: retirementrealdstateplan.com
How is your business green?: Green Certified office in Feb 2023					
	business name: Meghiddo Architects, AIA - Farm Urbana	street address: 115 W. 4th St. Suite 205 Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 2013	name(s): Ruth Meghiddo, AIA	phone number: 562-310-3399
	service provided: City + Farm Circular Economy Model			title(s): Owner Founder	website: armurbana.com
How is your business green?: Create a Regenerative Productive Business for Profit with Purpose					
	business name: Assistance League of Long Beach Thrift & Vintage	street address: 2100 E. 4th St. Long Beach, CA 90814	year founded: 1950	name(s): Tammy Kline	phone number: 526-434-7121
	service provided: Resale of clothing and household goods.			title(s): Manager	website: allb.org
How is your business green?: We provide used goods to decrease waste and production of new items. .					
	business name: Healthy Life Products, LLC	street address: 388 E. Ocean Blvd. Suite 616 Long Beach, CA 90802	year founded: 1996	name(s): Carlton L. Dowdy	phone number: 714-273-5223
	service provided: ActivePure Air & Water Purification			title(s): CEO	website: vollara.com/godowdy
How is your business green?: ActivePure Technology was cleared by the FDA for its Virus reduction abilities.					
	business name: Bowman Change, Inc.	street address: 283 Argonne Ave. Long Beach, CA 90803	year founded: 2009	name(s): Tom Bowman	phone number: 562-572-3317
	service provided: Leadership coaching, sustainability consulting			title(s): President	website: bowmanchange.com
How is your business green?: CoolCalifornia Business of the Year, climate leader					
	business name: Summit Chemical Recycling Envrionmetal Services	street address: Remote Office	year founded: 2022	name(s): Manuel Martinez	phone number: 562-233-1160
	service provided: Envrionmetal Services			title(s): Owner	website: summitchemicalrecycling.com
How is your business green?: Hazardous Waste to Energy					
	business name: Pretty Smart Studio	street address: 4117 E. 4th St. Long Beach, CA 90814	year founded: 2007	name(s): Daniella Carter	phone number: 562-343-2491
	service provided: Architecture and Interior Design			title(s): Principal and Founder	website: pretty-smart.net
How is your business green?: We lead by example, integrating sustainability values for lasting spaces.					
	business name: Dynamo's Dills	street address: 712-714 Orange Ave. Long Beach, CA 90813	year founded: 2021	name(s): Ben Harrison	phone number: 323-515-2852
	service provided: Premium Pickles and Hot Sauces			title(s): Owner, Chief Pickle & Sauce Artist	website: dynamosdills.com
How is your business green?: Plant-based inks and labels, composted food waste, etc.					

The Long Beach Business Journal makes every effort to verify the information included in the list above, but we also rely on the accuracy of the information provided by the employers and organizations represented.



COLUMNIST: TIM GROBATY

# Long Beach real estate market is softening, but it’s hardly cheap

We have been over this before: Houses in Long Beach are generally too expensive for Long Beachers.

The city’s median annual household income in February was \$71,150. That kind of money, according to mortgage calculators set at 6.7% interest rate, can comfortably handle a home costing \$631,692.

If you want to stretch things to where you won’t have much extra put away to pay for unexpected expenses, you can go as high as \$775,000, but you’ll not only be on thin ice financially, you’ll be settling for a house that might not qualify as your dream home.

The semi-good news for homebuyers is the fact that the market appears to be softening, which is, after all, inevitable after houses in the city soared by double-digit percentages year after year from 2017 through 2022. During that five-year span, the median price of Long Beach homes increased by 41%, according to Seiji Steimetz, professor and Chair of Economics at Cal State Long Beach.

The year-over-year increase in home prices from March 2022 to 2023 was less than 1%, which isn’t good news for longtime homeowners who might have waited too long to make the top-of-the-market bonanza, though it’s a bit of good news for people who’ve been waiting for things to settle down, if not nose-dive, in the market. Tempering the upside for buyers, of course, is the continuing increase in interest rates which more than negates the money that they might have saved by purchasing a home that’s come down a bit in price.

For home-shoppers with a bit more income than the median—which would by definition be

about half the households in Long Beach—and have perhaps socked some additional funds away for the purpose of buying a house, here is a small sampling of homes currently for sale.

Like, what’s wrong with this place at 1342 Myrtle Ave. that’s painted in the palette du jour of white with black trim—all the kids are doing it? The three-bed, two-bath home offers 1,502 square feet of living space with an open floor plan (the kids are beginning to sour on that concept now) that allows the kitchen and living room to carry on a cordial conversation. The house is on a pleasant-looking street just steps from the Anaheim Street corridor of Cambodia Town and its rich tapestry of offerings. And the house—still being trendy—has a new wood fence made of light boards laid out horizontally and vertically. A nice surprise is a finished attic that serves as an upstairs loft. The property is listed by Realtor Genesis Hidalgo at \$875,000.

Let’s save you a couple hundred thousand with this three- bed, two-bath relatively cozy home at 5415 Lemon Ave., just north of Market Street between Atlantic and Orange avenues in North Long Beach. Listed by Alejandro Lopez at just \$629,900, it’s a fairly eclectic property with, again, an open floor plan marrying a spacious living room with a serviceable kitchen that wouldn’t say no to new cabinets. The rooms in this 1,164-square-foot home are all tiled and things get downright rustic in the laundry room, back bathroom and one wall of the dining nook where knotty pine is featured, giving it a decidedly Big Bear vibe, which, oddly, I don’t really mind, having spent a good portion of my youth at the family cabin in Fawnskin on the

north shore of Big Bear Lake. But not everyone shares my precious memories, so that part of the house might get an upgrade. The backyard goes on forever and is suitable for a pack of dogs and as many kids and guests as you can throw at it.

And here’s a place that’s darned tempting if you don’t require a lot of space to range around in. It’s a two-bedroom, one-bath Craftsman bungalow, built in 1922 and kept in good condition, with many Craftsman touches still extant, including door and window moldings, picture rails and a covered front porch. The home is at 2612 E. 11th St. in the continually emerging Zaferia District, right next to Rose Park Historic District. Offered by Eric Greene at \$675,000, the house has some modern upgrades to bring it closer to modern times, including air-conditioning and a whole-house sound system (though at just 757 square feet, you could get the same effect with a transistor radio). The attractive kitchen has high-end appliances and white Shaker cabinetry. Its primary bedroom has a walk-in closet and there’s also ample storage in the other bedroom. The backyard is small, but the fenced front yard is a good place to relax on the porch and try to forget about the mortgage for a while. ■



Movoto photo

Priced at \$875,000, this Zaferia District home has several upgrades and a finished attic loft.



Movoto photo

This home on Lemon Avenue in North Long Beach has a large back yard and rustic touches inside.



Movoto photo

A nice 1922 Craftsman bungalow in Zaferia is listed at \$675,000.



Movoto photo

This Bixby Knolls home at 4521 Tolbert Ave. is listed at the city’s median home price of \$730,000.

# Local workers protest ‘grocery monopoly’ merger of Kroger and Albertsons brands

Grocery worker unions are calling on the Federal Trade Commission to block the merging of Kroger and Albertsons Companies, two of the country’s largest food and drug retailers—a move they say would lead to store closures, layoffs and higher prices for customers.

By Brandon Richardson

Dozens of local grocery workers gathered at the Lakewood Ralphs store April 6 to protest the proposed merger between Kroger and Albertsons Companies, which they say will result in store closures, layoffs and higher prices for customers, though Kroger has denied those claims.

Since the merger between two of the nation’s largest food and drug retailers was announced in October, workers, elected officials and consumer groups have spoken out against it.

“It’s not good for the community or employees,” Steven Manzanares, who has worked in grocery stores for 36 years, said during the protest.



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

Steven Manzanares, a Lakewood Ralphs employee who has worked at grocery stores for 36 years, speaks during a protest against the Kroger-Albertsons merger.

The companies have not stated stores or jobs would be lost as a result of the merger, but Manzanares said he fully expects it, having been through a similar situation over 25 years ago. In 1995, he was celebrating his 10th year with Alpha Beta, a supermarket that first opened in 1917. In 1994, Alpha Beta owner Yucaipa Companies purchased the Ralphs Grocery Company. All stores were rebranded as Ralphs or Food 4 Less and Alpha Beta ceased to exist. “People had to move to different

locations and if you didn’t have enough seniority, you got bumped out,” Manzanares, who has worked at the Lakewood store for six years, said. “They are going to monopolize the market and be able to raise the prices to whatever they want,” Manzanares added, noting that unionized workers also will have less bargaining power because there will be fewer competitors vying for workers.

In a statement, representatives for Kroger said on behalf of both companies that the merger will not result in any layoffs of frontline workers or store or facility closures. “Kroger is one of America’s largest unionized workforces, and this merger secures the long-term future of union jobs while creating a more competitive alternative to large, non-union retailers,” the statement said. “Beginning day one, we will invest an additional \$1 billion to raise wages and benefits, continuing our longstanding track record of associate investments.”

“We pursued this merger to grow jobs, lower prices and provide more choices to consumers across the U.S.,” the statement continued.

Combined, Kroger and Albertsons Cos. have over 5,000 stores nationwide across nearly three dozen brands. Locally, Kroger operates Food 4 Less and Ralphs, while Albertsons Cos. operates

Albertsons, Vons and Pavilions. Workers and union representatives noted during the April 6 event that Southern California has a high concentration of stores from both companies, so any fallout from the merger would be felt significantly here. In Long Beach and Lakewood alone, the companies operate more than a dozen stores.

The companies claim the merger will benefit all stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- Fresher food faster;
- A broader selection of products, offering higher quality and better value;
- A better customer experience;
- Expedite both companies’ sustainability initiatives;
- Increased customer traffic, which means bigger profits;
- And increased shareholder returns.

But workers, union leaders and some politicians see the move as a power grab to monopolize the industry.

“Let’s talk about what a monopoly and what an oligopoly gives us,” Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal said during the protest. “Is it good for consumers?”

“No,” workers shouted back. “Is it good for workers?” Lowenthal asked.

“No,” workers responded again.



Brandon Richardson / Business Journal

A customer loads groceries into his car as Ralphs employees and other union members protest the Kroger-Albertsons merger at the corner of Del Amo Boulevard and Woodruff Avenue in Lakewood.



Sugar Taco

Continued from page 8

developed a relationship after she hired Campos as executive chef for Sugar Taco. Now, Campos is working to curate a brand-new menu for the deli.

“If you want to grab some slices of deli meat for sandwiches, we’ll have turkey, ham...” she said. “For the summer, we’re going to have BBQ kits where you can get steaks and chicken wings and sausages, hot dogs ... There’s so many good options right now, we’re trying to narrow it down.”

Traditionally, seitan, which is typically made from hydrated gluten, has been a key component to mastering meat mimicry. At Sugar Taco, the seitan is made from chickpea flour and wheat. But Gatica says all too often such recipes

*“I’m half-Mexican, and I am really big on showing people that you can still have all of your favorite cultural foods without the cruelty and without the same environmental impact.”*

- Nia Gatica Campos, founder of Sugar Taco and The Plant Butcher

are heavily processed and involve harmful additives, especially in meatless proteins sold at grocery stores (think tofurky).

In developing the menu for The Plant Butchers, Campos is experimenting with all manner of fresh ingredients including koji, a culinary friendly fungus. One of the

items that will certainly be offered is Gatica Campos’ recipe for tuna salad, which consists of a heart of palm base.

Ultimately, Gatica Campos says the team is aiming to offer fresh meat alternatives that are made from whole foods, rather than a smattering of whatever it takes to

produce the right flavor. Although, a fried chicken recipe—with or without meat—will always be a delectable, albeit less healthy, treat.

“Our mission is not to convert everyone to be vegan,” she said. “It’s just simply to show people that you can still eat delicious food that happens to be plant-based.” ■

Port Closure Fallout

Continued from page 3

Any economic consequences of a work stoppage or strike would depend on how long it takes to resolve, Knatz said.

In 2012, an eight-day strike by the 800-member clerks union cost the Southern California region an estimated \$8 billion in wages, cargo that went to other ports and other losses, Reuters reported at the time.

That strike ended after then-Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa stepped in, brought Knatz with him and “pulled an all-nighter” to get the clerks and port management to agree to a deal, Knatz said.

In the past, concerns about disruption of the supply chain and the larger economy have prompted even higher-profile intervention. In 2002, President George W. Bush invoked a 1947 law known as the

Taft-Hartley Act to end an 11-day lockout that had shut down 29 West Coast ports, according to a New York Times article at the time.

When negotiations drag on as they are now, “people get frustrated that there’s not enough action happening, that they’re not making progress,” Knatz said. “If it gets severe enough, you’re going to have the White House taking an interest in it.”

The most immediately visible impact of a slowdown or halt at the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports will be familiar to Southern California residents from the pandemic: a growing proliferation of cargo ships in the waters offshore.

“The first thing that happens is ships wind up piling up off the coast, so the first thing we do is put those at anchor that fit at anchor,” said Capt. Kip Louttit, executive director of the Marine Exchange of Southern California. The exchange monitors and manages ship activities in the twin ports.

Those that can’t nab one of the limited spots at anchor will loiter offshore, powered by their generators, until a berth comes open. In October and November 2021, 55 ships sat at anchor and another 62 vessels loitered, Louttit said, but recent revisions to outdated plans mean that today there’s a maximum of about 30 anchorages.

On the afternoon of Friday, April 7, there were about two dozen ships at the ports of LA and Long Beach.

The union attributed the dockworker shortage to union members attending its monthly meeting and observing religious holidays.

But in the event of a prolonged shut-down, some shippers may decide to peel off and either sail north to Oakland or Tacoma, or head down to the Panama Canal and then up the east coast to ports there. That could cost this region billions of dollars across the supply chain, from truckers who haul goods to warehouses that store

goods to the businesses that need the goods on shelves.

Automation of port functions was a major sticking point for port workers and management in their 2002 dispute, and it remains an issue today. And the protracted negotiations have already had an impact: in October 2022, the Conference Board said cargo was already being diverted away from the L.A. and Long Beach ports because of uncertainty over the unsuccessful talks.

The board, a business association and think tank, also predicted that in the event of a strike or lockout, federal authorities “would likely intervene very quickly to limit the stoppage to just a few days.”

In fact, a coalition of trade associations has already called for President Biden to step in and help the port workers’ union and their employers reach an agreement, according to a March 23 letter from the more than 200 organizations. ■



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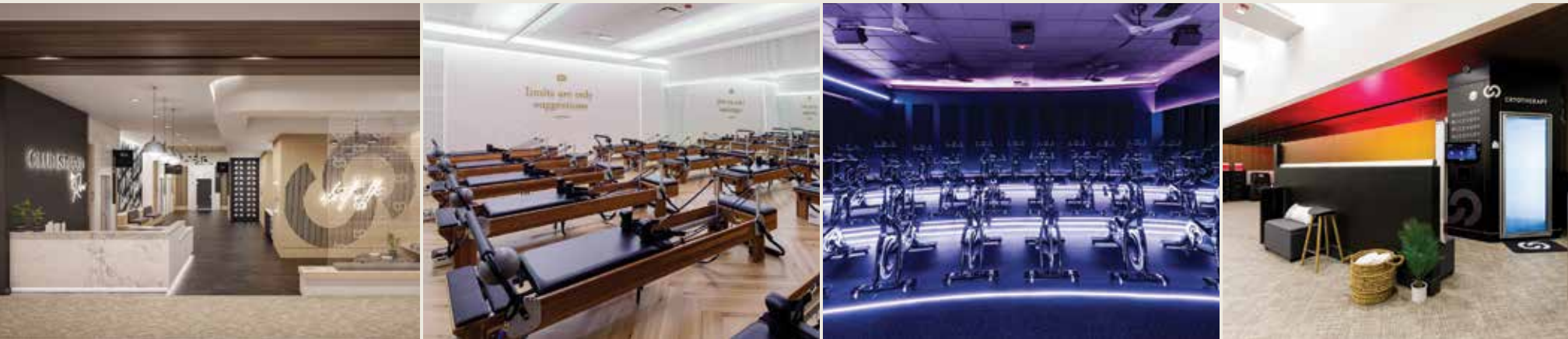
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## Aquaculture

Continued from page 4

added, could have a more positive environmental fallout than the rise in electric cars across the state because large amounts of electricity are generated using fossil fuels. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, fossil fuels are used to produce 60% of the nation's electricity.

"I don't see us being able to address climate change unless we address our food systems," Kareiva said. "And I don't see us addressing our food systems that effectively unless we expand aquaculture."

In addition to its climate resilience, using less resources and producing fewer emissions, Kareiva said the cultivation of shellfish would actually clean water, as many of those species are filter feeders, which remove excess nitrogen and other pollutants from water.

### Challenges to local cultivation

While it's clear that aquaculture offers significant benefits over land-based agriculture, there are still challenges to fostering the industry's growth locally.

The U.S. imports 70-85% of its seafood, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which estimates half those imports are produced via foreign aquaculture. The national seafood trade deficit grew to \$17 billion in 2020, the report states.

"We have great seafood right off our coasts," Kareiva said. "It just doesn't make any sense to be importing seafood from countries that don't regulate environmental destruction anywhere near as well as we do, or that even violate fishing rules."

While local aquaculture should provide local restaurants and stores with fresh seafood, according to Kareiva, he noted that it needs to

be done sustainably. This includes reducing impact on natural ocean environments as well as those on local communities.

In Long Beach and Los Angeles, for example, port operations would make hosting aquaculture facilities far more difficult than other areas. According to a 2021 NOAA analysis of natural and cultural resources as well as various industry, leisure and trade routes along the Southern California coast, areas near Santa Barbara and Ventura are the most viable, followed by waters between Malibu and Santa Monica.

become a roadblock to allowing such facilities nearby.

"They're always wary of being criticized for allowing something," Kareiva said. "So at one level, the federal government is supportive of aquaculture, but that doesn't mean that it reaches down to the level of permitting."

### Lack of public awareness

Part of that fear is likely a direct result of the public's lack of knowledge. Outdated narratives on the topic of aquaculture have hindered social acceptance of the

it's common to see protests against it," Kareiva said. "You shouldn't have a knee-jerk reaction."

Throughout the course of the study, respondents were educated on aquaculture using a series of videos produced by the Aquarium of the Pacific: "Ocean to Table: Stories of Food, Farming, and Conservation." The series highlights responsible marine aquaculture and ocean farming in the U.S., bringing together seafood farmers, scientists and chefs who share their stories.

Over half of respondents who began with a negative opinion of seafood farming were in favor of the industry after watching one of the videos, the report states. Respondents ranked scientists, seafood farmers and aquariums/museums as the best sources for education on the topic.

The study was authored by Brianna Shaughnessy, Amalia Almada, Kimberly Thompson and Michelle Marvier from the School for the Environment at the University of Massachusetts Boston, the University of Southern California Sea Grant Program, and the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences at Santa Clara University. It was published in The Journal of the World Aquaculture Society.

If the U.S. wants to truly take a holistic approach to fighting climate change, including aquaculture, Kareiva said education is the first step. Once the public becomes aware of the modernized sector and, in turn, more supportive of it, local governments would be more likely to approve them.

"This climate thing is serious," Kareiva said, noting he's been involved in climate science for 30 years. "It's not the end of the world or an existential risk, but it really can wreak havoc on lives and communities. Aquaculture and doing a better job raising food from the ocean has to be a big part of the climate solution." ■

## Buy-sell trade clothing shop to open in Belmont Shore

*Japan-based 2nd Street, Belmont Shore's new secondhand clothing store with a buy-sell-trade model comparable to Buffalo Exchange, is opening at the end of this month.*

By Kat Schuster

This is about to be a mouthful. There's a secondhand clothing shop opening up on Second Street called 2nd Street later this month.

2nd Street is an upscale, used clothing retail chain with some 700 locations in Japan, where the company is based. The conglomerate is currently making its way across the country, and the Belmont Shore location will mark

its 24th U.S. store when it opens on April 29.

Lisandro Quiroz, a Long Beach resident and communications coordinator for the Japanese company, confirmed that yes, landing 2nd Street on Belmont Shore's Second Street was intentional.

Initially, Quiroz said his team had hoped to score the quirky marquee-topped building that Buffalo Exchange once inhabited, but after facing too many construction obstacles at that location and some other failed attempts at leasing other buildings on the block, they landed on the corner of Second Street and Granada Avenue last year.

Buffalo Exchange was once beloved by thrifty shoppers for its vintage and trend-of-the-week pieces, but it shuttered during the height of the pandemic in 2020. While 2nd Street has an identical buy-sell-trade model, the shop touts itself as an upscale boutique selling used but quality garments as well as designer bags



Kat Schuster / Business Journal

2nd Street, a buy-sell-trade retail chain, is based in Japan. The chain opened its first U.S. location in Los Angeles. As more open across the country, Long Beach marks the 24th location.

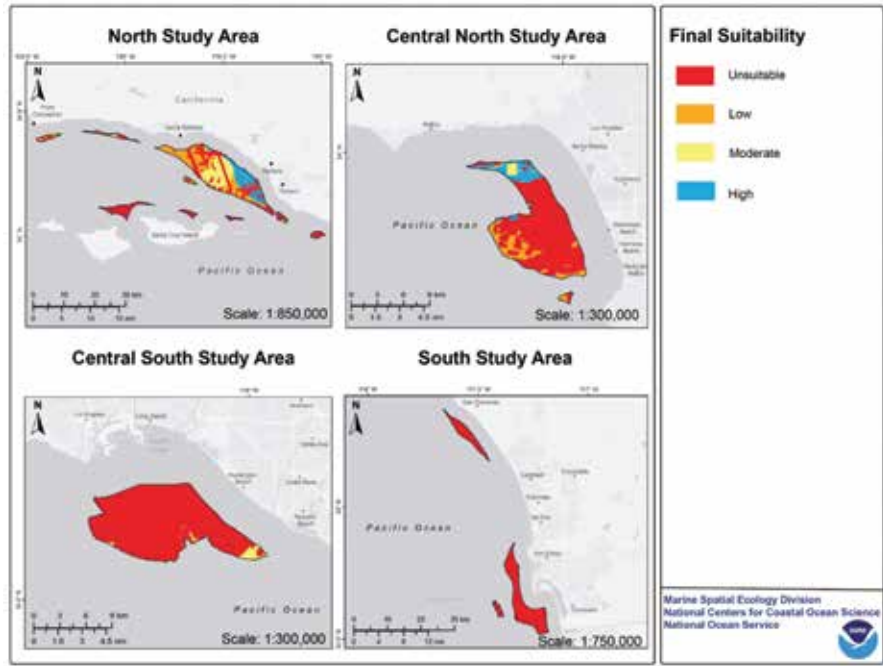
and clothing—but Quiroz said they aren't above the \$5 item.

2nd Street aims to avoid fast-fashion brands, which sets it apart from buy-sell chains like Buffalo Exchange and Crossroads, Quiroz said. Prices will range from what you would expect for used Gucci to a wide spectrum of more affordable brands.

"The store is also going to be

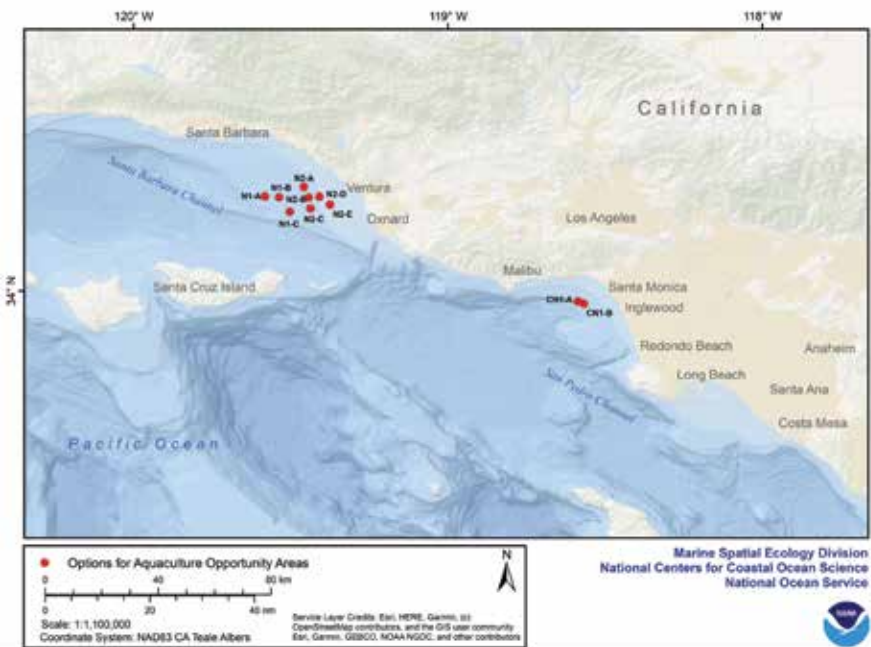
a reflection of what people in the area are selling and buying," Quiroz said.

*2nd Street, opening April 29 at 5025 Second St., will operate from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day, and the staff will welcome people to come in and trade or sell clothing from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day. Sellers must be 18 years old and show a form of identification. ■*



Courtesy of NOAA

U.S. federal waters identified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for seafarm locations.



Courtesy of NOAA

The final report on suitable seafarm locations along the Southern California coast by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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# Fuel pressure, timing led to Stage 2 failure during historic mission, Relativity announces

*A malfunctioning oxygen pump and valves impacted the fuel pressure and release timing, which kept the Stage 2 engine from achieving full power.*

By Brandon Richardson

Due to multiple malfunctions aboard Stage 2 of Relativity Space's Terran 1 rocket, the engine did not reach full power, causing the company's historic mission last month to be terminated just under seven minutes after takeoff.

The Long Beach-based satellite launch company announced its preliminary finding exactly three weeks after the mission, which proved its 3D-printed rocket was capable of withstanding the immense pressures of reaching space. An investigation is ongoing, the company stated, but in a series of tweets on the morning of Wednesday, April 12, it outlined the successes and the root causes of the Stage 2 failure.

After the mission was scrubbed twice, the first Terran 1 blasted off from Launch Complex 16 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station on March 22 at 8:25 PDT.

Dubbed "Good Luck, Have Fun," the mission started off smoothly with successful vehicle release and flyout. The rocket reached max-q, which is the point of a launch where the vehicle is under maximum mechanical stress, at T+84 seconds.

After the Stage 1 main engine cutoff, with the rocket traveling over 4,629 mph, the stage separation system cleanly released Stage 2 at T+163 seconds. The Stage 2 igniters were given the "on" command at T+166 seconds, with performance appearing nominal, the company stated. At T+168 seconds, however, the Aeon Vac engine did not reach full thrust.

The engine's main valves opened slower than expected, the company reported, which impacted the fuel pressure and the timing of it reaching the thrust chamber assembly and gas generator. While the fuel pump generated pressure as expected, the oxygen pump did not, which also affected fuel pressure and timing.

"The data from the oxygen pump is consistent with a vapor bubble being present at the pump inlet," the company wrote.

Due to the pressure and timing



Relativity Space's Terran 1 rocket blasts off from Launch Complex 16 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station Wednesday, March 22, 2023.

issue, the gas generator did not light and the engine never reached full power.

Despite the malfunctions, at T+191 seconds, Stage 2 crossed the 100-kilometer Karman line into space and coasted up to 134 km above the Earth's surface before the mission flight control officer sent the arm/terminate command functions at T+415 seconds.

"Initial data review indicates the flight termination system performed nominally," the company stated, noting that stages 1 and 2 fell into the same designated disposal area. "No injuries, impacts to public safety or property damage were reported."

Relativity's investigation into the failure began immediately with Federal Aviation Administration oversight. The company is expected to submit a full report summarizing its key findings from the failed launch.

The company said its Terran 1 program allowed the company to refine its ability to develop and test its metal 3D-printing technology, adding that taking a more ambitious approach early in the company's life gives it valuable experience for its upcoming venture.

"Building on the momentum from Terran 1's development and flight, Relativity is shifting its focus to design, development and production of its next generation Terran R launch vehicle," the company stated. The Terran R is "a medium-to-heavy lift reusable rocket designed to meet customer's needs for disruptive, diversified launch capabilities in an underserved and quickly growing payload market." ■

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# Trademark Brewing debuts 'Morning Drive' beer in nod to the Long Beach Grand Prix

By Kat Schuster

Sometime in the early 1990s, Sterling Steffen remembers peering out at the hairpin turn from the grandstand at the Long Beach Grand Prix around the age of 9. He sat near the same turn every year with his father.

Now, he says if his father hadn't brought him to race weekend from their home in the West Valley, there might not be a Trademark Brewing in Downtown Long Beach, and he's paying homage to the city's landmark event.

Steffen, who opened Trademark and moved to the city in 2019 with his wife Ilana, unveiled the first of a series of race-themed beers a few weeks ahead of the 48th Acura Grand Prix last weekend: Morning Drive, a coffee-cream ale.

The beer is a light, 5% ABV, crisp ale that carries distinct notes of fresh coffee beans without an overbearing coffee aroma (we definitely tried it).

Kane Christensen, Trademark's head brewer, called it a "light drinking, easy, crushable beer" that is palatable for both evening and, yes, morning drinking.

"We added a bunch of whole Ethiopian coffee beans to bring out the nice coffee character without being overwhelmingly, you know, potent in flavor, but we still get like a big burst of coffee aromatics," Christensen said.

While Morning Drive will only be available until supplies run dry, more race-themed beers will be released throughout the year.

"I would be surprised if we made it more than once a year. It's a fun novelty," Steffen said.

For now, the beer is available both on draft and in a particularly striking can. Steffen tapped Norwegian artist Abel Toth to design the wrap-around,

*"We started with (Morning Drive), and we timed it to overlap with the Grand Prix. We figured that was the best opportunity to kind of get our foot in the door and make some noise."*

- Sterling Steffen, Owner of Trademark Brewing

which boasts a colorful illustration of a Formula One racer, zooming on a roadway between the ocean and a city skyline.

At first glance, one might assume the illustration is of Shoreline Drive in Long Beach—until you notice the Australian flag. It's actually Melbourne, where the 2023 Australian Grand Prix took place last month. Trademark Brewing hosted a viewing party for the Aussie race in conjunction with the ale's debut on March 31.

"That was actually a beautiful coincidence," Steffen said. "This is a truly collaborative international combination of events."

With the Australian Grand Prix's Formula One race and Long Beach's Grand Prix just weeks apart, Steffen aimed to release the beer as a nod to both race events. Later this year, fans will see more race-themed beers released by Trademark.

"Our Formula One crowd is pretty active and they're pretty loyal, and the Formula One crowd overlaps a little bit with the Grand Prix of Long Beach crowd," he said.

This year, that overlap was heightened as Long Beach welcomed Historic Formula One

to Grand Prix weekend. The event featured cars driven in the series in the 1970s and '80s.

By June, Steffen says Long Beachers can look out for another race-themed beer. For now, the beers are not an official collaboration with the Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach, but he hopes to change that as the series continues.

"We started with (Morning

Drive), and we timed it to overlap with the Grand Prix," he said.

"We figured that was the best opportunity to kind of get our foot in the door and make some noise."

Trademark Brewing, located at 233 E Anaheim St., is generally open from 4:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Friday, the brewery opens at 3 p.m. and on weekends, it opens at noon. ■



Cheantay Jensen / Business Journal

Trademark's head brewer Kane Christensen holds a pint of the Morning Drive coffee cream ale next to a canned four-pack of the new beer at Trademark Brewing near Downtown Long Beach.

  
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Grocery Monopoly

Continued from page 15

“Is it good for our communities?” Lowenthal questioned.

“No,” workers said a third time.

Lowenthal pointed to recent oil and gas prices, which increased sharply as company profits soared to record highs.

“If the cost of groceries goes up, it affects the entire economy, it affects our communities, and everybody loses except the shareholders,” Lowenthal said.

Amid the pandemic, grocery prices increased with demand and stores reported historic profits. Combined, Kroger and Albertsons Cos. generated approximately \$210 billion in revenue, \$3.3 billion in net earnings, and \$11.6 billion of adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization in fiscal year 2021, according to the merger announcement.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 324 staged the Lakewood event. Other UFCW groups hosted similar events that week, including Local 770 in Los Angeles, Local 5 in Northern California, locals 367 and 3000 in Washington, Local 7 in Colorado and Local 400 in Washington, D.C.

UFCW locals represent more than 100,000 Kroger and



Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal addresses dozens of grocery workers during a protest against the Kroger-Albertsons merger at the Lakewood Ralphs store.

Albertsons employees in 11 states and D.C. The merger could put upward of 5,750 unionized employees out of work, leaders estimate.

Over 100 organizations have created a coalition to “Stop the Merger,” which is calling on the

Federal Trade Commission to block the joining of the two grocery giants.

“It is critical that we remain strong and united to protect workers, customers, food suppliers and communities from the disastrous effect of this merger,” Local 324 President Andrea Zinder

said during the event, adding that closures would increase food deserts locally and across Southern California. “Customers who already pinch pennies to afford groceries for their families will see even higher prices. We can’t let that happen.” ■

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