



Madru is one special woman
See Page 2



Teacher signing copies of book
See Page 8



Symphony gets local support
See Page 10

Friday, March 27, 2009

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8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240

Mayor feels good about Downey's circumstances

■ Mayor Mario Guerra touts upcoming projects in State of the City address.

BY ERIC PIERCE,
CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – With several development projects already in mid-construction or preparing to break ground, Mayor Mario Guerra delivered a steady dose of confidence and optimism in his State of the City address last week.

Guerra took a mostly positive tone as he spoke before a capacity audience at Rio Hondo Event Center on Friday. The event is sponsored annually by the Downey Chamber of Commerce, and usually includes the city's mayor as featured speaker.

Using a PowerPoint slide, Guerra used charts, figures and statistics as he spoke about Downey's current fiscal state. He summarized the city's \$138 million annual budget, of which nearly \$48 million is allocated to the police and fire departments.

The city continues to be conservative with its money while investing in public safety, Guerra said. City Hall currently has 197 full-time employees, down from a high of 209 in 1990, while the Downey Police Department today employs 264 full-timers, up from 241 in 1990, according to the slide.

Crimes against persons, a statistical category that encompasses murders, rapes, robberies and aggravated assaults, dropped nearly 13 percent in the last year, Guerra said. But property crimes, particularly vehicle thefts, have risen 2.7 percent.

"That's more a sign of the times. With Rio Hondo [Event Center] and Downey Landing, there's more places to steal cars," Guerra said.

A chaplain with the Downey Police Department, he heavily praised local law enforcement and their efforts to combat graffiti. Last year, 148 arrests were made for graffiti-related crimes that totaled more than \$22,000 in property damage, Guerra said. More than 3,300 instances of graffiti were inputted into the police department's graffiti

See ADDRESS, page 2

State of the City Highlights
•Coca-Cola is planning \$100 million expansion by late 2010.
•BJ's Restaurant will open by July 1.
•13% drop in violent crime last year.
•Property crimes rose 2.7%

Rising star to delight Downey audience

BY JOYCE SHERWIN,
DOWNEY SYMPHONY

DOWNEY – Astronomers give names to newly-discovered stars. Helps to sort them out and makes us feel a connection with their light shining way off in time.

We now would like to suggest a great name for a new star: Nigel Armstrong.

This star can be viewed from Downey tomorrow night, Saturday, March 28, rising time shortly after 8 p.m., and you don't even have to go outdoors with telescopes. Nigel Armstrong will be visible from your seat in the Downey Theatre and you can expect some uncommon music of the spheres in his appearance as violin soloist with our symphony orchestra.

At 19, and a student at the Colburn School in L.A., he has already performed with the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Berkeley and Bozeman Symphonies, and the American Philharmonic of Sonoma County, which is home turf. Armstrong received first prize in concerto competitions with the Boston Symphony and the San Francisco Youth Orchestra and now it is Downey's turn to recognize his talent as the winner of our symphony's new Young Artist Competition.

"That was a very competitive event," says Downey Music Director Sharon Lavery, "and I was thrilled with the level of the finalists. The caliber of contestants was very high, and some of L.A.'s most prominent musicians made up the panel of judges to pick the winner."



Nigel Armstrong

Armstrong will play Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 1 on a program which includes the Brahms Second Symphony and the appearance of Rhona Weinberg Gewelber as Baton Winner conducting Johann Strauss, Sr's Radetzky March.

Tickets priced at \$20 and \$25, \$10 for students, are available in the theater box office the evening of performance, Saturday, March 28. Sharon Lavery gives the pre-concert lecture at 7:15 p.m., concert time is 8, and you are invited to a complimentary reception in the theater patio at the conclusion of the evening.

The Downey Civic Theatre is at 8435 Firestone Boulevard, at the corner of Brookshire, close to Mimi's Café, which will honor your concert tickets with a 10 percent discount. Plenty of free parking, not a bad seat in the house, gorgeous music and a new star. See you there.

Allison Iraheta – our very own Idol

■ Allison Iraheta, 16, is among the finalists on 'American Idol.'

BY ERIC PIERCE,
CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – Allison Iraheta is only 16, but she's already an idol in the eyes of millions of Americans.

Allison, who lives in Downey, is among the 10 remaining contestants on FOX's hit show, "American Idol."

Allison has been singing since age 3. Although she's a resident of Downey, she currently attends school at Animo Ralph Bunche Charter High School in Los Angeles.

The school held an "American Idol" viewing party Wednesday, where friends, family and students phoned in to vote for Allison.

"The voting last week was very scary. When they announced Allison was in the bottom three we all thought, 'this is it.' I was relieved when they finally said she was safe," said Sarah Iraheta, Allison's sister and a teacher at Animo Ralph Bunche. "That is why this viewing party [was] so important to us, we need to make sure Allison doesn't land in the bottom three again."



Downey resident Allison Iraheta is progressing rapidly on "American Idol," but she needs votes to stave off elimination. Photo courtesy FOX

Allison has also made a fan of Mayor Mario Guerra, who attended the viewing party.

"The city of Downey is very proud of Allison," Guerra said.

"She has demonstrated exceptional talent and sportsmanship in the competition. She has been a great example to our young adults and teens about achieving your dreams

through hard work and effort. "We are always happy to see one of our youth make a positive impact on others."



Kathia Morales, right, was crowned Miss Downey at a pageant last week. Sandy Fernandez was named Miss Teen Downey. Photo by Paul Heidecker

Kathia Morales takes throne as Miss Downey

BY BRIDGET SAGRERO &
MICHELLE MÜLLER,
INTERNS

DOWNEY – Kathia Morales, 22, was crowned Miss Downey and Sandy Fernandez, 16, won Miss Teen Downey at the 54th annual Miss Downey Pageant, presented Saturday by the Downey Rose Float Association at the Downey Theatre.

The doors opened to the public at 6 p.m., where they were greeted by last year's court and directed to their appropriate seats. Once the crowd was seated, Pageant Director Susan Domen welcomed everyone and introduced the master of ceremonies, Rick Porcaro.

Following Porcaro's introduction, the ladies performed their opening number, "Labels 4 Love." The various categories that contestants competed in were Sportswear, Business Wear and Evening Gown.

Prior to the selection of the top 10 in the Miss Downey category

and top 11 for the Miss Teen Downey, the judges deliberated while the audience viewed a small clip of the ladies' three months of preparation.

This year, the panel consisted of 12 judges from various areas. The panel included former NBA player like James Cotton; theatrical and motion picture executive Keith Hurt; UNET Music & Entertainment co-owner Linsey Onken; Miss Long Beach 2006 Christy Van Der Westhuizen; R&B singer Uné; actor Ernest L. Thomas; active member of the pageant industry Sara Hilt; president of Sports Legends Incorporation Gene Rotundo; city of Lakewood resident and volunteer Rita Gallardo; pageant industry expert Barbie Myer; and Financial Investment Firm employee Ingrid Martin.

"We try to get a variety of people [to judge]," said Domen, when

See MISS DOWNEY, page 8

Habitat for Humanity building house in Downey

DOWNEY – Low-income Downey residents are invited to apply for a new home through the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the new home, located at 12812 Blodgett Ave., will take place tomorrow at 10:30 a.m.

Habitat for Humanity will also be offering free exterior home repairs to nearby homeowners through its Brush with Kindness program.

Applicants for the home must either live or work in Downey and meet certain income restrictions.

They must also invest 500 hours of "sweat equity" and qualify for a 0% interest mortgage.

Applicants must attend a mandatory orientation session tomorrow at Downey Adult School (1:30 p.m. in Spanish, 3 p.m. in English) or Tuesday at the Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center (6 p.m. in English, 7:30 p.m. in Spanish).

Habitat for Humanity has made the home available through partnerships with the city of Downey's Community Development Department and local Lutheran congregations.



Mayor Mario Guerra, left, spoke at the State of the City address last week at the Rio Hondo Event Center. He is shown with Rick Rodriguez, president of the Downey Chamber of Commerce.

Address: Guerra wants improvement to public communication.

Continued from page 1

tracking system, which records and categorizes the vandalism, helping detectives make arrests.

"They will not win, they can not win," Guerra said of taggers. "We don't tolerate graffiti in Downey."

Guerra also updated the audience on a few key pieces of development. The Discovery Sports Complex - Downey's first new park in more than 30 years - should open in "three to four months;" the adjacent Columbia Memorial Space Center "will probably be opening up in August;" and the anticipated BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse at Stonewood Center will open by July 1.

When it opens, the recently-approved Porto's Bakery will bring 2,000 people downtown daily, Guerra said. A Fresh & Easy Market is moving forward in its plan to occupy the former Albertson's supermarket.

The Coca-Cola plant on Lakewood Boulevard is planning a

\$100 million expansion for late 2010, according to Guerra. Already the largest bottling facility in the world, the plant will add three new production lines, he said.

Speaking about the fallout from last year's boil-water order, Guerra said he visited numerous restaurants and "asked for 10 things the city could do - short of writing a check" to help in their recovery.

"Not a single restaurant called me back," Guerra said.

In response, the city will host a "Dine in Downey" promotion May 1-16, where residents will be encouraged to eat out locally.

Wrapping up, Guerra ran through some of his and the City Council's remaining goals, which include the establishment of a volunteer citizens patrol to work alongside Downey police; creating a youth commission that will speak on behalf of Downey adolescents; consolidating the city's transit yards to create more park space; and improving public communication, partly through the expansion of the city's website.

Classes available for young and old

DOWNEY - A variety of classes and activities are planned this spring at the Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center

Seniors are invited to socialize as they enjoy their favorite trivia games, board games, cards and puzzles every Thursday from 1-4 p.m.

Wednesday Walkers has begun for residents over age 50 who are interested in joining a walking club. New walkers should arrive at 8:30 a.m., and walking/stretching begins at 9. Free promotional pedometers will be provided to all walkers.

Sign-ups continue for the free California Telephone Access Program (CTAP) screening and distribution scheduled for April 10. Physicians from Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital will provide screenings and residents who qualify will receive a free telephone. An eligible person must have existing phone line service and be visually and hearing impaired.

The Make-It & Take-It craft class for seniors begins April 2 from 1-3 p.m. Cost is \$20 for the 4-week session. All supplies and materials are provided.

Pilates is a form of exercise to help improve your body strength, flexibility and endurance. The next 5-week class begins April 6 at 10 a.m. or April 9 at 10:30 a.m. The fee is \$35 for seniors over age 50, or \$40 for residents 18-49.

The city of Downey's licensed child care program will offer day care during spring break, April 13-17. Children ages 5-11 will receive care from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cost is \$105 per child, per week, and includes daily snack and a mid-week excursion to John's Incredible Pizza.

CareMore will offer a free glucose screening to residents over 50 on April 3 from 9-11 a.m.

Rhythm, Rhyme and Fun, a 5-week class for children 2-4, begins April 4 at noon. Children will have fun clapping, singing and moving. Cost is \$28 per child.

The 3-week Fun-N-Messy class for children 2-4 begins April 2 at 4 p.m. or April 4 at 1 p.m. Cost is \$15 per child.

A 12-week adult jazz dance class begins April 9 at 7:15 p.m. or April 10 at 1 p.m. Cost is \$72 per person and is open to beginner and intermediate levels.

A chess class for kids ages 6-11 begins April 15 at 3:30 p.m. Cost for the 6-week class is \$40.

A workshop on April 21 from 6-9 p.m. will show students how to build their own topiary design. Cost is \$35 plus a \$15 materials fee payable to the instructor.

Tai Chi 1 (Chi Gong) for adults begins April 22 at 10 a.m. for adults. The 6-week class costs \$35. Tai Chi 2 is the same price and begins April 22 at 11 a.m.

An authentic Indian cooking workshop will be held April 23 from 6-8 p.m. Learn to cook with spices, oils and about the main staples of Indian cooking. Cost for adults is \$15 plus a \$5 material fee payable to the instructor.

Learn about Downey's neighborhood watch program on April 27 from 9-10 a.m. Learn how to make your neighborhood a safer place and meet a Downey police officer to ask questions and/or express concerns.

For additional information regarding any of the programs, or to learn about other programs and classes, call the community center at (562) 904-7227. The Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center is at 7810 Quill Dr.

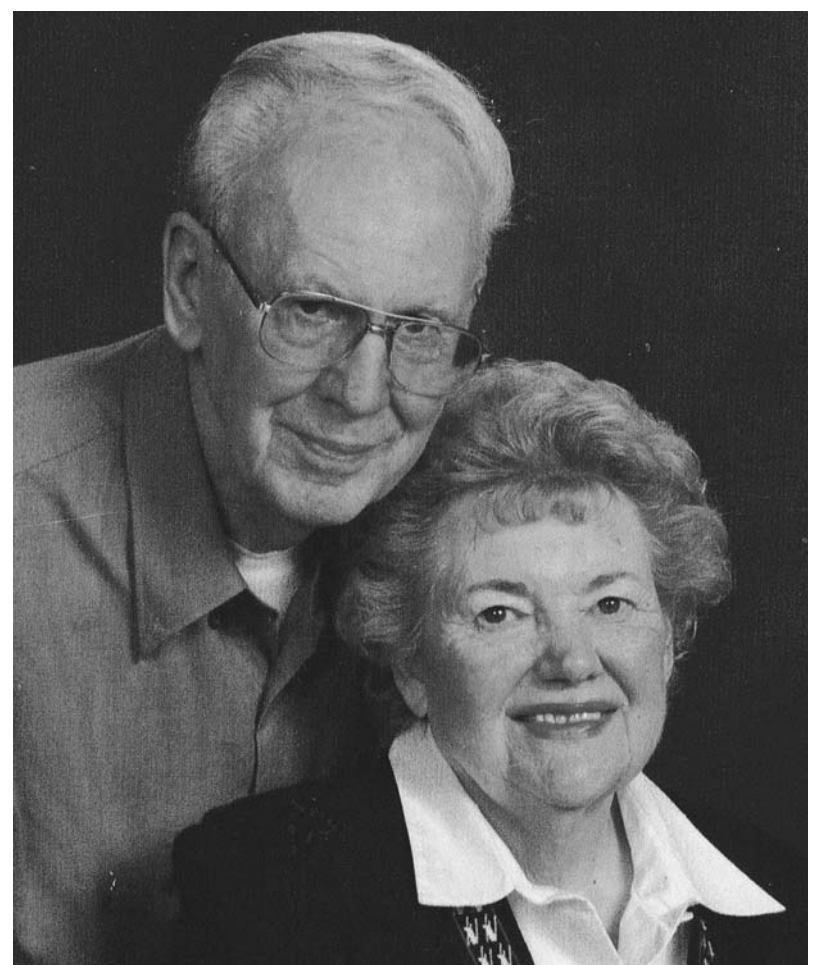
DCLO to present '42nd Street'

DOWNEY - The Downey Civic Light Opera will present "42nd Street," a Tony Award-winning musical set during the Great Depression, beginning May 28 at the Downey Theatre, executive producer Marsha Moode announced this week.

Returning to conduct for the 11th time will be Eddy Clement, and Gitana Van Buskirk will choreograph for her third time. "42nd Street" will be Moode's 20th production with the DCLO.

The Harry Warren musical was a tremendous Broadway hit in the 1980's and has a celebrated score featuring "Lullaby of Broadway," "You're Getting to be a Habit With Me," "Shuffle Off to Buffalo," and many more.

For tickets and information, call (562) 923-1714. The box office is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1-5 p.m.



Downey resident Marilyn Madru, pictured with husband Gordon, has been named 'Woman of the Year' for sending coupons to troops overseas.

Madru is 'Woman of the Year'

DOWNEY - Longtime Downey resident Marilyn Madru has been named "Woman of the Year" for 2009 by the Eldorado Chapter of the American Business Women's Association.

It is the third time Madru has been honored with the designation. She previously held the honor in 1992 and 2000.

With her husband, Gordon, Marilyn Madru sends 65 packages of hand-cut coupons each month to military commissaries around the world, which accept the coupons up to three months after their expiration date. Troops use the coupons to purchase food and snacks.

Madru and her husband have been Amway/Quixtar distributors for more than 40 years, and are longtime members of First Baptist Church of Downey (43 years), Downey Christian Women's Club (35 years), Downey Coordinating Council, Downey Historical Society, Aerospace Legacy Foundation, and OASIS.

Madru accepts coupons from residents to send to troops. Coupons must be from the manufacturers, have an expiration date (no more than three months' expired) and include a bar code. Coupons must be cut out, and no restaurant or store brand coupons are accepted.

Send your coupons to Gordon and Marilyn Madru, 8632 Guatemala Ave., Downey, CA 90240. Call (562) 928-2623 for more information.

Children's reading event April 25

DOWNEY - A children's reading event will be held at the Downey Memorial Christian Church parking lot April 25 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Children in grades 3-6 will read an age-appropriate book - as chosen by the Downey City Library - for 5-10 minutes and then pass off to another child until the book is finished.

Downey resident Shirley Johnson is organizing the event, which is done in association with the annual Walk the Talk Against Child Abuse.

To sign up for the reading event, call Johnson at (562) 862-2378.

Resident chosen for 'Price is Right'

DOWNEY - Downey resident Laura Castellanos will appear as a contestant on "The Price is Right" this Thursday.

Show representatives would not reveal how much Castellanos won, other than to say "nobody leaves 'The Price is Right' without a great prize...and a really fun chat with host Drew Carey."

"The Price is Right" featuring Castellanos airs Thursday at 10 a.m. on Channel 2.

Insurance agent opening office

DOWNEY - Cecilia Martinez-Morris, a State Farm insurance agent, will celebrate her grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Thursday at 4 p.m.

The Downey Chamber of Commerce is assisting with the event. The office is at 8050 Florence Ave., Suite 10, near Florence and Paramount Boulevard. RSVP by calling (213) 675-0769.

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An Introduction to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Did you know...

- There is a very good chance that your neighborhood will be on its own during the early stages following a catastrophic disaster.
- After a catastrophic disaster, citizens will volunteer to help. Without proper training these people can expose themselves and others to potential injury and even death!
- Experience has shown that basic training in disaster survival and rescue skills improves the ability of citizens to survive until responders or other assistance arrives.

What is a CERT Member?
A CERT member is a person who is trained to prepare for and respond after a disaster in their neighborhood.

Who can join CERT?
Anyone 18 years or older who is interested in helping his or her neighborhood in preparing for a disaster and provide assistance afterward.

What type of training do CERT members receive?
CERT members learn how to take care of themselves, their families and neighborhoods through training in the following areas:

- Disaster Preparedness
- Fire Suppression
- Medical Operations
- Damage Assessment
- Light Search & Rescue
- Team Organization
- Disaster Psychology
- Disaster Simulation

Join the Team!
The next Class: April 18, 25, and May 2, 2009
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
R.S.V.P to (562) 904-7345

Space center sets new opening date

■ Grand opening set for Aug. 1 as City Council approves \$1.74 million budget.

BY HENRY VENERACION,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – With the City Council's approval Tuesday of a budget of \$1.74 million, the eagerly anticipated opening of the Columbia Memorial Space Center is set for August 1.

Breaking ground on April 12, 2007, the city dedicated the space center on Nov. 15, 2008, in honor of the 7-member crew of the space shuttle Columbia who lost their lives Feb. 1, 2003 during re-entry into the earth's atmosphere.

The two-story Columbia Memorial Space Center will feature exhibits, labs and simulators, including an impressive-looking photo mosaic mural and robotics, meant not only to capture the five-decade history of the site but also inspire future generations of kids to pursue careers in science and technology-based industries. The "one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art" facility, on whose construction the city has invested \$10 million, is nearing completion.

The approved budget of \$1,741,062 is broken down into \$822,212 for operational expenses, \$740,000 capital outlay for equipment and building improvements, and \$178,850 for building maintenance. Initial staffing provides for

four full-time positions, including an executive director (to manage the space center), a special program coordinator (with special attention to education programs), a Center supervisor, and an administrative assistant, and at least a couple of part-time positions.

The original proposal to assign one-half of the salary of the assistant deputy city manager to the Center budget was revised downwards to one-fourth.

2009-10 funding sources for the Center include: \$766,062 from the General Fund, \$700,000 NASA grant, \$200,000 miscellaneous grants, and a projected \$75,000 from admissions, memberships and fees.

With sufficient staffing and a viable operating budget in place, the aim, said executive director Jon Betthausen, is for the Center to be open to the general public at least five days a week.

In other action, the Council:

- Turned down an impassioned request, on a 3-2 vote, by William and Marlene Griffin to waive or defer the mandated installation of a fire sprinkler system and a so-called Cultec Recharger 330 (filtration) system on the couple's property at 7803 Puritan St., with the

See COUNCIL, page 4

Fresh & Easy moves closer to opening

BY ERIC PIERCE,
CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – It's been more than a year since the Fresh & Easy grocery chain announced plans to open a new location in Downey, but the British-based market appears to be finally making progress towards an opening.

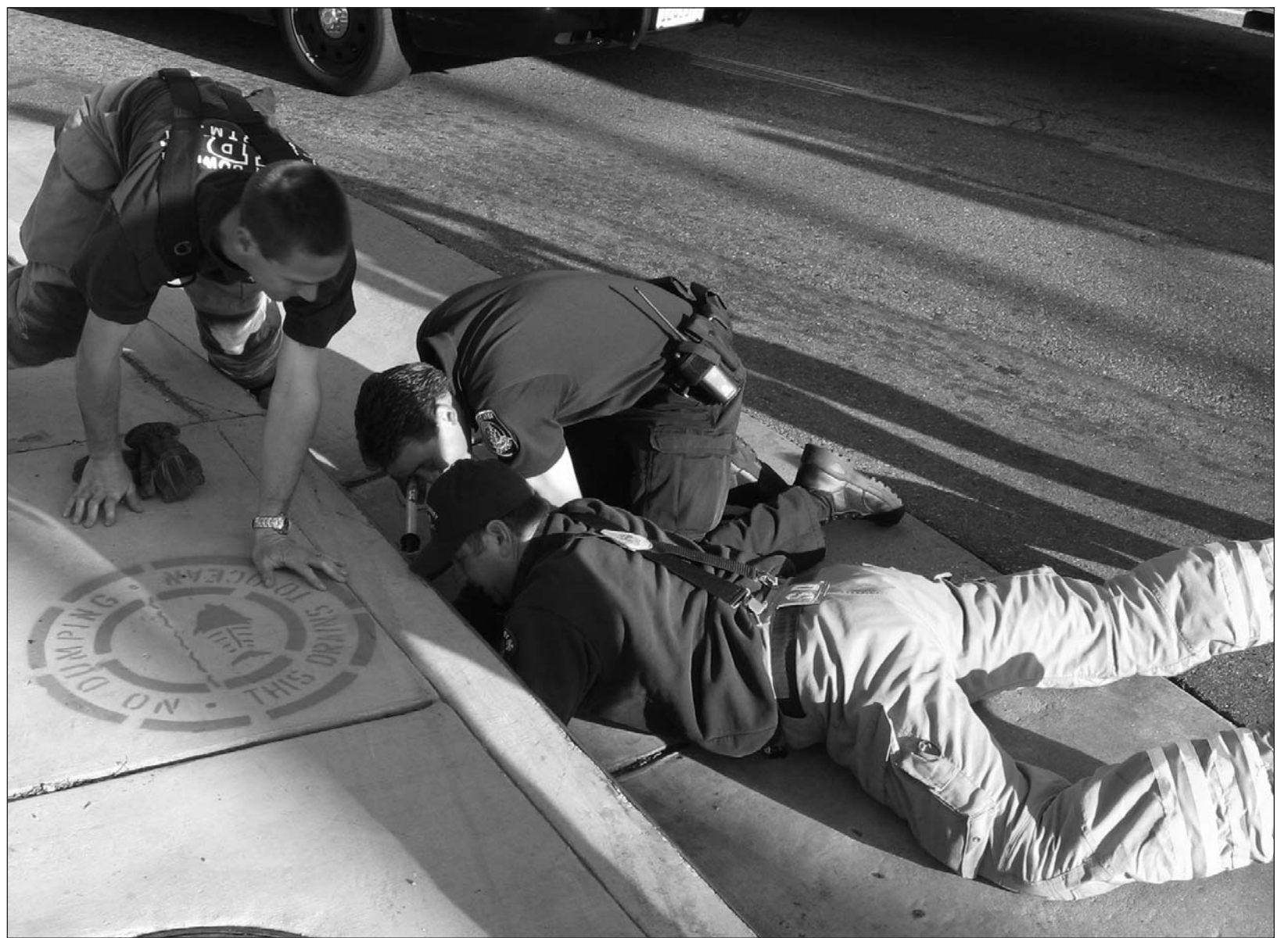
The Downey City Council on Tuesday approved a parking agreement with Fresh & Easy, permitting the store to use a city-owned parking lot on Firestone Boulevard. Fresh & Easy plans to move into the former Albertson's building at 8320 Firestone Blvd.

Fresh & Easy will occupy 15,000 sq. ft. of the 32,000 sq. ft. structure, city officials said. Fresh & Easy will sublease the remaining space.

Under the agreement, the city agreed not to build any structures on the lot and not to reduce the number of available parking spaces. Fresh & Easy will clean and re-stripe the lot, and will install five trees, tree wells and an irrigation system.

Fresh & Easy opened its first Southern California stores in late 2007, and announced plans for 122 more openings in California, Phoenix and Las Vegas. But amid reports of poor sales, the company took a three-month "time-out" and temporarily halted store openings.

Fresh & Easy markets are typically smaller than average grocery stores, and offer natural or organic foods at budget prices. Last week, Fresh & Easy unveiled a new line of fully-prepared family meals – designed to feed a family of four – that cost \$8 each.



Man throws puppy down storm drain

BY ERIC PIERCE,
CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – Downey police arrested a man after he allegedly threw a 4-month-old Shih Tzu puppy down a storm drain following an argument with his girlfriend, police officials said Monday.

Police arrested Juan Lopez, of Los Angeles, on charges of felony animal cruelty. He was released after posting \$20,000 bond.

According to witnesses, Lopez got out of the car and threw the puppy, named Chiquito, down a storm drain near Firststone Boulevard and Old River School Road.

Downey firefighters and officers from the Southeast Area

Animal Control Authority (SEAACA) rescued the puppy.

"The puppy is presumably doing fine at this point," said Capt. Aaron Reyes, director of operations for SEAACA. "Chiquito was a bit scared, but otherwise unharmed when our animal control officer (Robert Wilson) rescued him from the drain."

Sgt. Alex Irizabal of the Downey Police Department said Lopez threw the puppy down a drain after he became angry.

"He told us he got upset and threw the dog into the drain. He indicated he wanted the dog gone," Irizabal told the *Los Angeles Times*. "The good thing is we were there fast. Thank God the animal wasn't hurt."



Downey firefighters worked with SEAACA officers, including Robert Wilson, above, to save Chiquito, a 4-month-old Shih Tzu puppy tossed into a storm drain. Photos courtesy SEAACA

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CERT training planned next month

DOWNEY – The city's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is hosting a series of upcoming meetings for residents who want to help their neighborhood should a catastrophic disaster strike.

Volunteers will undergo training to assist the fire department directly following an earthquake, flood, or other major emergency. They will help assess damage after a disaster; extinguish small fires and teach fire safety; perform light search and rescue operations; perform triage and provide medical services to the injured; and organize the procurement of supplies.

Residents must be at least 18 years old to volunteer. CERT classes will be held April 18 and 25, and May 2 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. RSVP by calling the Downey Fire Department at (562) 904-7345.

Relay for Life meeting Wednesday

DOWNEY – A meeting to help plan and organize teams for the upcoming Relay for Life will be held Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. at the Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center.

The American Cancer Society's local Relay for Life will be held at Downey Adult School June 6-7.

The annual 24-hour walk begins at 9 a.m. on June 6, with the first lap symbolizing the unity in cancer survivors' hope for a cure. At 9 p.m., a Luminaria ceremony will honor the memories of family members lost to cancer.

The walk closes with the final lap June 7 at 9 a.m.

Residents are invited to participate in the walk, which usually draws teams from several local businesses, schools and service groups.

For information on how participate, call Sharon Newberg at (562) 940-6211.

E-waste collection tomorrow

DOWNEY – West Middle School will be collecting e-waste tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. as part of a fundraiser supporting the school's students.

Residents can dispose of their broken or unwanted televisions, computers, monitors, printers, scanners, circuit boards, copiers, fax machines, audio visual equipment, CD and DVD players, telephones, cell phones, and most other electronic devices.

If you have a large number of items, or something too big to bring, call Omni Technics at (562) 627-1910.

Items that can not be collected include large household appliances, broken glass, fluorescent devices, batteries, toxic materials, or unsafe-to-handle products.

West Middle School is at 11985 Old River School Rd.



Maria Reyes, of Downey, and Michael Troli, of Rancho Cucamonga, will be married May 16 at St. Anthony's Church in Upland. The future bride, daughter of Teresa Rojo of Downey, graduated in 1995 from Cal State Dominguez Hills. She is a civil servant. The future groom, son of Nick and Elizabeth of Upland, graduated in 1987 from Upland High School. He is a bank manager.

Bus trip to Pechanga April 6

DOWNEY – The Woman's Club of Downey is sponsoring a bus trip to the Pechanga Resort and Casino on April 6.

The bus will leave the Woman's Club at 8 a.m. and return between 5:30-6 p.m. Cost is \$6 for Woman's Club members or \$11 for non-members, and includes a \$5 casino voucher.

Bingo is played on the bus and guests must be at least 21 years old. Funds raised by the trip will go towards the club's scholarship fund.

For reservations, call Jeanine Keys at (562) 923-6620 or Doris Patterson at (562) 869-0377.

Council: City revises contract with CalMet, seeks bids for street resurfacing.

Continued from page 3

couple citing economic hardship after being victimized by unscrupulous contractors; the city attorney meanwhile cited the city's statutory obligation to safeguard it against potentially serious litigation were it to violate both letter and spirit of both federal and state Clean Air Act laws; in the end, after an extended and circuitous appeal-and-Council discussion, the Council directed staff to look at

alternative ways with which to assist the couple;

•Approved the first ever amendment to the Solid Waste Handling Agreement executed by the city with Calmet Services, Inc. on Jan. 1, 2006; the amendment, a result of a one-year period of analysis and negotiation by both staff and outside consultant, and which arose because of "unclear language in the contract," revolves around certain items including: a rate adjustment across the board of 7 percent, effective April 1, 2009; a

new annual rate adjustment formula for future years to be implemented on April 1 of each year (rates will be adjusted accordingly up or down on April 1, 2013 if it's determined that Calmet is earning a profit of more or less than 10 percent); and bin service roll-out charges will apply to bins that have to be moved more than 10 feet or are located in bin enclosures;

•Appropriated \$5,000 from the SB 2766 AQMD fund (a special revenue fund—Fund #22), for the

assessment from Gateway Cities Council of Government needed for a special study which will evaluate the requirements of SB 375. SB 375 (Transportation Planning) requires local governments to identify land uses and transportation strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

•Approved the plans and specifications for a citywide residential street pavement rehabilitation project submitted by Kabbara Engineering for the rehabilitation and resurfacing of 57 residential neighborhood streets at various locations, and granted authority to advertise for bids for Cash Contract No. S.S. 571;

•Approved the agreement with KFM Engineering, Inc. for the preparation of plans, specifications and engineer's estimate, as well as bid documents, for Phase 3A of the Lakewood Blvd. Improvement Project (between 5th St/Cecilia St. And Florence Ave.), in an amount not to exceed \$161,000;

•Proclaimed March 28 as Arc Walk for Independence Day;

•Presented a certificate of recognition to Ahmed Husain, senior civil engineer, "for his exemplary work" with the Public Works Department since 2000;

•Presented a certificate of appointment to Dorothy Van Zuilen, Emergency Preparedness Committee; and

•Presented the mayor's Diakonia (servant) award to Downey Unified School District board member Martha Sodemani, for her "multidimensional service" to Downey's citizens/residents; recipient said afterwards that she was "humbled and touched deeply" by the award, first given to philanthropist Dr. Mary Stauffer;

The third and wrap-up segment of the City Council Priority Workshop, designed to integrate departmental goals and priorities with those of the City Council, is scheduled for March 31 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall chambers. The first two sessions were held on Feb. 14 and March 21.

The next regular public meeting of the Council will be at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14 at City Hall, 11111 Brookshire Ave.



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POET'S CORNER

Respect Mother Earth

Open your eyes little one, do you see the sky and feel the sun?
It's so full of energy and shines so bright,
the beauty of nature is a wonderful sight.
It's as pure as you, outside and in with no sign of any evil sin.
Treat Mother Earth right for this is your home,
she has so many beautiful places for you to roam.
Keep it clean and you will see just how happily life can be,
for you and your future family.

—Michael Walker,
Downey
(inspired by his son)

A Working Marriage

I hate my life
I hate my wife
I date my strife
I met my wife
I wed her right
I made her bride
I paid the price
I get yelled at night
She excels my plight
expels my whites
Hardly ever says I'm bright
But she will be there tonight.

Will your words of love ever touch
the ground you swear they touch upon
Or will they be matters of another time
like the broken door and our unmowed lawn?
I hope you notice my new hairdo
I meticulously worked on a look you can't
possibly refuse
I would work on a dinner and wine
If there were the time.

—James Hernandez,
Downey

Untitled

"Begin again," she said
"Try again" she murmured from the couch
And I turned my glass inward
to a time my tie hung loose about my neck
and Kafka mattered.

"I'm sure it will get better
her white arms about me.
And I thought about time and doorknob
I thought about tomorrow's obligations
and all the weeded sorrows

The glass broke
the light slammed shut
"Begin again" she said...

Tecate teachings
when a hot sun cooks your skin tight
and leaves no space for neckties

Dos Equis wisdom says you wait
for the cool of the evening.
All the Budweisers and Miller-Lights
in the States
aren't worth one Mexican beer
in the heat of Sonora summer.

Stuffed animals are the caresses we never got
I think a lot, you know...
Caramel candy is the lover we somehow never met
I think a lot, I assure you...
The scent of roses
gentle, yet persistent
is the promise of beauty undisclosed
I think a lot, you notice?

Good wine in a crystal glass is often
all I ask
it's the anesthetic for what I thought
I knew
before,
"Begin again," she said.
—John Quincy Adams

Spring of Hawaii

Snow white misty spray
From rolling white caps
On troubled seas of gray

Her spirit from the deep
Bursts up and parts
The solemn clouds
to touch that fiery orb
That rests on a pot of gold
Her rays reach out
And touch each scattered cloud
Blue skies are painted
With red and gold

For me ---
Across the shining sea
A brilliant path
To my Blue Hawaii
—Leona Swanson,
Downey

Go, Arc, go

By Eric Pierce

If I ever strike it rich in Vegas, hit the California Lottery, or inherit a vast fortune from a wealthy oil-tycoon uncle, the first thing I'm going to do is open a business.

Maybe a coffee shop. Or a used bookstore. Something – anything – to keep my mind occupied.

The second thing I'm going to do is hire an employee from Arc of Southeast Los Angeles County.

It will be the best business decision I'll ever make.

Arc employees are the most hard-working, dedicated employees I've ever encountered. If you don't believe me, call Kevin MacDonald, executive director of Arc, and arrange for a free tour of their brand new stainless-steel kitchen.

I took a tour two weeks ago and was amazed at the quality of food being produced. The consumers were baking huge, scrumptious-looking muffins, bigger than those from Mimi's Café.

And the consumers – who all suffer from some form of developmental disability – weren't simply doing busy work. They were sticking their arms into hot ovens, slicing vegetables, washing dishes using industrial-sized dishwashers used by major hotel chains, and sanitizing the kitchen. The County Health Department holds Arc to the same standards as any other restaurant.

A majority of the consumers don't need constant supervision. They're independent, self-motivated employees. They're happy to work, and they don't need somebody holding their hand.

What Arc consumers need is an opportunity, not a handout. They need a chance to prove they can be just as productive – if not more so – than everybody else with a job. The recession has created a rough job market, but as MacDonald points out, the unemployment rate among people with developmental disabilities is somewhere around 80 percent.

As I watch Arc consumers in action, I wonder how that can be.

The Arc Walk for Independence is tomorrow at Stonewood Center, and it's the community's chance to show Arc our support. Registration begins at 7 a.m., and the cost is only \$10. ABC-7 television reporter Gene Gleason will emcee, and the Laker Girls will lead the crowd in stretches.

Go, Arc, go.

City Council has their priorities straight

By Henry Veneracion, Staff Writer

No one probably expected the City Council Priority Workshop to stretch over three sessions, with the third and final session scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, but no one is complaining. If anything, it has so far accomplished at least two important things: 1) a comprehensive and detailed articulation of various departmental operations, along with 2) their 'wish lists,' reflecting must-have priorities and those conditional on the loosening of budget constraints with the advent of better economic times.

In other words, the presentations so far by the Police, General Services, Community Development, Emergency Management, Fire, Community Services, and Public Works departments which, including Special Projects, city manager Gerald Caton oversees, have provided a rare glimpse into the inner workings of the departments. That of Special Projects concludes the departmental presentations Tuesday, after which the City Council, as scheduled and as the policy-making group, will attempt to infuse the departments with *its* vision and own set of priorities. At the center of all this of course is the seasoned and pragmatic Caton and analytic, no-beating-around-the-bush assistant city manager Lee Powell.

The way some of the announced priorities of the members of the City Council, representing as they do their different constituencies, converge, is interesting. For example, both Councilmembers Dave Gafin and Luis Marquez would like to establish a dog park "somewhere" in the city, while they, along with Mayor Mario Guerra, are in agreement about the city going 'green' as well as instituting traffic calming measures.

Better marketing strategies for promoting Downey are in the minds of Mayor Pro Tem Anne Bayer (through an enhanced website, booklets, etc.), Guerra (through a citywide, unified 'branding' plan) and Marquez (through a streamlined permit process and enhanced training of city staff). Gafin and Roger Brossmer are for restructuring the Downey Theatre, while Guerra, Marquez and Brossmer want the installation of security cameras citywide. Marquez and Brossmer are of the same mind about a more aggressive grant funding search posture to take advantage of little noticed grant opportunities.

There are also the unique priorities of each council member. Gafin suggests increased parking at the Lakewood Boulevard Green Line station, while envisioning additional parking at the civic center, "possibly a parking structure," he said. Guerra said the city should attract/find youth-oriented businesses and possibly entertainment for youth teens, and would work towards promoting completions of abandoned structures throughout the city. Marquez desires a more regular update of Downey crime statistics and, echoing Brossmer's intent to push for a city manager evaluation plan, would not mind establishing an annual review and evaluation process for each city department.

Considering the seriousness with which the City Council and the whole city administrative staff have approached this Priority Workshop exercise, which Guerra surmises is a first in Downey's history, it can only enrich city governance.



Henry Veneracion

Letters to the Editor:

Anti-war protest

Dear Editor:

There was an anti-war protest on March 21 and a few thousand people showed up.

That evening, at 11 p.m., CBS made a report about it that lasted only 17 seconds. The L.A. Times put it on page A-34, a very small article.

This event should have been on Page 1 on Sunday morning and CBS could have been longer than 17 seconds. This just shows us they think we should be there by not putting it on Page 1 or avoid showing us much news about people against this 6-year war.

— Mike Sandoval,
Downey

Community spirit

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Women's Guild of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church here in Downey, I want to acknowledge and thank several local businesses who generously donated door prizes to our fundraising St. Patrick's Day luncheon on March 14, honoring our past presidents. Their kindness helped make our luncheon a huge success. Our guests told us that this event was one of the best that they have ever attended.

We extend our gratitude to the following Downey businesses: Barry at the Elephant Bar restaurant at Downey Landing; Dana at Sizzler; Chuck Orrett at Carino's Italian Grill at Downey Landing; Mandy Arburua at Chili's at Downey Landing; Panda Express on Firestone Boulevard; HomeTown Buffet on Firestone; Rubio's Fresh Mexican Grill at Downey Landing; Jim at Ralph's grocery store on Lakewood Boulevard; Santa Mendoza at SuperCuts at Gallatin and Lakewood; and Martie's Hair Design and Adrian's Hair Design on Florence Avenue.

Thank you, also, to A Unique Florist on Lakewood Boulevard. You always take such good care of our organization and the corsages for each of our past presidents were perfect. Last but not least, our gratitude to Mark Sheldon at the Rio Hondo Event Center for providing the elegant accommodations for our event, the excellent service and the quality food.

I realize that the economy has made things more difficult for business, but this group did not hesitate to lend a helping hand to the Women's Guild for our fundraiser. With their help, we, in turn, are able to give back to the Downey community. We applaud their community spirit.

— Paula Mayfield,
Downey

Downey's newest church

Dear Editor:

Last Sunday, March 22, marked a day of celebration and rejoicing for the members of Desert Reign. About 350 supporters gathered together to celebrate this auspicious occasion of the new church building located at 11610 Lakewood Blvd. It was with great jubilation that they marched from the parking lot into their new building. The adults followed after the children who entered first, waving colorful banners and ribbons while singing songs of triumph as they entered the main sanctuary.

The story of this building dates back about six years, when the congregation outgrew their former building in Cerritos. What was then known as Stats on Lakewood Boulevard was purchased by the church. Facing zoning and building code issues, among other obstacles, the congregation began its long road to building a new structure. This took almost eight years to come to fruition. According to several members of the congregation I spoke with Sunday, it was all worth it.

The celebration inside brought tears to my eyes when I looked at church attendees singing and communing with God, and so engulfed in the worship as if the Holy Spirit was right there in the midst of everything. The worship was like nothing I have ever seen before with several guitarists, including the pastor of the church who brought the house down, and the worship leader dancing her way from one end of the stage to the other.

This experience is one that will last a lifetime in my cherished memories and I am looking forward to next Sunday with much anticipation.

For further information, feel free to visit the church's website at www.desertreign.org or call the church office at (562) 861-6011.

— Irene Hernandez,
Downey



Obama's change

Dear Editor:

Well, how do you like the "change" so far?

Here are only a few of the wonderful changes brought about by our new president and TV personality, Barack Obama, and our "love to spend someone else's money" Congress:

1. Stimulus package.
2. Another "bill" (a third one is now being asked for). If at first you don't succeed, try the same stupid thing again.
3. Bailout bills – you know, AIG, Citibank, Bank of America, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, etc.

Does anyone reading this letter care enough about their country to call these jokers every day until they listen to us? The congressional switchboard is (866) 340-9281.

Unless he's auditioning for a TV show, I wish President Obama would stay off Leno's show and other TV programs and stay in D.C. and play president. Reassure him that the campaign is over and he won; tell him Air Force One is not a toy and costs hundreds of thousands of dollars every time he uses it.

— Elsa Van Leuven,
Downey

Perfect time to start your own business

CERRITOS – Now is a great time to start your own business and seek alternatives to traditional employment, according to the Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Investment Board (SELACO WIB).

"People who choose to start small businesses not only improve their own lives, but improve their communities and help create jobs," SELACO WIB said in a news release. "Now is the time for innovation and flexible thinking... a time to take a good idea and run with it."

SELACO WIB will host a seminar, "Be Your Own Boss," Tuesday from 9-11 a.m. inside its offices at 10900 E. 183rd St., Suite 350, in Cerritos.

The seminar is \$25 and will be taught by Sue Hunter of Dynamic Concepts, a consultant and business owner for more than 20 years.

To register, call Marjean Clements at (562) 402-9336, ext. 1252, or e-mail her at marjeanc@selaco.com.

Why local newspapers matter

Contributed by Glenn Scherer

This February, Denver's Rocky Mountain News died. In March, The Tucson Citizen followed. Meanwhile hundreds of other American newspapers reduced staff and declared themselves in significant economic trouble.

Many commentators have lamented the passage of local newspapers; others foretell a not yet arrived golden age of electronic news reportage. But few have mentioned one of the biggest potential losers in the demise of print publishing: our local environment — the clean air, water, land, forests, beaches, wetlands and wildlife that enrich our communities.

Since the days of muckraking reporter Upton Sinclair and his establishment-shaking revelations about a corrupt Chicago meat packing industry, responsible local investigative journalists have shone a withering light on corporate polluters, unscrupulous developers, dishonest officials, and incompetent environmental regulators — thereby making our hometowns better, safer, more enjoyable places to live.

Likewise, local activists have relied on community newspapers for accurate unbiased reporting. With little or no money to buy publicity, environmental activists, like Love Canal's Lois Gibbs, scribbled outraged but informed Letters to the Editor, or sponsored public meetings and protests that were sure to attract a reporter from the local paper. That's one way activists marshal grassroots troops against environmental injustice.

In Anniston, Alabama, for example, it was a neighborhood group called the Community Against Pollution (CAP) that in the late 1990's spoke up for West Anniston, "a part of town that is largely poor, largely black, largely forgotten, and largely polluted," according to John Fleming, then The Anniston Star's editorial page editor. CAP led the charge against a grossly negligent Monsanto Corporation that let toxic PCBs leach into soils, and an equally negligent Alabama Department of Environmental Management, "more of a permit facilitator for industry than a protector of the environment," said Fleming.

But it was The Anniston Star's reporting about CAP, including the filing of a lawsuit, that helped bring the issue to the attention of the rest of the city and the state, and moved the US Environmental Protection Agency to act. The paper's reputation for integrity and truth-telling helped shine a light on West Anniston's plight. And corruption — whether in the form of toxic waste or government malfeasance — can't stand much light.

You'll find thousands of "light bringing" stories like that of West Anniston in big city editions, mid-size dailies and small town weeklies. One of the most instructive recent examples I can think of is that of the

New Orleans Times-Picayune, which reported the likelihood of Mississippi River levee failures a year before Hurricane Katrina, along with an obvious reason for those failings: the diversion of federal funds away from levee construction to the Iraq War by the Bush administration.

But every example isn't a matter of life or death. Without the small newspaper in my hometown of Vernon, New Jersey, activists couldn't have defeated a cell phone tower slated for construction within eyeshot of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, or the illegal trading of a state wildlife management area for a proposed 165-unit condo complex; or the demolition of a Revolutionary War-era tavern for a Burger King. Those battles played out on the pages of The Vernon News, with both sides vying for the people's hearts and minds. This is democracy at work, even if it is democracy writ small, not large.

So if you are looking for the next big, breaking, nationally important environmental story, don't go first to CNN or Google News. Rather look for those stories percolating upwards from the pages of your community newspaper.

Or at least that is the way things were. In a 2008 editorial, John Fleming of The Anniston Star summed up the greatest worry of many involved in community journalism: "If local media no longer is local, how does it fulfill one of its most essential roles: informing the community in times of peril?"

Fleming was asking this question about a local radio station that had recently been mechanized and so failed to report an oncoming tornado. He might however just as readily have asked what would have happened if there had been no local paper to trumpet the peril posed by PCBs to the people of West Anniston?

As our economy implodes, and deregulated corporate shenanigans reach unbelievable heights, it would be foolish for us to imagine that no company out there is quietly trying to dispose of toxic waste in somebody's backyard, or that state or federal regulators might not be asleep at the switch as that waste gets dumped.

The best thing you can do to defend against such possibilities in your community? Support your local newspaper. Buy a subscription. Read every edition.

Glenn Scherer is co-editor of Blue Ridge Press. His columns about the environment have appeared on the Op Ed pages of small town and big city newspapers across the nation. © 2009 Blue Ridge Press

The Downey Patriot

STAFF

Jennifer DeKay-Givens	Publisher/Adv. Director
Eric Pierce	City Editor
Henry Veneracion	Staff Writer
Scott Cobos	Staff Writer
Dorothy Michael	Display Advertising
Linda Larson	Classified Advertising
Jonathan Fox	Production
Gibran Latif	Webmaster

TEL (562) 904-3668 | FAX (562) 904-3124 | Hours Monday-Friday 9a.m. - 3p.m.
8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240 | www.thedowneypatriot.com

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Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer



They're twisted and enlarged, they're purple and blue, and sometimes they swell and ache by the end of the day. Everybody knows someone with varicose veins. This makes sense; over half of American women and just under half of American men suffer from some sort of vein problem. Let's explore together what varicose veins are and why they occur.

The heart pumps blood through the body, which carries with it oxygen and nutrients. Arteries carry the blood from the heart toward the different body parts, and veins carry the spent blood back to the heart. Thus, arteries act as a high-pressure hose, but veins must rely on muscle contractions in order to pump the blood back to the heart. Varicose veins develop when the valves in the veins become faulty, and the walls become weakened. Normally these one-way valves act as flaps to keep blood flowing efficiently, usually against gravity. When the valves malfunction, however, they leak backward and blood pools. This causes pressure to build up, which weakens, enlarges, and twists the vein. Spider veins are caused in a similar manner, but are a milder problem. Although most varicose veins are found in the legs and feet, any vein can become varicose.

The causes of varicose veins are many. Unfortunately, the biggest risk factors are out of your control: having a family history of the problem, aging, and being female. Hormonal changes also increase the risk, including entering puberty, taking birth control pills, pregnancy, and menopause. Pregnancy also leads to more varicose veins because the increased amount of blood flow causes veins to enlarge. The expanding uterus puts pressure on the veins in the pelvic cavity, which increases pressure on circulation in the lower extremities. Each additional pregnancy can lead to more and worse varicose veins. Obesity, prolonged standing, and leg injuries can all increase risks. Even excessive sun exposure can increase spider veins in those of us with fair complexions.

The most common symptoms are legs that feel achy, tired, heavy, or numb; burning, throbbing, muscle cramping or swelling in the lower extremities; darkening of the skin; and an itching or irritated rash in the legs.

Aside from being unsightly, what dangers do varicose veins present? While spider veins don't pose a medical risk, varicose veins usually get bigger and can cause health problems. They can affect the general circulation of the body, causing pooling of blood in the lower extremities and poor blood return back to the heart. This in turn can increase the risk for blood clots, infection, skin sores, and ulcerations.

A doctor's evaluation will

begin with a good history and physical. The discussion will include any injury to the legs, symptoms, history of blood clots, and the story of how the problem progressed. In order to make the diagnosis, the doctor will examine the legs and feet. Varicose veins are easy to see, especially when standing. The doctor will also note any tender areas, swelling, skin color changes, ulcers, and other signs of skin breakdown. An ultrasound test may be indicated to see if the valves are functioning normally, or to check for blood clots.

The most common treatments for varicose veins are support hose, leg elevation, and weight loss. These non-invasive therapies may be sufficient. However, whether for medical or for cosmetic reasons, many people pursue more invasive options. The methods described below are effective but, as with all surgeries, may also be expensive, painful, and have side effects such as bleeding and infection.

- **Sclerotherapy** can be very effective and is the most common invasive treatment for both spider and larger varicose veins. A solution is injected into a vein, causing its walls to swell, stick together, and seal shut. This stops the flow of blood and turns the vein into scar tissue. In a few weeks, the vein fades. Since the procedure does not involve anesthesia and can be done in the doctor's office, many people start here.

- **Laser surgery** is a newer technique for smaller spider veins. The vein is exposed to strong bursts of light, causing it to slowly fade and disappear. This treatment takes 15 to 20 minutes, and is done two to five times.

- **Endovenous** techniques have replaced old surgical methods for some patients with severe varicose veins. It is also performed in the doctor's office. A very small catheter is inserted into the vein, which emits a radiofrequency or laser energy that shrinks and seals

Beware deceptive food labels

Love your morning cheerios? It's hard to miss the giant banner stretched across the middle of the cereal box that reads: "Lower your cholesterol 4% in 6 weeks." Turns out there's some fine print behind that health promise. When combined with a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol, one may reap those cholesterol lowering benefits, but not by consuming Cheerios alone.

A new special report from the editors of Consumer Reports Health looks at several grocery-aisle gotchas, cautioning that one can't make assumptions about food based on its packaging. The report recommends that consumers think twice when they see marketing terms that sounds like health claims. Some of those terms include "Organic," "Natural," "Whole Grains," and "Cage Free."

Here are a few "gotchas" from the report:

- The "All Natural" claim confuses the vast majority of consumers, according to a 2007 poll by Consumer Reports. Case in point: Snapple Tea carries the label "All Natural," when in fact the bottled tea contains high-fructose corn syrup, a highly processed form of

the vein.

- Finally, **surgical ligation and stripping** is the old technique of tying off and removing the bad vein. Blood flow shifts to the remaining veins. The surgery is done under anesthesia in an operating room.

I encourage you to reduce your risk of developing new varicose and spider veins, and to make any symptoms you may feel milder and more manageable:

- Wear sunscreen to protect your skin from spider vein formation.

- Keep your weight as close to your healthy target as possible.

- Maintain a low salt diet to decrease water retention in the legs.

- Eat a high fiber diet to reduce the risk of constipation. Straining increases the risk of varicose veins. Cross your legs at the ankles, but not higher up.

- Elevate your legs when resting as much as possible.

- Avoid standing or sitting for significant amounts of time. When you stand, shift your weight from one leg to the other every few minutes. When you sit, stand up and move about frequently, or wiggle your feet to keep the muscles contracting.

- Wear elastic support stockings if necessary, and avoid tight clothing that constricts around the waist, groin, or legs.

- Exercise regularly to improve leg strength, circulation, and vein strength. Walking or running is excellent.

- Consult with your doctor if you have questions or concerns regarding your varicose veins.

As always, I wish you good health!

Dr. Alan Frischer is former chief of staff and current chief of medicine at Downey Regional Medical Center. Write to him in care of this newspaper at 8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240.

sugar. Part of the confusion results from the fact that the Food and Drug Administration does not officially define the term "natural."

There are three tiers of "organic" labeling - "100% organic," "organic," and "made with organic ingredients" - and they all mean different things.

A chicken that gets as little as 5 minutes of open-air access daily qualifies as "free range."

To read the full report on food labeling, go to www.ConsumerReportsHealth.org

Helping women overcome alcohol abuse

Six million women in the U.S. abuse or are dependent on alcohol, according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

Frequent binge drinking in women's colleges increased by 124 percent between 1993 and 2001. Nearly 21.6 million Americans are in need of but have not received treatment for an alcohol problem, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2003).

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, and Brookhaven Retreat, a multidisciplinary treatment facility that helps women overcome emotional trauma and addiction challenges, is working to raise awareness about the number-one drug problem in the United States: alcohol.

"Alcohol abuse is a tool women use to numb out emotional pain, often not realizing that an addiction has developed because they are doing something perceived as legal and social, and therefore okay," said Jacqueline Dawes, the owner and founder of Brookhaven Retreat. "There are millions of American women trapped by alcohol dependency who, because of fear, shame, and the whole stigma associated with alcohol abuse, feel too afraid to seek help. They need to understand that the addiction is treatable and there is hope."

The trained professionals at Brookhaven Retreat strive to help women understand how their need for a numbing-out escape began. What caused them to start using alcohol as a tool to relax, sleep, and hide, when the stress and fear were mounting? And why can they not find the strength to stop?

According to Dawes, alcohol conceals the real issues these women are facing, including depression, low self-esteem, trauma, and disempowerment.

"The alcohol is the tip of the iceberg, and is only a small part of what is really going on with the person," said Dawes. "At Brookhaven, we offer no judgment. It is overwhelmingly frightening to seek treatment, but that is the first step to recovery and is undoubtedly the most crucial."

Alcohol dependency is shrouded by many myths, one of which is that a person chooses to be an alcoholic. Many times, friends and family members think the person should be able to exert self-control, when in fact, the emotional breakage existing within the person has made it unbearable for them to live without their dependency on alcohol. Dawes says that these women have formed a relationship with the alcohol that makes them feel like they need it to function in society, and that once the dependency has been established, women must undergo residential treatment in

order to disengage the dependency.

Brookhaven Retreat's philosophy is that each person must receive individualized attention, administered by highly-trained staff in order to facilitate long-term recovery. This recovery grows from an introspective journey to define the emotional breakage, followed by the development of life skills that allow lasting maintenance of emotional wellness.

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- Feeling guilt about drinking
- Drinking to calm nerves, forget worries or to boost a sad mood
- Unsuccessful attempts to cut down/stop drinking
- Lying about or hiding drinking habits

- Feeling irritable, resentful or unreasonable

- Causing harm to oneself or someone else as a result of drinking

- Needing to drink increasingly greater amounts in order to achieve desired effect

- Identifying medical, social, family or financial problems caused by drinking

For more information about how Brookhaven can help women with alcohol problems begin the recovery process, call 877-817-3422 or visit www.brookhavenretreat.com.

Report: Hispanics less likely to fill prescription due to cost

Struggling to meet health care costs, 29 percent of Hispanic adults said they had decided against filling a script for cost reasons, according to a national poll conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center. Survey respondents said that they also economized by asking their doctor for free samples, skipping doses, taking smaller doses, or sharing a prescription with someone else on the same medicine.

Consumer Reports' (CR) poll demonstrates that the majority of Hispanic consumers in the U.S. are struggling with healthcare costs. When asked about how easy or difficult it is to afford healthcare, 66 percent responded "difficult" or "very difficult," including 88 percent of those without health insurance. Three-quarters of consumers earning under \$50,000 and those born outside the U.S. or Puerto Rico reported difficulty dealing with cost, along with nearly 7 in 10 of those under the age of 55.

CR's poll shows a large portion of Hispanics do not have health insurance (44 percent). Those most

likely to be without health coverage were ages 18-34 (55 percent), in households earning less than \$25,000 per year (54 percent), or foreign born (56 percent).

Hispanics without health insurance are more than twice as likely as those with health insurance to forego a prescribed medication because of cost. They are nearly twice as likely to skip a dose to make a prescribed medication last longer.

Moreover, one-quarter of uninsured Hispanics reported taking a smaller dose to make a prescription last longer versus 16 percent of Hispanics with health insurance. The uninsured also are more than 4

times as likely to share a prescription with someone else. This "sharing" trend is also popular with the younger Hispanics ages 18-34 years -- 22 percent said they had shared.

"We were surprised by the extent to which Hispanic consumers are cutting corners and the risks they're taking to save money. The most important thing is for patients to talk to their doctors about the cost of medicines. This can be challenging for some patients, especially where there are language and cultural barriers," said Dr. Jose Luis Mosquera, medical expert for Consumer Reports.

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Word of MOUTH

by Soheir S. Azer, D.D.S.

The most common treatment for periodontal disease ("scaling and root planing") involves removal of plaque and tartar above and below the gum line. By smoothing the root surface, the rough surfaces to which bacteria-laden plaque and tartar like to adhere are removed. In addition, smooth root surfaces encourage gum tissue to reattach itself. In some cases, antibiotic gel is also injected by syringe into the pockets that form between teeth and gums. While clinical evidence supports the use of antibiotic gel, it should only be used in conjunction with scaling and root planing and not as a replacement for the standard treatment or surgery. Antibacterial gel alone does not stop gum and bone degeneration, which contributes to tooth loss.

Deep cleaning and other periodontal treatments can largely be avoided if you are careful with your cleaning. One of the ideas of having regular check-ups is to avoid such problems developing. We'll be more than happy to show you how to clean your teeth properly if you are unsure how to do it. Periodontal disease approaches silently. It may progress painlessly, producing few obvious signs. We're located at 10800 Paramount Blvd., Suite 307, where we offer complete dental care for the entire family. Please call (562) 923-3714 to schedule an appointment. You can trust your dental health to our experience and knowledge. We want to keep you smiling.

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Miss Downey, Miss Teen Downey, along with their courts, are responsible for attending city and Downey Chamber of Commerce events. They also ride in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day. Photo by Paul Heidecker

Miss Downey: First public event will be Arc Walk tomorrow.

Continued from page 1

asked how the judges were selected. She said judges cannot have any prior involvement with the city of Downey, whether as a resident or city employee.

"We don't want favoritism," said Domen.

The 2009 Miss Downey Princesses Court consists of Sarah Del Rio, Natalia Amador, Roxy Arteaga and Alicia Winter. The Miss Teen Downey Princesses Court includes Lauren Brasov, Katarian Schweitz and Mariah Picou.

"I am extremely excited," said Morales, Miss Downey. "I've actually competed before and I've always placed really well but I've never really won a crown, so I wanted to give it one more shot, and I actually still can't believe it." Morales said it was hard to believe that she was the winner over the other contestants, whom she referred to as "magnificent girls".

"It still feels like it's a dream," said Fernandez, after she was declared Miss Teen Downey. Fernandez said her favorite part of the pageant experience was meeting all the girls and the challenges

that it brought forth, and overcoming them.

"I'm happy," she said.

Not only was the pageant exciting for the winners, but the ladies said they enjoyed the experiences leading up to the competition.

"My favorite part was definitely meeting new people and just getting involved in the community," said Amador.

The ladies underwent several interviews with five judges the morning of the pageant, an important factor in the judges' final decision.

"I think that they were all so extremely talented and really forthcoming in their answers in interviews," said Myer. "I asked behind-the-door questions that kind of pulled something out about them, and they all had a lot of substance."

As the ladies excitedly take on their new duties, they are responsible for attending all big community events such as the Arc Walk for Independence, the annual Downey Holiday Lane Parade, ribbon cuttings, and helping to build and ride on the rose float.



Chris Bowen, an author and teacher at West Middle School, will sign copies of his book, "Our Kids: Building Relationships in the Classroom," on April 6 at the Downey City Library.

Downey teacher to speak, sign books

DOWNEY – Author and educator Chris Bowen will speak and sign books at the Downey City Library on April 6 from 7-8:30 p.m.

Bowen is the author of "Our Kids: Building Relationships in the Classroom." Bowen, who currently teaches at West Middle School, also taught reading and math at Lewis Elementary School in Downey. He was recently honored as "Teacher of the Year" in Los Angeles County.

Bowen's book is geared for teachers, parents and anyone who wants to improve their relationships with children.

"The key to success with children is building a personal relationship with each child," Bowen said. "There is a huge difference between being tough and being strong. Anybody can be tough...but it takes the strength of patience, empathy and honesty to build the more effective, lasting relationship."

At the free event, Bowen will discuss his experiences as a teacher and give tips for improving relationships at school and at home. Copies of his book will be available for purchase and signing, and light refreshments will be served.

To register, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 132.

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Renowned trumpeter Fred Mills will be a guest performer tomorrow night at First Presbyterian Church of Downey.

Brass ensemble in concert

DOWNEY – The Knox Brass Ensemble will perform tomorrow at 7:15 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Downey.

World-renowned trumpeter Fred Mills guest stars in an evening of music from Brazil, Argentina, Italy, the U.S., and more.

Some of the ensemble members have played with Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Mary J. Blige, Gianni, Wayne Newton and Yo-Yo Ma, and have provided music for video games and films.

Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Tickets can be purchased by calling (562) 861-6752 or at the church, located at the intersection of 7th Street and Downey Avenue.

New Century Singers to perform

DOWNEY – The New Century Singers will perform “Springtime Musical Favorites” at Downey Adult School’s OASIS program Monday at 3:45 p.m.

The New Century Singers are a 30-member professional women’s chorus “known for their beautiful harmony and exceptional performances.” Their programs include numerous show tunes, light classical, Americana and favorite seasonal specials.

The OASIS program welcomes all older adults and is located in the Harriett Paine Event Center at Downey Adult School.

Enrollment is free and begins at 2:45 p.m. The program begins at 3:45 and is followed by an optional dinner which may be purchased for \$3.50 at time of enrollment.

Downey Dial-a-Ride will provide transportation to those who qualify. For more information on OASIS, call (562) 940-6200.

Casino night tickets on sale

DOWNEY – Soroptimist International of Downey invites the community to “A Night at the Copacabana Casino” on April 17 at the Rio Hondo Event Center.

The event begins at 6:30 p.m. and will feature live music with a DJ, \$100 in scripts, silent auction, and more.

Pre-sale tickets are \$40 and available now. For tickets, contact Dorothy Pemberton at (562) 927-9908 or Monica Goel at mgoel@tldlaw.com.

All money raised will go to local high school scholarship winners.

Character Counts puppet show

DOWNEY – A puppet show about Character Counts will be presented at the April 8 meeting of the Downey Christian Women’s Club.

Irene McClanahan will make the presentation. The meeting’s guest speaker is Gloria Feralio, who will speak on “How Your Life Can Have a Happy Ending.”

The meeting begins at 11:45 a.m. at the Los Amigos Country Club. Men are invited to attend.

Cost for the buffet luncheon is \$13. Reservations are requested by calling Sonja at (562) 862-4347 or Jean at (562) 861-1114.

Comedy fundraiser April 4

DOWNEY – Improv groups, stand-up comedy, and dancers from OnStage Dance Center will headline a comedy fundraiser April 4 at the Downey Theatre to benefit the Downey Rose Float Association.

The event is titled “A Night of Comedy,” and proceeds will help with the construction of Downey’s 2010 float, “Jewels of the Pacific.”

Tickets for the 7 p.m. show are \$10 and available by calling (562) 760-9880 or e-mailing chameleoncomedy@yahoo.com.

Easter Brunch

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Embassy Suites renovates property

DOWNEY – The Embassy Suites in Downey has completed a 3-month, \$8 million renovation that included an overhaul of all 219 suites.

The hotel also renovated its bathrooms and public areas, including the lobby, fitness center, meeting rooms and the Firestone Grill & Lounge.

The renovation also included a seismic retrofit of the building.

“The extensive renovation recently completed at the Embassy Suites in Downey will enable the hotel to provide guests with superior accommodations and a highly-satisfying stay overall,” said the hotel’s newly-appointed general manager, Maurice Casaus. “Our spacious suites will continue to appeal to business travelers by affording more space to work and relax than the average one-room hotel accommodations in the local market. Families also will continue to enjoy spreading out within the two separate rooms.”

The hotel, owned by RLJ Development and managed by Hilton Hotels Corporation, celebrated its grand re-opening with a large mixer that including the Downey, Commerce, Santa Fe Springs, Paramount and Vernon chambers of commerce.

The event carried an Academy Awards theme (including a Charlie Chaplin look-alike) and drew more than 350 guests. Chef Zaya, executive chef at the Firestone Grill & Lounge, catered the event.

Located at 8425 Firestone Blvd., the Embassy Suites is 18 miles from LAX and 10 miles from Long Beach Airport. The hotel features more than 6,000 square feet of meeting space, including seven meeting rooms, the Firestone Grill, and a complimentary business center, indoor heated pool, and a small gift shop.

All suites include a separate living area with a sofa bed, din-



The staff of Embassy Suites in Downey (above) celebrated their \$8 million renovation by hosting a Downey Chamber of Commerce mixer recently. The renovation included an overhaul of the property, including a seismic retrofit of the building.

At right, the Embassy’s newly-designed suites.



ing/work table, private bedroom and bath, hair dryers, MP3 clock radio, two TVs, two dual-line phones, high-speed Internet access, a wet bar, mini-refrigerator, microwave, an iron and ironing board, and a cooked-to-order breakfast each morning.

The hotel also provides guests with complimentary shuttle transportation within a 5-mile radius.

To make reservations, visit their website at www.losangelesdowney.embassy.com or call (562) 861-1900.

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I LOVE YOU, MAN R (11:30, 2:05, 4:50), 7:25, 10:10
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William Dubin was WWII veteran

DOWNEY – William (Bill) Arthur Dubin, a wholesale car dealer for 40 years and World War II veteran, passed away March 7.

He was born in Bedford, Iowa on Nov. 20, 1922 to Sam Dubin and Madge Bristow-Dubin.

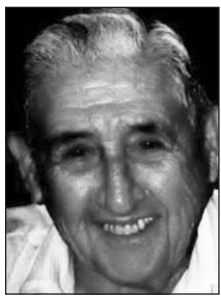
He was a sergeant in the Army Air Corps from 1942-1946, and worked on P-47 fighters during World War II.

A top basketball player in high school, he was a member of the Elk's Club and PGA.

He is survived by his sister, Roberta Linn, of Palm Desert; nephew, Fred Bell; and niece, Angela Vereen.

A celebration of life service will be held tomorrow at 1 p.m. at Forest Lawn Mortuary in Cathedral City.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested contributions in Dubin's name to St. Jude's Children's Hospital.



Anna Amelia Given lived to be 100

DOWNEY – Anna Amelia Given, known to friends and family as "Molly," passed away March 1.

Born in Cleveland on July 13, 1908, she and her husband, John Given, moved their family to Downey in 1957, shortly after a family vacation to Disneyland.

She was a member of the board of the League of Women Voters of Downey from 1965 to 1985, and helped increase memberships as Membership Chairman. She was also a volunteer with Meals on Wheels, a member of the American Association of University Women, and a supporter of other charitable organizations. She remained active well into her 90s.

Given graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1932 with a degree in Home Economics, and was a member of the Chi Omega sorority. While in college, she became the first female glider pilot in Ohio.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John Given, in 1975. She is survived by her three children, David (Joanne) Given of Lawrence, Kans., Susan Given of Downey, and Daniel (Janet) Given of Tustin; grandchildren, Ameer Lecoq of Apple Valley, Matthew (Cristi) Given of Rancho Santa Margarita, and Annaliese (Mark) Holt of Sacramento; step-grandchildren, Donald Beaton and Scott (Catherine) Beaton of Lawrence, Kans.; great-grandchildren, Jessica (Andrew) Hampton of Mobile, Ala., Melissa Webster of Del Rio, Tex., Molly, Blake and Emma Holt and Zoe Given; step-grandchild, Noah Beaton; and great-great-grandchild, Kurt Hampton.

A remembrance service will be held April 4 at Christ Lutheran Church in Downey at 10:30 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to the Salvation Army.



Funeral tomorrow for Glenn Daily, 95

DOWNEY – Downey resident Glenn Daily has passed away. He was 95.

He was born in New Hampton, Missouri on March 7, 1914. He was the second born to Fred and Frona Daily, one of 12 children. His early years were spent helping his family in the farming community in northwest Missouri.

Daily became a successful farmer. During those years he was an active board member of the hospital, school, bank and church.

The cold winters turned his attention to Southern California, where his brothers and sisters resided. He sold his 1,800-acre farm and everything that went with it and his family packed up and moved to Southern California.

Daily joined his brothers in their family business, where he established a new career path of apartment investments. During this time he was still interested in community involvement, and became an active member at Downey United Methodist Church and Downey Community Hospital. He also participated every year in the Downey beautification contests.

He is survived by two children, daughter Anna Marie (Bob) Brown, and son Ron Daily; grandchildren, John (Lisa) Petit, Kamryn Marie (Chloe) Ann, Ted (Janet) Petit, Megan Daily, and Michelle (Joshua) Daily.

A viewing will be held today at Miller-Mies Mortuary from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The funeral service is scheduled for tomorrow at 11 a.m. at Downey United Methodist Church. Graveside services will follow at 2 p.m. at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Downey Methodist Youth Group.



Downey Symphony Orchestra president Larry Lewis, right, receives \$17,000 donation from Jerry Wetzstein, Downey Kiwanis Foundation board chairman, in the presence of DUSD superintendent Dr. Wendy Doty, to cover the cost of Wednesday's symphony concert in which about 1,600 5th graders from DUSD and the city's private schools attended. The students' annual field trip is part of the Music in the Schools program sponsored by the Downey Symphony Guild designed to expose the children to an early familiarization with the delights of classical music.

Why kids should start their careers now

Internships can pay big dividends in the future, experts say

Ketaki Shiram doesn't like waiting. When she was 13, she dreamed of becoming a writer, so she sat down and wrote a novel. "Sorceress of the Himalayas" from Crystallius Press was published when she was 16. Now 17 and preparing for college, she is already reaping the benefits of early career development.

With unemployment claims at the highest level in history, and a recession that could last years, Ketaki believes that every teenager shouldn't just be thinking about what they want to do when they grow up – they should be acting on it. Moreover, she has some tips on how teenagers can start now on getting an edge on their competition in the future job market.

Internships – Even if it's an unpaid internship, it exposes you to what it's like to work at a real company in the field of your choice. Interested in being a TV reporter? Local newsrooms use interns for office help and to support the producers and talent. Want to be an engineer? Apply at an architectural firm or engineering company. Even if you just get coffee for executives, it exposes you to the working world and provides you an opportunity to learn from real professionals.

Volunteer – There are hundreds of non-profit charity organizations in every local community. Interested in business management? Volunteer to work in the office and watch how they run their business. Work with them in the field, or do promotional work to get experience on how to work with the media.

Apprenticeships – Some tradesman and craft shops still offer low-paid apprenticeships for young people interested in trades such as wood-working, cabinet-making, auto repair, and others.

Internships for students available

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe announced the availability of dozens of paid internships across the Fourth District (including Downey) through the Los Angeles County Arts Internship Program.

The positions are for 10 weeks and pay \$350 per week.

To support the internships, Los Angeles County has awarded grants totaling \$500,000 to 95 performing, literary, media and municipal arts organizations over the past 10 years. More than 1,100 college students have participated in the program since its inception in 2000.

Descriptions and contacts for the 125 internship positions are posted online at www.lacountyarts.org. Click on Internships, then 2009 Internship Positions.

Just Do It – If you're in the creative arts – writing, art, acting, singing – just go out and do it. There are tons of venues locally and online for writers and artists to display their work, sometimes even for pay. For performers, most cities have at least one community theater, valuable for getting on-stage experience.

Every guidance counselor and job counselor knows that it's about more than education these days – it's about experience. And who knows better than the kid who turned her dream into a reality decades before many other writers ever do?

"I started writing in elementary school, but it wasn't until I began writing "Sorceress" in 2004 that writing played a larger role in my life," says Ketaki. "Sorceress of the Himalayas has been an amazing experience to write and publish, because it has evolved along with me as I have grown over the past three years."

Cosmetology student on path of success

NORWALK – Bryan Griffith, of Downey, was one of two cosmetology students at Cerritos College to receive the \$500 City of Norwalk Cosmetology Scholarship.

The recently-established scholarship recognizes cosmetology students who volunteered at the City of Norwalk Locks of Love hair drive event last September.

"The event was an opportunity for women, men and children to donate their hair to cancer patients," said Gina Cosylyon, recreation coordinator

for the city of Norwalk, who presented the checks to Griffith and student Alecea Duran.

Coming from a family of hairstylists and barbers, Griffith's decision to enroll in the cosmetology program was a logical and natural choice. Griffith is vice president of the Cosmetology Club and, upon completing his associate degree in cosmetology and bachelor's in business, plans to open his own hair salon.

Bungkadanara lands scholarship at Cerritos

NORWALK – Downey resident Amy Bungkadanara was one of three Cerritos College students majoring in child development to receive the Alice Wang Scholarship.

The other recipients were Natalia Contreras, of Pico Rivera, and Thuhuong Mai, or Norwalk.

The scholarship was established in honor of Alice Wang, the wife of Cerritos College Foundation board member J.P. Wang. The Wangs actively support academic endeavors of low-income students through scholarships. Six \$500 scholarships are awarded annually to single parents who major in child development and demonstrate outstanding academics.

Bungkadanara grew up as the neighborhood babysitter. After learning that she was expecting a child of her own, she decided to begin studying child development.

Bungkadanara currently volunteers three hours each day at Kirkwood Christian School in Downey.

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Downey pitcher Jeremy Ruiz barely worked up a sweat as Downey cruised to a 29-0 win over Dominguez on Tuesday. The game was called after only five innings. Photo by Art Montoya

Mercy! Downey blows out Dominguez, 29-0

■ Mercy Rule halts game after only 5 innings. Dominguez accuses Downey of showboating.

By SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – A pair of home-runs in a single inning by second baseman Chris Munoz helped Downey fuel a 29-0 blowout of Dominguez on Tuesday at Yanez Field.

The Vikings were relentless in their attack against Dominguez, a team who hasn't fared well in the many years they've been part of the San Gabriel Valley League. In the game, Downey stole four bases and advanced on six wild pitches by Don pitchers.

In the bottom of the first inning, Cesar Valtierra started the party with a walk then stole two bases and scored on an error to give the Vikings their first of many runs to come in the game.

Still in the same inning, center-fielder Ivory Thomas reached on an error, got to third on a two-base error then got the pitcher to balk him in. Dominguez was called for three balks in the game and struggled to get anyone out.

After one inning, Downey was up 5-0 but was only feeling their opponents out. In the second inning came the onslaught where the Vikings scored six runs before recording an out and brought in 13 more runs before the inning ended, going up 24-0 with the crowd just settling in their seats.

During the inning, Munoz unloaded on a 2-0 pitch for a 3-run homerun over the right field wall. Later in the same inning Munoz hit another one out again to right field but on a 0-1 pitch with one runner on base.

Dominguez in the inning used three pitchers before getting back into the dugout.

Things started to get a little scrappy during the second inning when Dominguez manager Marc Huff came out of the dugout to complain about a Downey runner running outside the baseline on a

full-count-bases-loaded two-out pitch. Huff yelled over at the Downey dugout directing his comments toward Vikings manager Jess Gonzalez.

Huff barked at Gonzalez about his team's showboating saying that Downey's day will come. The umpires quickly tried to cool the flaring tempers in Dominguez's dugout after the comments were made.

With the game completely out of hand, Gonzalez removed his starting pitcher Jeremy Ruiz who went three innings giving up no runs but allowing a pair of walks. Thomas came in to close the door and assured the shutout, pitching two innings before the Mercy Rule was invoked.

The game exemplified the ailing baseball program over at Dominguez even with Major League Baseball building a baseball academy in the area. In league play, Dominguez has lost both games by at least 26 runs, losing their first game against Gahr 30-0.

Since the 2005 season, the Dominguez Dons have gone 4-43 in league play, never beating Gahr, Warren, Downey, or Paramount.

With the win, Downey is 1-1 in league play and travels to Lynwood today at 3 p.m. In the past, Downey has had great success against Lynwood, another struggling program in the SGVL. Since 2005, the Vikings have a 9-game winning streak against the Knights.

Bears win first game, regain swagger

By SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – After a tough pre-season, Warren baseball got off the mat and collected their first win of the season in their San Gabriel Valley League opener 6-4, scraping by Lynwood last Friday.

The Bears have struggled so far on the road with costly errors and too many mental lapses. But nothing helps build confidence like playing a team you've had great success against in the past. With

the win the Bears were able to recapture a little swagger.

Warren, like three other teams in the SGVL, haven't dropped a game to Lynwood since their 2005 campaign. Beating Lynwood helped bring their win streak to 10 games against the Knights.

Warren comes home for the first time in a while to face Gahr today at 3:15 p.m. As of late, Gahr has given the Bears trouble but the match up has always been a scrap at Warren.

Warren golfers stay perfect in league

By SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Jay Hoskins fired a +3 (39) at Rio Hondo Golf Course and helped Warren stay undefeated in league play defeating rival Downey 209-219 last Thursday.

Warren's top three golfers Hoskins, Javier Chavez, and Richard Lee all turned in scores that were better than Downey's Chris Saldana, who shot a +6 (42),

the best Viking round of the day.

Chavez finished one stroke behind Hoskins and Lee was close, only two strokes behind. The Bears move to 8-2 overall and look to challenge for the league title this year.

Vikings Brian Clarke shot a +7 (43) and Jon Strang turned in a +8 (44) on the day. Downey is 4-4 overall and 1-1 in league but are also considered to be factors in the league championship.

Father's Day golf tournament

DOWNEY – Sponsorships and donations are being accepted for the Light and Life Christian Fellowship Father's Day Golf Tournament on June 29.

The event will be at the Rio Hondo Golf Club and begins with a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m.

For more information, call Nathan Sharp at (562) 862-0910.

Vietnam veterans celebrated

WHITTIER – Vietnam veterans will be honored at a special event Sunday at California High School in Whittier, 9800 Mills Ave.

Custom cars and motorcycles will be on display, as well as military vehicles and memorabilia. There will be a climbing wall for children, and retail and food vendors.

The event is free and the public is invited. For more information, call (562) 696-3965 or e-mail whvvd@aol.com.

CalPERS fair this weekend

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Convention Center will host a free retirement planning fair this weekend for members of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS).

The two-day event will be held today from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

CalPERS members include all state employees, all classified public school employees, all Cal State employees, Los Angeles Unified School District employees, and more.

CalPERS members who attend the fair will receive information on benefits, programs, and services to help them plan for a financially secure retirement.

More detailed information about the fair, along with maps and workshop schedules, is available online at www.calpers.ca.gov.

Warren boosters plan fundraiser

DOWNEY – The Warren High School Football Boosters invites the community to its first fundraiser for the 2009-10 football season, to be held at Santa Anita Race Track on April 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The boosters club has reserved the Santa Anita infield for Warren High School supporters. The infield provides a family picnic setting which includes a children's play area.

Cost is \$20 per adult, and includes admission, parking, daily program and a meal. Children 17 and under are admitted free, but meals are \$5.

Tickets to the event will be sold until March 29. Due to space availability, same-day tickets will not be available.

To purchase tickets, call Cesar Lopez at (562) 805-4021 after 1 p.m. or e-mail cnlprod@yahoo.com.



The Downey AYSO boys 12U cultural exchange team won first place in a tournament last weekend in Lancaster. The team went undefeated, and allowed only one goal in five games. The team is coached by Johnny Lemucchi and Felipe Caro. Team members include David Lemucchi, Phillip Caro, Andres Esparza, Joshua Hernandez, Victor Avila, Kevin Chavez, Antonio Gomez, Antonio Orihuela, Robyn Ortega, Rodryck Ortega, Isaias Rodriguez and Luke Sarimento. Not pictured is Marcello Frasca.

Golf tournament in Pico Rivera

PICO RIVERA – The Hispanic American Airborne Association will present their annual golf tournament March 29 at the Pico Rivera Golf Club.

Cost is \$50 and registration begins at 10 a.m. The event will include contests, prizes and raffles. Lunch will be served at VFW Post 7734.

To register, or for more information, call Javier Curiel at (562) 699-8901.

New Titles at the Downey City Library

Fiction

- **"An Accomplished Woman"** by Jude Morgan. In this witty comedy of manners, Lydia Templeton is a woman who eschews convention and declares herself content, even joyful, in her unmarried state.
- **"The Faraway War"** by Enrique Clio. The Cuban struggle for independence from Spain is the subject of this biographical novel about young adventurer Henry Reeve.
- **"Home Safe"** by Elizabeth Berg. A popular and prolific author finds she is unable to write after the sudden death of her husband.
- **"The Language of Bees"** by Laurie King. In this complex mystery, Mary Russell must help reverse the greatest failure in the career of her husband, Sherlock Holmes.
- **"The Last Child"** by John Hart. Suspense writer Hart returns with the story of a young boy's hunt for his missing sister, and the dark truths he uncovers in his North Carolina hometown.

Non-Fiction

- **"The Blue Sweater: Bridging the Gap between Rich and Poor in an Interconnected World"** by Jacqueline Novogratz. Eleven years after donating her blue sweater to Goodwill, Novogratz spotted a young boy in Africa wearing that very sweater. In that moment, she realized how all people are connected, which set the author on a lifelong course to fight poverty worldwide.
- **"The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child"** by Donalyn Miller. The author shares her love of reading and shows students and parents how to navigate the world of literature.
- **"No Angel: My Harrowing Undercover Journey to the Inner Circle of the Hells Angels"** by Jay Dobyns. The first federal agent to infiltrate the inner circle of the Hells Angels tells the inside story of the 21-month operation that almost cost him his family and his life.
- **"1,000 Recordings to Hear Before You Die: A Listener's Life List"** by Tom Moon. Drawing from classical, jazz, rock, pop, blues, country, folk, and opera, this reference helps you discover the best of various musical styles.
- **"What's Next: Predictions from 50 of America's Most Compelling People"** by Jane Buckingham. Fifty business leaders, doctors, artists and others give us their view of the next decade.

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Q: With so many contractors out of work, it seemed like a good time for the kitchen remodel I have dreamed about. The contractor I hired was very easy to work with and he understood what I wanted, so we signed a contract. Then the unthinkable happened – he disappeared along with the \$5,000 deposit I gave him. Do I have any chance of getting my money back?

A: You didn't indicate if the contractor was licensed or unlicensed. If the contractor was unlicensed, he was working illegally and you are pretty much on your own to go after him with either court action or with a lot of luck and persistence.

If the contractor was licensed, you can file a complaint with the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) to try to recoup your loss. Licensed contractors are required to post a \$12,500 bond, which suppliers, consumers or subcontractors can file against if the contractor cannot meet his legal obligations.

Something else you always want to keep in mind when signing a contract is it is illegal for contractors to take a down payment of more than 10 percent or \$1,000, whichever is less. You might also want to contact your local District Attorney's consumer crimes unit and notify the Better Business Bureau about your experience.

Q: Three old mulberry trees on my property need to come down due to disease, old age and because they are lifting up the sidewalk. I got bids from several licensed tree trimmers. One of the guys had a much lower estimate than the rest. I found out that he does not have workers' compensation insurance, which seems to be the reason for the lower rates. Since this is just a one-day job, is it really necessary to have that insurance?

A: Tree trimming can be extremely dangerous work with flying projectiles, power equipment and a lot of heavy physical activity. All it takes is one accident and your homeowner's insurance could be at risk. Any contractor with employees is required by state law to have workers' compensation insurance. Do you really want to gamble on someone who is taking chances on your property?

If the prices from the other tree folks seem high, talk with them. Many contractors are willing to negotiate.

Q: I had a swimming pool and spa installed about 1 1/2 years ago. It was OK for the first few months, but it started leaking around the pump recently and the water level in the swimming pool has dropped. The company that did the installation and provided the warranty is now out of business. What should I do?

A: Gather up your paperwork from the contractor who installed the pool and spa. There is a chance that the warranty was provided through the manufacturer of the equipment, which means you may get some help with

repairs. You might also track down the contractor to see if someone has taken over the servicing of his clients or if the business was bought by someone else.

Another good resource for links to pool and spa-related organizations is the California Spa and Pool Industry Education Council at www.calspec.org.

Q: I am a licensed contractor who is constantly being underbid by these unlicensed guys who crawl out of the woodwork for major tile and flooring jobs. It seems to have gotten worse with the downturn in the economy. I'm about ready to throw in the towel and find some other line of work. Why doesn't the CSLB do something to stop these people?

A: A unit within the CSLB called the Statewide Investigative Fraud Team (SWIFT) tracks down unlicensed activity around the state through construction site inspection sweeps and sting operations just about every week somewhere in California.

Part of the competition problem you're dealing with has to do with educating the public about the dangers of hiring unlicensed workers. When people know just how risky it is to hire unlicensed operators, they're less likely to roll the dice.

Q: My neighbor is getting some major landscaping work done and it has been trickling over onto my property. The contractor is parking his trucks in front of my house and has been leaving equipment and supplies on my lawn and sidewalk. I don't really want to call the police, but this has been going on for several weeks now. Can the CSLB do anything to help?

A: Talking directly with your neighbor should be your first step. You might also talk politely with the work crews to see if they would be more courteous and clean up their act. If they are only employees, give the contractor a call. The contractor's license number should be listed on work trucks or yard signs that advertise the business. You can look him up on CSLB's online license database at www.cslb.ca.gov or by calling (800) 321-2752.

The contractor is responsible for anyone working under his license and may not be aware of the problem. He may also have liability insurance, should there be any damage to your property. Another possibility is to contact the city or county code enforcement unit for help.

The California Contractors State License Board operates under the umbrella of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, licensing and regulating California's 302,000 contractors. The CSLB investigates 20,000 complaints against contractors annually. For more information, or to check out a contractor's license, bond and workers' compensation insurance information, visit the board Web site at www.cslb.ca.gov.



Incoming Downey High School Key Club board members are flanked by advisor Fernando Vasquez and DHS teacher Laura Wack, after they conducted last week's Downey Kiwanis Club meeting, an annual ritual, held at Rio Hondo Event Center. Highlight of the meeting was the students auctioning off various home-cooked cakes, pastries, and foods to raise funds for the club.

Conductor to speak about music

WHITTIER – Olivia Tsui, conductor of the Glendale Symphony Orchestra, will be the featured Concert Preview speaker sponsored by the Rio Hondo Symphony Guild on May 1.

The former concertmaster of the Rio Hondo Symphony will talk about music by Wagner and Dvorak, plus music that will be performed by the winners of the Young Artists Competition.

The free event begins at 10 a.m. at the First Friends Church of Whittier, 13205 Philadelphia St. For more information, call (562) 693-5516.

Garden tour to raise money

WHITTIER – The Rio Hondo Symphony Guild will present its 22nd annual Garden Tour on April 19. This tour of three private gardens includes a terraced garden and another with an exhibit of hydroponics gardening.

At each garden, music will be provided by musicians and friends of the Rio Hondo Symphony. There will also be light refreshments and plant sales.

All proceeds will benefit the Rio Hondo Symphony, which each year presents four free concerts to the community.

Tickets are \$25 and available at the Whittier Community Center and Whittier Art Gallery. Guests can also send a check with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Rio Hondo Symphony Guild, P.O. Box 4767, Whittier, CA 90607.

For more information, call Beverly Walker at (562) 949-2010.

Hearing technology discussed

LAKEWOOD – The Hearing Loss Association (HLA), Long Beach/Lakewood chapter, will listen to guest speaker Bill Busch at its April 9 meeting at the Weingart Senior Center, 5220 Olivia Ave., in Lakewood.

Busch will speak on "Hearing Assistive Technology."

Busch received his PhD in Communications from USC in 1970. He worked in satellite communications at TRW for more than 30 years before retiring in 2000.

He began attending HLA meetings in 2007 and began speech reading classes in 2008. He is currently serving as the Refreshment Co-Chairman.

Admission to the meeting is free and reservations are not necessary.

Plants on sale in Long Beach

LONG BEACH – The Assisteens of Long Beach are sponsoring a plant sale April 4 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the shopping center parking lot located at 4600 E. Pacific Coast Highway (near Ximeno Avenue) in Long Beach.

Direct from a local grower, flats of spring colors and 1-gallon containers will be sold at below-retail prices. Proceeds from the sale will go towards Assisteens' self-improvement and philanthropic programs.

The Assisteens of Long Beach are an auxiliary of Assistance League of Long Beach.

Only cash will be accepted at the sale. For more information, call Marie Johnson at (562) 439-7960 or Rita Hayes at (562) 596-6834.

How to handle unfriendly debt collectors

Contributed by Dr. Debbie Joffe Ellis

In these testing financial times many are struggling to keep what they've got, and others are pushing to get what they can. The latter is the realm and activity of the debt collector.

The newly released book "How to Hug a Porcupine" offers guidelines for dealing with difficult people. With money becoming a major point of contention for many people these days, such skills are an important commodity.

While debt collectors are most often thought of as a type of porcupine, a recent article in The New York Times described the successful outcomes for debt collectors who traded their quills for kindness. When the debt collectors were not prickly or forceful in their attempts to have relatives pay the money owed by their deceased relatives—but were instead sympathetic—some of the survivors not only gladly paid up but also wrote appreciative notes to the collectors. They felt cared about, and not put upon.

But what if you're in debt and not lucky enough to encounter the understanding collectors mentioned in the article? What if a debt collector is pressuring you in a porcupine-like and less-than-caring way to give up money you don't have?

Keep a cool head. If you react in the porcupine manner of defense and attack, it is unlikely to benefit you and may make the situation worse. Your words may bring out more of the aggressive porcupine side of the collector, which will make him or her less understanding of your difficulties. As a result this porcupine will be less flexible with debt demands. He or she

will then be less willing to look for a solution that is workable and beneficial for both sides.

Maintain perspective. Remember what the revolutionary and pioneering psychologist, Albert Ellis PhD, used to say: "As bad as it is, it could always be worse. If you owe \$10,000, be glad it's not \$200,000 that you owe. And be grateful for what is still good in your life."

Recognize that on the other end is a person, too. Whilst it is quite rational to dislike having money collected from you if it is scarce, it is irrational, unhealthy and unhelpful to be spiteful to the collector. Recognize that he or she is a fallible human, just as you are, who is performing an occupational duty (albeit in an undesirable manner!).

Face the facts. Do you owe that money? What's the reality? If you do owe money, and your money is scarce, you'll have a better chance of finding a way to pay it off in small installments. The collector may approve of this payment plan if you communicate in a respectful and non-abrasive fashion.

Find balance. Make choices that maximize your chances to get more of what you do want and less of what you don't want. Life does contain difficulties, but by thinking and acting in sane and wise ways, we will minimize any suffering and increase inner and outer harmony. *Dr. Debbie Joffe Ellis wrote the foreword of "How to Hug a Porcupine" and is a licensed psychologist in Australia and mental health counselor in New York.*



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The St. Matthias Laudate Ringers performed at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels in downtown Los Angeles on Sunday, when the Catholic Education Foundation honored more than 450 high school seniors. Pictured, left to right: Nicolette Phillips, Lisa Ochoa, Arcylicet Iniguez, Jacqueline Ibarra, Raquel Munoz, Lucy Vasquez and Stephanie Garcia.



The Downey Rotary Club held their weekly meeting at Arc of Southeast Los Angeles County this week. Rotary is a longtime supporter of Arc, which is holding its annual Arc Walk for Independence tomorrow at Stonewood Center. Pictured above with Arc consumers are Rotary members Mayor Mario Guerra and Councilman Luis Marquez.



The Downey Police Department was one of several law enforcement agencies to participate in the recent 25th running of the Baker to Vegas Relay, a grueling run through the California and Nevada deserts. The friendly competition draws hundreds of law enforcement teams from as far away as Australia. Photo by R.D. Salyer