

The Downey Patriot



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Vasquez sworn-in, lays out goals

■ Councilwoman Anne Bayer bows out, saying “[It was] the fastest eight years of my life.”

BY CHRISTIAN BROWN,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – With more than 100 community leaders, city officials and residents in attendance, Fernando Vasquez, who claimed victory in the District 4 campaign last month, was sworn-in as Downey’s newest council member Tuesday night.

Aided by his two sisters, Vasquez repeated the oath of office in front of the large assembly drawing cheers and praise from the diverse crowd inside the Council Chambers.

“I am honored and humbled you elected me,” said Vasquez. “I love Downey, I am committed, but I can’t do this alone. We need you – it’s all about community.”

In a brief speech following the ceremony, Vasquez presented several goals he hopes to accomplish in his next four years on the Council including tough, new restrictions on illegal street vendors, proactive gang intervention programs, community policing committees, city-wide youth programs and more economic development projects such as the \$1 billion Tierra Luna project.

Councilman Mario Guerra, who ran unopposed in District 2, also thanked his supporters, pledging to use fiscal responsibility and the tenants of Character Counts as his guiding light over the next four years.

“I made a promise to my family,” said Guerra. “I made a promise to this city and most importantly I made a promise to me and my God that every vote would be in the best interests of the city and I’ve done that.”

Guerra also announced his agenda for the next four years, which includes increases in public safety, street and park improvements, a Downey veterans’ memorial, more arts and culture programming, and a continued business-friendly environment at City Hall.

Prior to the swearing-in ceremony, city officials also took time to recognize outgoing Councilwoman Anne Bayer who was elected to the City Council in 2002, serving as mayor twice over the course of eight years.

“I want to thank the people who elected me twice to the Council – it’s been a joy beyond belief serving the people of Downey,” Bayer said. “And the fastest eight years of my life.”

In addition to many city distinctions presented to Bayer Tuesday night, she also received recognition from several community organizations and legislators including the Soroptimist International of Downey, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downey Unified School District, Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, County Supervisor Don Knabe, and the cities of Lakewood, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera, Signal Hill and Cerritos.

Wal-Mart opening grocery store in Downey

■ The grocery store, called Marketside, will take over the Alin’s Party Depot property.

BY CHRISTIAN BROWN,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Hoping to expand its brand presence to new suburban communities and small towns alike, Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which operates more than 4,000 retail locations in the United States alone, is planning to bring a new, smaller-format grocery store, called Marketside, to Downey next year.

According to the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder’s office, last month Wal-Mart Stores Inc. purchased the nearly 32,000-square-foot building now occupied by Alin’s Party Depot. County records show that the previous owner, Westminster Properties, sold the property, located at 12270 Paramount Blvd, on Nov. 10.

A Downey fixture since 1985, Alin’s Party Depot announced in November that it would shut down early next year, unable to renew its lease with Westminster Properties. Last month, a representative of Westminster Properties told *The Downey Patriot* that a large, recognizable establishment had acquired the property, but would not reveal the buyer.

Alin’s Party Depot is slated to vacate the building next month after the store completes liquidation in early January.

Two months ago, Wal-Mart U.S. President and CEO Bill



Wal-Mart purchased the Alin’s Party Depot property on Paramount Boulevard in November with plans to open a Marketside grocery store.

Simon unveiled the company’s new strategy for the coming year, indicating the retail giant would focus on the coveted urban and suburban markets by opening smaller, more efficient Wal-Mart locations across the country.

“We are very excited about the additional growth opportunities that we have in the United States,” said Simon in a statement on Oct. 13. “Over the next few years, we will introduce new formats to help us enter new markets. Wal-Mart U.S. will move toward a three-format portfolio, which will drive expansion to urban markets and small towns, as well as fill in gaps in existing markets.”

In addition to Wal-Mart’s large supercenters, Simon said the company would seek to open medium formats between 30,000 and 60,000 square feet as well as smaller stores, which will total less than 30,000 square feet, targeted towards urban markets and small towns.

In 2008, Wal-Mart, known for its large discount supercenters and Sam’s Club locations, began testing smaller grocery stores called Marketside, which average 15,000 square feet in size and focuses mainly on fresh produce and bakery-style bread. With only four Marketside locations open in the U.S., Wal-Mart hopes to open more

of the small-scale grocery stores around the country.

Councilman Mario Guerra welcomes the new business, assuring residents that the new establishment will only further go to help the city.

“We’re real excited about it,” he said over the phone. “It’s going to be a Marketside...It’s owned by Wal-Mart, but it’s a little more upscale. It’ll be good – it’s going to bring more jobs into the city and provide a different market for the south Downey quarter.”

The Downey Patriot reached out to Wal-Mart, but has yet to receive a comment on the new store placement.



Fr. Greg Boyle to speak in Downey

DOWNEY – Father Gregory Boyle, founder and executive director of Homeboy Industries, will speak at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church on Jan. 19 at 7 p.m.

The event is free and open to the public.

Through Homeboy Industries, Boyle provides jobs and counseling to reformed gang members. The company offers mental health counseling, free tattoo removal, a charter school, job placement and career training.

More than 8,000 gang members from 700 different gangs have benefited from Homeboy Industries, which was founded in 1986 and was the focus of the documentary, “Father G and the Homeboys,” narrated by Martin Sheen.

Homeboy Industries operates five businesses where former rival gang members work side-by-side: Homeboy Bakery, Homegirl Café, Homeboy Silkscreen, Homeboy/Homegirl Merchandise and Homeboy Maintenance.

Boyle released a book this year titled “Tattoos on the Heart,” described as “a treatise on the sacredness of each life, an astounding rebuttal to the idea that any one life matters more than another.”

Copies of “Tattoos on the Heart” will be available for purchase and signing at the Jan. 19 event.

Marquez elected mayor

DOWNEY – In a brief transition ceremony Wednesday night, Councilman Luis Marquez was unanimously chosen to become the city’s next mayor, replacing outgoing Councilwoman Anne Bayer, who was termed out of office this year.

Following a one-year term as mayor pro tem, Marquez was next in rotation for the largely ceremonial title of mayor and was expected to be selected for the position.

Marquez, formally nominated for mayor by Councilman Roger Brossmer, expressed his gratitude while promising to do his best to represent the city faithfully.

“I want to thank my Council colleagues for your vote of confidence,” Marquez said. “At our next meeting, I will share my goals for the future, but I’m excited about working with you to help move this city forward.”

This will be Marquez’s first term as mayor since his election to the City Council in 2008. The City Council also unanimously selected Brossmer as Downey’s new mayor pro tem.

—Christian Brown, staff writer

Downey police adds canine to force

BY ERIC PIERCE,
CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – The Downey Police Department has made a four-legged addition to its rank of officers.

Duke, a 2-year-old chocolate labrador, has joined the department as a full-time narcotics dog. The canine is specially trained in detecting four types of drugs – methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana and heroin.

Dogs such as Duke are used for sniffing out drugs hidden inside vehicles and on search warrants, police officials said. They are especially adept at locating hidden compartments used to store drugs in cars, said Officer Chris Kurtz, Duke’s handler.

The addition of Duke eliminates the Downey Police Department’s reliance on outside agencies for assistance in drug searches, said Capt. Carl Charles.

The dog was purchased from a breeder in Texas for \$15,000 and paid for from the department’s Asset Forfeiture fund.

“We’re very thankful the city saw fit to provide us with this invaluable tool,” Charles said.

Duke completed 120 hours of training in September and has been

working since October. He is already responsible for the recovery of three pounds of meth and 100 grams of cocaine, Kurtz said.

“And the more training he gets, the better he’ll become,” Kurtz said.

Duke uses his advanced sense of smell to find narcotics that a human officer might miss. When he identifies a hit, Duke will scratch at the surface to notify Kurtz.

“It’s a big game for him,” said Kurtz. “He becomes really excited when we’re going out on a call.”

Duke is at Kurtz’s side at all times, and goes home with him every night. A police cruiser has been retrofitted for Duke to safely travel in the back seat. He can also travel in a portable dog crate.

Duke has been in high demand in his short time on the job. In about 10 weeks of service, he has already participated in more than 400 searches and has assisted three law enforcement agencies, including the DEA.

Still a friendly puppy, Duke is used solely for searches of vehicles and homes, and cannot be used to identify contraband on humans. And with good reason.

“He would lick the person to death,” Kurtz said.



Duke, a 2-year-old chocolate labrador, has joined the Downey Police Department as its only drug-sniffing dog.

Voices want to be heard by new theater management



HENRY VENERACION

DOWNEY – It was community activist Harold Tseklenis who first pointed out that arts advocate Carol Kearns, in her letter to the editor (Dec. 2, 2010), captured the gist and spirit of what transpired at the Nov. 23 city council meeting regarding the new management arrangement of the Downey Theatre.

Kearns' main points were: 1) Except for Councilman David Gafin, the council was "quick to approve this million-dollar contract without allowing much time for public input"; 2) she commends Councilman Mario Guerra for suggesting a yearly cap on city funding of \$400,000; 3) she wondered, "What will happen to the current theater staff?"; and 4) after all was said and done, she was really concerned mainly about "I do wish the council had allowed more time for discussion."

And this is what resonates among the cultural cognoscenti. Almost lost in the din was Councilman Roger Brossmer's contention that "the theater subcommittee [of which he was a member] and staff had been at work on this for six months."

Speaking as a private citizen (but intimately involved with the Downey Symphonic Society), Lorine Parks wrote: "Downey certainly needs a thriving center for the performing arts...Some of the arts

are in place and performing brilliantly – the Symphony and the Downey Civic Light Opera. Their audience is here, and now we need to build a larger audience base and more artistic activity. We now need innovative programming, and I hope VenueTech will be the ones to do it...Interest in all the arts stimulates interest in all the arts. We the citizens of Downey want more involvement with the lively arts. We hope VenueTech will bring it to us."

Marsha Moode, of the Downey Civic Light Opera: "I want DCLO to continue. It's been in operation for 55 years. Other groups have shut down. It is difficult. But it is important that it continue. Therefore I hope things will work out. I'll be glad to give my input in any way I can."

Downey Rose Float Association's Susan Domen: "It is my understanding that it won't affect our operations one way or another."

DUSD superintendent Wendy Doty: "We're happy to work with the new management firm."

Tseklenis: "I agree with Councilman Luis Marquez when he expressed concern that, quoting Carol Kearns, 'the establishment of a non-profit foundation to do fundraising [to offset the city's subsidy] could result in an unfortunate situation of several entities competing for the same funds.'" Further, he said that the sources are "drying up." He agrees with the feeling that VenueTech will nevertheless be facing "a big challenge." He also hopes they will look at the upcoming results of the census, so they can "plan accordingly."

Andrew Wahlquist, a longtime Downey resident who describes himself as an independent filmmaker and theater enthusiast, has some trenchant observations at his website, www.downeyarts.org: "This is

a 90-degree turn from the status quo that has run the theater for the past 30 years."; and "This is a good development since the theater is dark anyway for more than 2/3 of the year." He applauds VenueTech for its wanting to get involved with the community, for their wanting the city and its residents to have ownership of the theater, and for their wish for anonymity with the patrons of the theater.

He's also glad that the DCLO, the Symphony, school concerts and local artist groups as well as arts-oriented festivals are planned to be a major part of their future programming schedule.

"With marketing and increased awareness of the big picture of the theater," he said, "these programs can flourish...Otherwise, I'm excited at VenueTech's decision to work with the community. Hopefully it will give us a better chance to take ownership."

Echoing David Gafin, Wahlquist said, "The future is uncertain, but so far it's at least a change with a lot of good potential."

Finally, "an arts renaissance must come from a city's residents, not the city staff and council," he said. "I'm proposing to form an official city arts task force so we can talk about these things on a monthly basis and come up with a framework for Downey's approach to the arts. How hard can that be?"

Gafin: "The reason why I dissented was we need to let the general public know what's going on. We need a little more input from the general public."

"The bottom line," Gafin said, "is we'll still exercise control over them. If there's a bad situation, we'll be able to go after them, hold them accountable. Remember, the agreement calls for a 5-year period. In the next council session, perhaps we can discuss their proposed business plan."

Pauline Hume, whose late husband, John, was the first managing director of the theater, said: "I have very mixed feelings about this arrangement. I am not totally unhappy with [VenueTech president John Lind]. He appears worthy... I am distressed with the city leadership and the lack of transparency and communication to the Downey community. This is not the first time the arts groups have been discounted by the leadership. I am very happy that at long last the city leadership has decided to take a positive action on behalf of the theater... I don't know if VenueTech and Mr. Lind is the right management, consulting, booking firm for us not. I guess we'll find out."

There we are, some citizens approving of the latest development, others skeptical as usual. Proof that you can't satisfy everybody.

Employee layoffs

Because of the management agreement signed by the city and VenueTech, the full-time position of theater supervisor and the 25 temporary/part-time on-call positions that have performed essential theater functions (lighting, sound, stage, house management, etc.) will be eliminated, according to the city's human resources director Irma Youssefieh.

The appropriate notices were sent out Tuesday.

Under the new dispensation, current theater supervisor Noreen Kimura, who has served in the department for a number of years, is subject to layoff effective Jan. 7, 2011 if, said Youssefieh, "there is no other full-time alternative." The part-time positions will be wiped off the books effective Jan. 31, 2011.

"All employees impacted will have the opportunity to submit their interest to VenueTech for employment consideration," said Youssefieh. "These same employees based on their interest and qualifications would also be considered for any current openings with the city."

Under the Memorandum of Understanding establishing terms for Kimura's position, she is entitled to a three-month severance payment equal to three months' salary. The position was in the \$27.21-\$33.71 per hour range.

The hourly pay of the part-time positions ranged from \$13.79-\$23.75.

Reusable bags to be given away

DOWNEY – Nearly 200 locations throughout Los Angeles County, including many in Downey, will be giving away 25,000 reusable shopping bags Dec. 16 as the region celebrates "A Day Without a Bag," which urges consumers to forego one-use plastic or paper grocery bags in favor of reusable totes.

Free bags will be distributed until supplies last at Fresh & Easy, Albertson's, Ralphs, 99 Cent Only Stores, Union Bank and other locations.

Bags will also be available at the Downey City Library and all Los Angeles County public libraries.

A map of all giveaway sites is available at www.healthebay.org/nobagday.

"A Day Without a Bag" follows the L.A. County Board of Supervisors' vote in November to ban plastic bags in unincorporated areas of the county. Dozens of other municipalities are pursuing similar measures, including Long Beach.

"This year we have more than tripled the number of bag giveaway sites," said Mark Gold, president of Heal the Bay. "It reflects the growing groundswell in Los Angeles for reusable bags, which not only save the environment but taxpayer dollars as well, especially in a time of drastic budget shortfalls."

Professor earns research award

DOWNEY – Richard Brutchey, a 1996 graduate of Warren High School, has been awarded the 2010 Cottrell Scholar Award, which recognizes leaders in integrating science teaching and research at leading U.S. research universities.

After graduating from Warren, Brutchey received his B.S. in Chemistry at UC Irvine and his doctorate at UC Berkeley.

He has been an assistant professor of chemistry at USC since 2007.

No street sweeping tickets Dec. 23-26

DOWNEY – In an effort to accommodate the extra visitors expected in Downey during the holiday season, citations will not be issued for street sweeping parking violations Dec. 23-26.

Other types of parking tickets may still be issued.

Enforcement will start again on Dec. 27.

Holiday carols at library

DOWNEY – Divine Talents, a non-profit music education group, will perform holiday carols Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. inside the Downey City Library.

The public is invited to the free event.

Under the direction of John Heideman and Tim Garcia, Divine Talents have performed for the Holiday Lane Parade, Kids Day and at Stonewood Center. The group features young singers in kindergarten through eighth grade.

For more information, call the library at (562) 904-7360, ext. 132.

Youths extend helping hand

DOWNEY – More than 50 young men and women from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Downey Stake) worked at the church storehouse in Los Angeles on Nov. 24 as they lent a hand for Thanksgiving.

The volunteers, all ages 12-18, helped can items such as milk and flour for people in need of food.

"This was their way of showing how thankful they are for the many blessings they have in their lives," the church said in a statement.

Blessing of the animals at church

DOWNEY – St. George Greek Orthodox Church will hold a blessing of the animals Dec. 18 at 11 a.m.

Residents are invited to bring their pets and livestock. Anyone without a pet is invited to bring their favorite stuffed animal.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church is at 10830 Downey Ave.

Church spoofs TV talent shows

DOWNEY – First Baptist Church of Downey will host "So You Think You Can Christmas" this month a spoof of TV talent shows with a Christmas twist.

The dinner show will be presented Dec. 17-19 at 7 p.m. Admission is \$4.

Registration is required by calling (562) 923-1261, ext. 232.

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Dn. Mario and Ann Guerra

Family, Friends and Residents of Downey

Ann and I would like to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for the support, prayers and friendship you have given us...It has been an incredible journey and we have been so blessed to have lived it and enjoyed it with so many of you.


We are humbled, honored and excited by the support we received. Your vote of confidence and endorsement for our hard work these past 4 years and dedication of serving Downey is very appreciated.

I promise to serve all of our citizens with equal representation and I will do so using the principals of Character Counts as a guiding light...

Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship.


Thank you!...I am proud to be your council member and I look forward to the opportunity to serve...One Great Community...Our Home...Our City: Downey

Contact me anytime at MGuerra@Downeyca.org...Again, thank you!



Thank You and God Bless You!

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Twas the Night Before Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And mom in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tinny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

"Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.
A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, 'ere he drove out of sight,
'Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!'

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Lifetime resident Jean Bitters has died

DOWNEY – Jean Bitters, 60, passed away Nov. 15 at Downey Regional Medical Center in the presence of her longtime friends, brother Richard Bitters and his wife, Vickie Bitters.



She was preceded in death by her parents, Harry and Rose Bitters.

Jean was born on July 17, 1950, in Downey and graduated from Warren High School in 1968. Her favorite charity was the Manilow Music Project, which highlights the importance of music programs in schools and donates instruments and material to school music programs.

Funeral services will be held graveside at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier on Dec. 10 at 3 p.m.

Isabelle Diliberto laid to rest

DOWNEY – Isabelle Diliberto passed away Dec. 3 in her Downey home.

Born Aug. 8, 1920 in the original Downey Hospital on 5th Street, she never moved from her hometown.

Daughter of Downey pioneers, Antonio and Angelina Diliberto, Isabelle went through the Downey schools, graduating with her high school class of 1939. Later, during World War II, she worked at the Vultee Aircraft plant.

She participated in the management of the small shopping center which the Dilibertos developed from the family farm on the corner of what is now Paramount Boulevard and Florence Avenue.

She is survived by her sister, Grace Diliberto; niece, Carolyn Diliberto; nephew, Edward Diliberto; and numerous grand nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Dec. 8 with final resting place at Rose Hills Memorial Park in Whittier.

Cruz Arias, WWII veteran, was 87

DOWNEY – Cruz Patino Arias, an American war hero who earned the Purple Heart during World War II, died Nov. 9 in Hemet. He was 87.



He was born in Watts on May 3, 1923 to Blas and Dolores. He was a longtime Downey resident.

Arias served in the Army during WWII and, in addition to the Purple Heart, received medals for Good Conduct.

He is survived by his wife, Amelia; sons, Cruz, George and Robert; brothers, Frank and Robert; sisters, Carmen and Lola; 16 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces, nephews and godchildren.

Services were held in his honor Nov. 19 at St. Raymond's Catholic Church. Interment was at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside.

Funeral set for Warren Bauman

DOWNEY – Warren Bauman, 84, passed away suddenly but peacefully on Nov. 19.



He was born to Jesse and Martha Bauman in Los Angeles County on Aug. 24, 1926.

After working as a surveyor for 35 years, he retired from the L.A. Flood Control. He also worked part-time for many years as a guard at the Iceland ice rink in Paramount, and organized a yearly reunion for Skaters of the Past.

He and his wife, Yvette, resided in Downey for more than 50 years. They were regulars at the Downey Theatre, where they enjoyed attending Downey Symphony concerts.

Warren was a U.S. veteran and served in the armed forces. He was preceded in death by Yvette, to whom he was married for 53 years.

He is survived by two daughters, Beverly Madru and Cheryl Bauman; three grandsons, Justin, Micah and Jared; and cousins, Ed Rall, Betty Button and Virginia Rall.

A memorial service will be held Dec. 10 at 1 p.m. at Downey First Christian Church.

Highly-regarded economist Jack Kyser dies at 76

■ Kyser was a favorite of the media for his ability to explain complex matters in layman's terms.

scratch.

Because of its impact and his contributions to the county, the department was renamed the Kyser Center for Economic Research in his honor. Bill Allen, LAEDC president and CEO, stated: "We at LAEDC are absolutely committed to carrying on his legacy at the Kyser Center."



BY HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Jack Kyser, widely regarded as the dean of economists for Southern California and a longtime Downey resident, has died.

He died Monday of undetermined causes at his home in Downey. He was 76.

Born in Huntington Park on April 30, 1934, the Downey High School graduate earned his BS in industrial design (1955) and MBA (1968) degrees from USC. Downey High has enshrined him in its Hall of Fame.

Although he did not pursue economics as a professional discipline, Kyser had a gift for presenting lucid analyses of economic developments and complex economic issues for much of his professional life, earning him the sobriquet of economic guru for the region.

Kyser was a frequent presence on TV and in the printed media and was much sought after as a speaker on economic matters. Joining the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) in 1991, he built its economics department virtually from

Supervisor Don Knabe, a close personal friend for more than 25 years who acknowledged benefiting often from Kyser's clear-eyed counsel, had this to say: "I am shocked to learn of the passing of Jack Kyser, one of the premier economists in Southern California...[He] will be missed, as an advisor, and most especially as a friend and resident of the 4th District. My thoughts and prayers go to the Kyser family in this difficult time."

Kyser retired just this past June. He was affiliated with the Southern California Association of Governments as economic adviser at the time of his death.

Never parsimonious with his economic prognostications, he graced the Patriot's pages with his forthright views on everything from trade, tourism, technology, infrastructure, the entertainment industry, etc. He was upbeat about future prospects, but cautioned in June when he announced his retirement that a rebound in the regional economy "may lag a little bit."

He was known to be a habitué of Stox Restaurant, where he used to have his coffee and breakfast before work and meet with friends on the weekend.

Service plans were still pending at press time.

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With hard work, we can ease polarization

By Lee Hamilton

There's a funny thing going on in our national politics right now: Everyone deplors polarization, but it just keeps getting worse.

Voters are clearly unhappy with the partisanship that has taken over Capitol Hill. They tend to prefer the moderation of the political center, yet the last few elections they've produced wild back-and-forth shifts between parties. Many politicians, meanwhile, understand that getting things done requires compromise. Yet they cluster helplessly behind partisan lines. It's begun to seem as though there's no way out.

There is, though it won't be easy. No single key unlocks this problem. But if you're tired of watching every policy decision in Washington get treated according to how it will play politically, if you've given up on members of Congress finding a way to work together for the good of the country, if you believe that the ideological divide trumpeted by our political elites represents a minority, not a majority, of Americans — then it's time to take dramatic steps to reverse course. To do this, we need to make progress in four arenas.

The first is elections. Americans as a whole may be centrist, but the dynamics of party politics, primaries, and wave elections have decimated congressional moderates. Bolstering the strength of the political center, then, is key to de-polarization. Probably the best way to do this is for states to expand the electorate by encouraging more people to vote. The more people that vote, the harder it is for ideologically driven party activists to control elections, and the more likely it is that the moderate center will be strengthened.

Expanding voting may be controversial — even voter turnout has fallen prey to partisan gamesmanship — but our national interest lies in encouraging it. Extending voting hours and making Election Day a holiday or holding it on a weekend are two ways to do this; so is lowering registration barriers. Open primaries, along the lines of what Californians recently voted into place, would allow independents and moderates to exert more influence on primaries — and to move party nominees toward the center.

Next, the President needs to get in on the act. Changing the dynamics of polarization will require politicians to focus more on making the country work and less on maneuvering for partisan advantage. The President is the central actor in our governmental system, so much of the initiative has to come from him. He must constantly remind people that the job of the policymaker is to put country first and politics second, and he must lead by example.

He must also reach out to engage with Congress, the media, and the American people, always reminding them how necessary it is for us to work together to make the country work. More regular give-and-take between the President and Congress and between the President and the press would be healthy for our democracy.

Congress sometimes seems so trapped in its ways that it's hard to imagine it can change. But some steps could help. Political scientists downplay the role of highly partisan redistricting in producing highly partisan members of Congress, but it's hard to imagine that the non-partisan drawing of district lines — and thus the chances of creating districts that require candidates to play to the middle — would have no effect.

Similarly, pressuring Congress to fix its procedures — to put in more time in Washington during the week; to return to real conference committees that require members to compromise with one another in order to reach a final agreement on a bill; to institute more open rules and fewer restrictions on how legislation gets considered; to restore the regular and deliberative order of doing business, rejecting omnibus bills and other legislative shortcuts — would force members to work together more, get to know and understand one another better, and ensure that the minority gets treated better.

The media needs to change, too. Today it loves to polarize issues. Broadcasters in particular need to recognize that along with their use of a public good — the airwaves — come responsibilities and obligations. Their eagerness to pander to the everyone-likes-a-good-fight instincts of their audiences, and to reject their solemn responsibility to educate fairly and fully has undoubtedly made our politics coarser, more polarized, and less capable of producing forward progress for our nation.

In the end, the spur to change will have to come from you. Both politicians and media moguls are responsive to the market — that is, the individual civic decisions of millions of people. We all need to find ways to convey to them that there is a right way and a wrong way to conduct the dialogue of democracy, and that those who polarize our politics are making it harder, not easier, to achieve a more perfect union.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Letters to the Editor:

Police help

Dear Editor:

My son Daniel and I volunteered with Keep Downey Beautiful to pick up trash after the Holiday Lane Parade on Sunday.

We would like to thank Officer Sean Penrose and fellow officers of the Downey Police Department that day for watching for our safety on Downey Avenue as we picked up trash after the parade. They really made a difference in helping all the volunteers with our safety that day.

-- Michelle Frase,
Downey

Step in the right direction

Dear Editor:

This is in response to last week's Letter to the Editor entitled "Environmentals" (*The Downey Patriot*, 12/2/10).

The author rants about the law banning plastic grocery bags in parts of L.A. County. These market bags can be replaced with reusable cloth bags or recyclable paper sacks for a small charge. She alleges that poor people are hurt by having to pay a few pennies for a paper sack if they don't bring a reusable bag. I have a collection of seven reusable bags, which I have been using for several years, and which cost me a grand total of \$3. These bags are often given away in promotions for free.

As for her fears about e-coli; fish, poultry and vegetables are almost always placed in smaller plastic bags before being loaded into a bigger one by the checkers. (The smaller bags for meat and produce are not banned, only the bigger ones.) I occasionally wash one of my bags and they all look clean despite repeated use. I have never once had a problem with e-coli.

I'm really tired of seeing plastic market bags blowing down the street, tossed in gutters and next to wide-open gutter drains. How many large gutters have any kind of screen over them to stop trash from going to the ocean? None where I live. I'm tired of excuses by narrow-minded, lazy people who won't do their part to reduce waste going to landfills or properly sort the trash they throw out into clean recyclables and garbage. The new Ecosystems exhibit at the California Science Center in Exposition Park shows how trash does not decompose in landfills; after 10 years the plastic items, toys, shoes, etc. just sit there covered with dirt but have not decomposed at all.

Trash in our streets goes down gutter drains to rivers which carry this waste to the ocean where it collects in massive quantities of trash and garbage and harms sea creatures as well as our environment. We need to change our way of thinking and stop being a disposable society just throwing things in the trash without another thought. We are running out of landfills and it will cost more to transport trash to faraway locations to bury.

It is clear that many people won't voluntarily change behavior which is comfortable for them, so we must pass laws such as the plastic bag ban.

When one sees dinosaur bones which have been preserved underground for millions of years, one must consider the consequences of throwing away so many plastic and recyclable items into our trash cans where they will stay underground forever. We must all do our part to clean up and protect our environment, and the law banning plastic grocery bags is just one step in the right direction.

-- Anita Rivero,
Downey



Mail service

Dear Editor:

This is to the businesses and residents in the area of Downey bordering Paramount Boulevard (115000-11800) and Old River School Road, and 7500-7900 Pivot Street.

As a recently retired 34-year mail carrier, I can tell you why your mail service has suffered.

Your area is now an auxiliary route, meaning it is split up every day 4-6 ways. Every day a different mail carrier will carry their route, then carry part of your area on overtime pay. They are tired but forced to do this, so please do not blame them.

Upper management is to blame. To complain to the Downey post office is useless. Your complaints should be directed to your area council person.

Please do this. Even though I'm retired I still care.

-- Kim Davis,
Downey

Government pork

Dear Editor:

I am very troubled. Sometimes I wonder where we are going next with our government.

With a huge national debt, taxes rising, jobs lost, national security at risk, what is funny is it takes 50 years to pass a bill to turn down the commercials and still the noises go on.

How broken is our government, or do they think we are so dumb we are not watching what is going on? Come on kids, start doing what's right for the people who put you there.

Oh, even if the commercial bill does pass, how much pork do I have to eat?

-- Robert Gustafson,
Downey

Minority-owned businesses catalyze job growth

By David Hinson

The federal government just revealed that private-sector firms created 159,000 new jobs in October. The unemployment rate, however, remains persistently high, at 9.6 percent.

Policymakers continue to search for ways to help those looking for work find jobs. The minority business community should be at the center of that conversation.

Minority firms have been an engine of job growth for the U.S. economy, outpacing growth within the general business community for most of the last decade.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people employed at minority-owned businesses jumped 27 percent - from 4.7 million to 5.9 million - between 2002 and 2007. Job growth for non-minority-owned firms was less than 1 percent during that time.

In those five years, the number of minority-owned firms in the U.S. grew 46 percent, to 5.8 million. Meanwhile, the number of firms in the overall economy expanded at less than half that rate.

The revenue of minority-owned businesses is also growing much faster than that of non-minority-owned businesses. Between 2002 and 2007, minority-owned firms' revenue jumped 56 percent to \$1 trillion annually. At non-minority firms, receipts were up just 21 percent, although average gross receipts for non-minority-owned firms remain much larger than those of minority-owned firms.

Minority businesses are emerging as leading exporters, too. They exported to 41 countries on six continents between 1992 and 2009. Minority firms are twice as likely to generate sales through exports as non-minority firms.

With these figures in mind, there's no doubt that minority entrepreneurs will lead the American business community's charge to double exports within the next five years, as the President's National Export Initiative has challenged.

While minority-owned businesses are growing at a breakneck pace, disparities continue to exist between minority- and non-minority-owned firms. Just 800,000 of America's nearly 6 million minority firms have more than one employee. The annual revenue for the average minority-owned firm is about \$300,000 less than that of a non-minority-owned firm.

Closing the entrepreneurial revenue gap between minority- and non-minority-owned businesses based on the share of the adult minority population would add \$2.5 trillion to our nation's economic output, creating 11.8 million more American jobs and unleashing the innovation of a long-undervalued economic sector.

Corporate America can strengthen its efforts to make minority-owned businesses a larger part of its global supply chain, and minority business owners can and should do a better job of embracing aggressive growth models and capitalizing on opportunities for alliances, mergers and strategic partnerships.

At the initial stages of growth, most business owners look to expand their operations in small steps, taking on one new contract or customer at a time. This approach makes sense as a company establishes itself.

But once a firm starts posting sustained profits, it must explore more sophisticated options for growth. Otherwise, as history has demonstrated, company revenues plateau and job growth grinds to a halt.



The most successful minority-owned businesses in this country have embraced aggressive models to join the upper echelons of the American economy - and have created thousands of jobs in the process.

Many of the largest black- and Hispanic-owned businesses were created through mergers, acquisitions, or joint investment projects. For instance, McDonalds collaborated with a Hispanic entrepreneur to form Lopez Foods, a top supplier that now generates \$500 million annually in revenue.

Johnson Controls partnered with a minority management team to create Bridgewater Interiors - now a billion-dollar company. And more than 20 years ago, Coca-Cola partnered with a minority investment group to create the Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bottling Company.

Minority-owned firms don't have to pursue these growth strategies blindly. The Minority Business Development Agency at the U.S. Department of Commerce supports more than 40 business centers nationwide to help minority-owned firms secure access to capital and contracts and assistance in entering growing foreign markets.

As we look for ways to create more jobs, shining a light on the economic potential of the minority-business community can significantly benefit the American people and economy. Minority businesses are creating jobs at a rate faster than non-minority owned businesses of similar size and are an increasingly important source of economic opportunity for all Americans.

David Hinson is the National Director of the Minority Business Development Agency at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Republicans block payment to seniors

Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34) released the following statement Wednesday after House Republicans refused to support the Seniors Protection Act.

As we enter the second consecutive year without a cost-of-living adjustment for Social Security retirees and other beneficiaries, this legislation would have provided 54 million Social Security recipients with a one-time payment of \$250 to help them make ends meet during these challenging times.

"In this time of economic uncertainty, America's seniors, veterans and people with disabilities depend on Social Security to make ends meet. An estimated 13 million American seniors rely on Social Security to simply survive," said Congresswoman Roybal-Allard, who supported the legislation today (12/8/2010).

"With so many elderly Americans living close to the poverty line, you can be sure that this payment would have had an important impact on our low-income seniors. It is unfortunate that congressional Republicans overwhelmingly chose to oppose this bill and continue to advocate for risky schemes like privatizing Social Security. I want to applaud my colleagues who supported this bill and reaffirm the commitment of Democrats to stand with our nation's seniors."

H.R. 5987, the Seniors Protection Act, failed in the U.S. House of Representatives today, December 8, 2010, by a vote of 254 - 153. The bill was considered under rules for expedited consideration of legislation that require a two-thirds majority for passage instead of a simple majority.

The Downey Patriot

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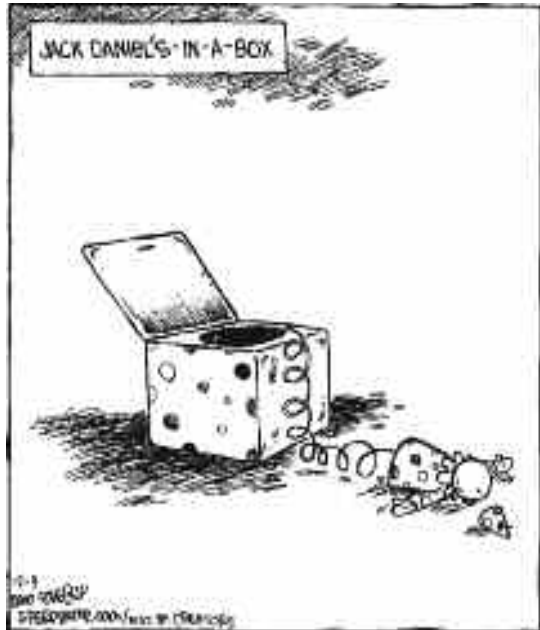
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SPEED BUMP



DAVE COVERLY



Downey Community Calendar

Events For December

- Sun. Dec. 12: **Home for the Holidays fundraiser**, tickets sold at Saywell Florist, 1 p.m.
- Tues. Dec. 14: **Elephant Bar representative speaks**, Bob's Big Boy, 7:30 a.m.
- Tues. Dec. 14: **Holiday caroling**, Downey City Library, 6:30 p.m.
- Tues. Dec. 14: **Warren choir Holiday Concert**, Downey Theatre, 7 p.m.
- Wed. Dec. 15: **Downey Sister Cities Christmas luncheon**, Rio Hondo Event Center, 12 p.m.

City Meetings

- 1st Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.: **Redevelopment Project Area Committee**, Cormack Meeting Room at Downey Library.
- 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.: **Planning Commission**, Council Chamber at City Hall.
- 1st Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.: **Recreation and Community Services Commission**, Council Chamber, City Hall.
- 1st Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.: **Emergency Preparedness Committee**, at Fire Station No. 1, 12222 Paramount Blvd.
- 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.: **City Council/Community Development Commission**, Council Chamber.
- 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.: **Library Advisory Board**, at Downey City Library.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Mondays

- 2nd Mon., 11 a.m.: **American Legion Auxiliary #270**, at United Methodist Church.
- 3rd Mon., 7 p.m.: **American Legion Post#270**, at Los Amigos C. C., for more info. call (626) 445-2582.
- 4th Mon., 7:30 p.m.: **Downey Numismatists**, at Downey Retirement Center, call 862-6666.

Tuesdays

- 9:30 a.m.: **Downey Seniors Club**, at Apollo Park, for information call Nadine Morris at 923-9422.
- 10 a.m.: **Downey Bocce Club**, at 7850 Quill Drive, for information call John Fiorenza at 652-4399.
- 12 p.m.: **Rotary Club**, at Rio Hondo, for information call Ingrid Martin at 413-4001.
- 6:00 p.m.: **Toastmasters Club 587**, at First Baptist Church, for info call John McAllister 869-0928.
- 7 p.m.: **Boy Scout Troop 2**, at Downey United Methodist Church, for information call 869-6478.
- 1st Tues., 7:30 a.m.: **Gangs Out of Downey**, at City Hall training room.
- 2nd Tues., 3 p.m.: **Keep Downey Beautiful**, at City Hall, for more information call 904-7159.
- 2nd and 4th Tues., 6 p.m.: **Sertoma Club**, at Cafe 'N Stuff, for information call (562) 927-6438.
- 2nd Tues., 6 p.m.: **Downey Fly Fishers**, at Apollo Park, for information call 425-7936.
- 3rd Tues., 6:30 p.m.: **Community Emergency Response Team meeting**, Fire station 1, 12222 Paramount.
- 3rd Tues., 7:30 p.m.: **Writer's Workshop West**, at Downey High School library, for info call 862-3106.
- Tues., Thurs. & Sat., 10 a.m.: **Downey Bocce Club**, at 7850 Quill Drive, for info. call John Fiorenza 652-4399.

Wednesdays

- 7 a.m.: **Kiwanis Club**, at Rio Hondo Events Center. Call Steve Roberson at 927-2626.
- 1 p.m.: **Women's Bocce Club**, at 7850 Quill Drive, for information call Marie Puch at 869-4366.
- 7 p.m.: **Out Post 132 Royal Rangers**, at Desert Reign Church, for info call 928-8000.
- 1st Weds., 10 a.m.: **Woman's Club of Downey**, for information call Barbara Briley-Beard 869-7618.
- 1st Weds., 11:30 a.m.: **Downey Coordinating Council**, at Community Center, for information call 923-4357.
- 1st Weds., 7:30 p.m.: **Downey Stamp Club**, at Maude Price School cafeteria, for information call 928-3028.
- 2nd Weds., 11:30 a.m.: **Christian Women's Club**, at Los Amigos Country Club, call Sonja 862-4347.
- 2nd Weds., 7:30 p.m.: **Downey Model A Club**, at Gallatin School Cafeteria, for information call 928-4132.
- 2nd & 4th Weds., 11:30 a.m.: **Downey AARP**, at Barbara J. Riley Senior Center, for info. call Pearl Koday 633-4355.
- 2nd & 4th Weds., 5:30 p.m.: **Lions Club**, at The Palms, for information call 803-4048.
- 3rd Weds., - **Downey Dog Obedience Club**, at Apollo Park, for info. call Gina 869-5213 or Valerie 420-2972.
- 3rd Weds., 10 a.m.: **Los Angeles County Quilters Guild**, at Women's Club, for information call 426-2418.
- 3rd Weds., 6 p.m.: **American Business Women's Association**, Rio Hondo Country Club, Call Barbara Carlson 863-2192.
- 4th Weds., 12:00 noon: **Retired Federal Employees**, at Barbara J Riley Center, call 943-5513.
- Wed. & Fri., 10:15 a.m.: **Senior Bingo**, at Apollo Park, for information call 904-7223.

Thursdays

- 7:30 a.m.: **Connections Networking**, at Bob's Big Boy, for info., call Nick Smith, 861-5222.
- 7:30 a.m.: **Soroptimist Int'l of Downey**, for information, call Mia Vasquez, 806-3217.
- 12 p.m.: **Kiwanis Club of Downey**, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Roy Jimenez 923-0971.
- 12:30 p.m.: **Take off Pounds Sensibly**, at First Christian Church, call (800) 932-8677.
- 6:30 p.m.: **Downey United Masonic Lodge # 220**, 8244 3rd St., Call 862-4176.
- 7 p.m.: **Troop 351, Boy Scouts of America**, at First Baptist Church, for information call 776-3388.
- 2nd Thurs., 7:30 p.m.: **Beaming Rebel Foxes Collectors Club**, for more information call Carl D. Jones at 923-2400.
- 4th Thurs., 10 a.m.: **Assistance League**, at Casa De Parley Johnson. for information call 869-0232.
- 4th Thurs., 7:30 p.m.: **Downey Historical Society programs**, at Community Center. Call 862-2777.

Fridays

- 7:30 a.m.: **Pro Networkers**, at Mimi's Cafe, for information call Barbara Briley Beard at 869-7618
- 3rd Fri., 8:30 a.m.: **Women's "In His Glory" Ministry** at Los Amigos C. C. (562) 622-3785.

Saturdays

- 9 a.m.: **Farmers Market**, Second Street at New Avenue, for information call (562) 904-7246.
- 2nd Sat., 12:30 p.m.: **AAUW**, Los Amigos Country Club.

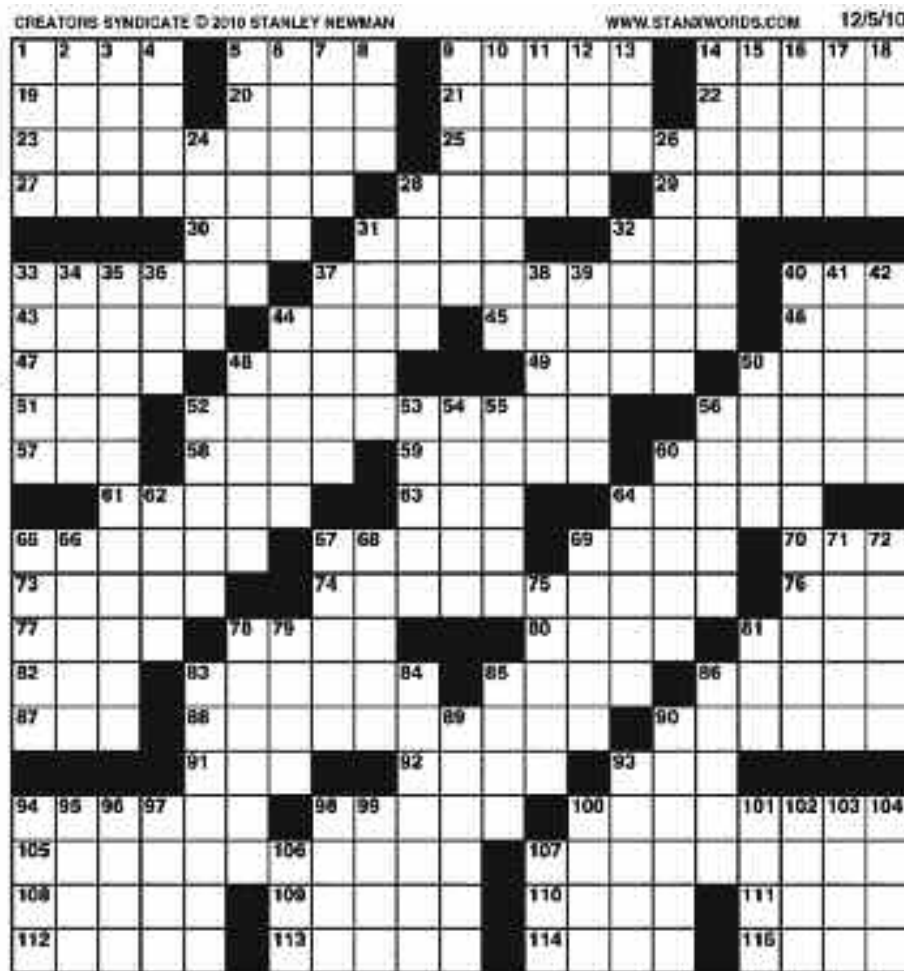
On This Day...

- Dec. 9, 1861** The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War is established by the U.S. Congress.
- 1875:** The Massachusetts Rifle Association, "America's Oldest Active Gun Club", is founded.
- 1958:** The John Birch Society was founded in the United States.
- 1962:** The Petrified Forest National Park is established in Arizona.
- 2008:** The Governor of Illinois, Rod Blagojevich, is arrested by federal officials for a number of alleged crimes including attempting to sell President Obama's United States Senate seat.
- Birthdays:** Actor/singer Donny Osmond (53), wrestler Kurt Angle (42), Weezer guitarist Brian Bell (42), Green Day drummer Tre Cool (38), rapper Canibus (36), actor Simon Helberg (30) and football player Leon Hall (26).

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

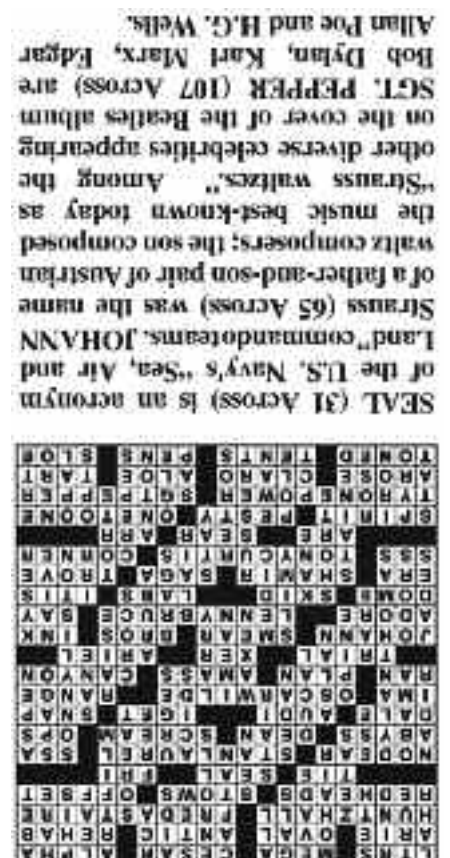
Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
CELEBRITY MEDLEY: All found on 107 Across
 by Fred Piscop

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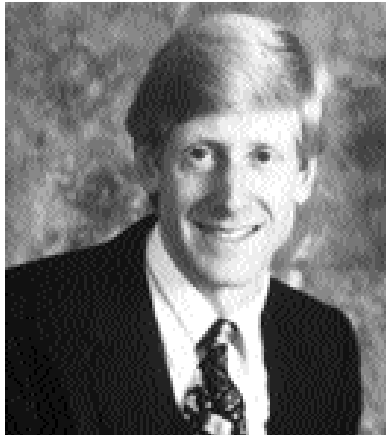
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You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at his e-mail address: StanXwords@aol.com. Or write him at P.O. Box 69, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you'd like a reply.



Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer



Doctor, how much water should I drink? I hear this question every day. We all know that enough water is essential for good health, yet everyone's needs are different. It's a simple question, with a not so simple answer!

Water makes up about 60% of our body weight and is the principal chemical component in the body. Every system depends on it. Water flushes toxins out of vital organs; carries nutrients to the cells; and moisturizes the nose, ears, throat, blood vessels, and tissues. Minor dehydration will result in thirst, loss of appetite, dry skin, skin flushing, dark colored urine, dry mouth, fatigue, weakness, chills and head rushes. More dehydration leads to increased heart rate, increased respiration, decreased sweating, decreased urination, increased body temperature, extreme fatigue, muscle cramps, headache, nausea, and tingling in the limbs. Once dehydration reaches 10% below normal levels, fluid loss becomes an emergency and can be fatal. Signs include muscle spasms, vomiting, racing pulse, visual changes, painful urination, confusion, difficulty breathing, seizures, and unconsciousness.

We lose water through breathing, perspiration, urine and bowel movements. Clearly, there is some ideal amount of water needed to replace these fluids and keep the system running correctly. The simplest approach is known as the eight by eight rule. Drink eight glasses of eight ounces of water per day. This is based on the replacement method: an adult urinates about six ounces of water per day, and we lose roughly an additional four cups each day through breathing, sweating, and bowel movements. Food accounts for roughly 20% of our total fluid intake, so if we consume about eight cups of water or other beverages a day along with a normal diet, we will typically replace the fluid lost. This is pretty general, but will normally suffice.

Another method is to look at the toilet bowl! If you drink enough fluid so that you rarely feel thirsty and produce about six cups or more of colorless or slightly yellow urine a day, your fluid intake is probably adequate. Since we don't typically measure our urine output, simply check the color.

Now that we have a general rule of thumb, let's explore factors that may change our specific requirement. Regular exercise, whether or not we sweat, demands that we drink extra water to compensate for the fluid loss. In general, drinking 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 extra cups

of water should suffice for short bouts of exercise, but intense exercise lasting more than an hour requires more, and if you tend to sweat heavily, even more fluid replacement is required. Sport drinks are more useful than water after heavy exercise.

The environment affects fluid requirements. Hot or humid weather will increase sweating. Spending time in heated buildings causes the skin to lose moisture. High altitudes (over 8,200 feet) may trigger increased urination and more rapid breathing, using up more fluids.

Women who are pregnant or nursing require more hydration. Pregnant women are advised to drink about 10 cups daily and women who are nursing need about 13.

Illness and various health conditions change the formula for fluid replacement substantially. Fevers, vomiting, diarrhea, bladder infections and kidney stones are examples of conditions that require us to drink more. On the opposite end of the spectrum are congestive heart failure, liver failure, and kidney failure, where fluid restriction is often necessary.

Remember that milk, juice, soup, and fruits and vegetables all contain some of the water that we need. Alcohol and caffeinated beverages (some sodas, coffee, tea, etc.) act as diuretics, however, and cause some fluid loss as well.

Is it dangerous to drink too much water? There is actually a condition known as water intoxication, which can be caused by a psychological condition known as psychogenic polydipsia. When too much water enters the body's cells, the tissues swell with the excess fluid. The result is a potentially dangerous decrease in sodium concentration.

Here are some simple guidelines to help avoid dehydration:

- Drink a glass of water with each meal and between meals
- Hydrate before, during and after exercise
- Try substituting sparkling water or other beverages for alcoholic drinks or sodas
- Work with your physician to determine the proper amount of fluid consumption for your specific needs.

I wish you the best of health.
Dr. Alan Frischer is former chief of staff and former 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.

Health officials urge flu vaccinations

LOS ANGELES – County health officials are recommending residents be vaccinated soon in time for end-of-year celebrations and gatherings.

Los Angeles County is currently seeing a slight increase in cases of influenza, including strains that were not included in vaccines from previous seasons but can be protected against with this year's vaccine.

"It is important for residents to get a new flu vaccine every season to ensure continuous protection,"

said Jonathan E. Fielding, MD, director of public health for L.A. County. "A look at flu activity in L.A. County and across the nation finds that this year's vaccine is an excellent match in protecting against currently circulating flu strains."

Influenza accounts for up to 200,000 hospitalizations and an average of 24,000 deaths each year in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Symptoms of the flu include

fever, cough, headache and muscle ache within the first three to five days of illness.

"It's never too late to vaccinate against the flu," Fielding said. "This is a serious illness, and getting either the flu shot or the nasal spray vaccine is a safe and effective way to avoid influenza."

"Keep in mind that it takes approximately two weeks to develop full immunity against the flu after you receive your vaccine," Fielding continued. "There, we encourage everyone who is eligible

to get their flu vaccine as soon as possible."

While an influenza vaccine is now recommended for everyone (except infants under six months old), certain groups are at greater risk of developing complications from the flu. These groups are pregnant women; children younger than 5; adults 50 and older; people of any age with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease or diabetes; people who live in nursing homes; and people live with, or care for, those persons at high-risk.

Health plans under greater scrutiny

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on Dec. 9 released new guidance that will give consumers more information about their health insurance plan.

Under the new rules, health insurers offering "mini-med" plans must notify consumers in plain language that their plan offers extremely limited benefits and direct them to www.HealthCare.gov where they can get more information about other coverage options.

HHS has also issued guidance restricting the sale of new mini-med plans except under very limited circumstances.

"The Affordable Care Act is

giving consumers more control over their health care by providing them with information about their health insurance options", said Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "Now, we're taking an unprecedented step to ensure consumers are informed when they purchase policies that offer limited coverage".

The Affordable Care Act will end limited-benefit health insurance plans, sometimes called "mini-med" plans, in 2014 and provide Americans with affordable, high-quality coverage options, HHS officials said. Today, mini-med plans are often the only type of private insurance available to some workers.

In order to protect coverage for these workers, HHS has issued temporary waivers from rules restricting the level of annual limits to some group health plans and health insurance issuers. Waivers only last for one year and are only available if the plan certifies that a waiver is necessary to prevent either a large increase in premiums or a significant decrease in access to coverage.

Guidance issued Thursday ensures that consumers in plans with low annual limits are notified of the quality of their health plan so that they can make informed decisions about whether mini-med coverage is right for them, authorities said.

The supplemental guidance requires health plans with waivers to tell consumers if their health care coverage is subject to an annual dollar limit lower than what is required under the law. Specifically, the notice must include the dollar amount of the annual limit along with a descrip-

tion of the plan benefits to which the limit applies.

Additional guidance issued Thursday also provides new rules on when mini-med plans can continue to be sold. Under limited circumstances, insurers that have obtained a waiver of the annual limit requirement can sell policies to new employers and individuals.

The Affordable Care Act bans annual dollar limits beginning in 2014. Until then, annual limits are phased out under HHS regulations published in June 2010. For plan years starting between September 23, 2010 and September 22, 2011, plans may not limit annual coverage of essential health benefits such as hospital, physician and pharmacy benefits to less than \$750,000.

The restricted annual limit will be \$1.25 million for plan years starting on or after September 23, 2011, and \$2 million for plan years starting between September 23, 2012 and January 1, 2014.

Register now for marathon at San Diego Zoo

SAN DIEGO – Get set for the San Diego Zoo Safari Park's inaugural half marathon and 5K family fun walk this spring. Both courses will start and finish inside the Safari Park, with views of bonobos, giraffes, rhinos and herds of other animals from around the globe.

The competitive half marathon starts at 7 a.m. on March 13, 2011, in the parking lot of the park.

The 13.1-mile course runs through the San Pasqual Valley past orange groves and a golf course, weaves in and out of the park and ultimately ends near the park's herd of African elephants. The half marathon is limited to 3,500 runners and has a time limit of three hours.

Awards will be given to the top three overall half-marathon finishers and the top three finishers in each division. All marathon participants will receive a finisher medal.

The registration fee for the half marathon is \$65 until Dec. 31. Fees for the marathon will increase to \$70 in January and \$75 in February, until March 9, 2011. If space is still available, race-day registration is \$85.

Each half marathon registration includes admission to the Park on the day of the race, a T-shirt, a virtual goodie bag and vouchers for two spectators to enter the Safari Park on race day for the discounted rate of \$15 (valid on race day only).

The 5K walk is open to all ages. Rates for adults are \$25, increasing to \$30 in January until March 9; race-day registration is \$35. Children ages 3-11 are \$20.

Secure, online registration for both events is available at www.safariparkhalfmarathon.com or call 619-557-3915 to request a registration form.

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Word of MOUTH
by Scheir S. Azer, D.D.S.

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Under new coach, Vikings look to the future

■ **GIRLS BASKETBALL:** Raymond Walker looks to get program back on track.

BY JENNIFER CHO, INTERN

DOWNEY – With a new head coach and returning key players, the Downey girls' varsity basketball team is looking to improve its game after last season's third place finish in the San Gabriel Valley League.

Raymond Walker is the team's new head coach and though last year's star players Katie Marifan and Debra Lovell may have graduated, seniors Demetria Love, Irma Urzua, Andrea Acosta, Janei Hawkins and Amanda Mazon are ready to lead their team this season. The team will participate in non-league tournaments and games before the opening league match against Gahr on Jan. 12.

Last season ended unfavorably for Downey, losing to an undefeated Lynwood team 77-55 and against cross-town rivals Warren 50-38 in February. A 68-28 loss at Troy capped the Vikings' lackluster year and although Downey finished with an 11-6 record, its league record was 5-5.

Love is expected to be a star player for the Vikings, ending last season with a total of 224 rebounds and 18 blocked shots. Acosta had 25 steals, Mazon had 24 steals and Urzua had 23 steals.

Returning players include juniors Brie Hatter, Kaylan Lane, Rayana Villalpondo and Anissa Segura. Hatter ended the 09-10 year with a 41% field goal percentage while Villalpondo had 27 assists. Love, Urzua, and Hawkins are projected to be the team's lead scorers for this season, if last season's impressive numbers were any indication.

Walker says though the team may have lost its best player and offensive threat to Cerritos, Downey has strengths that will guide the team throughout the season.

"The girls have chemistry and a desire to learn and to play defense," he said. "They're very hard workers with great attitudes."

Bears more prepared than ever

Frigid winter temperatures can't keep a Bear down, especially a Warren girls' water polo Bear, whose season is already on track to success after undergoing several early changes.

After a summer of players participating in the Junior Olympics with other high schools and an overall sense of improvement, the Warren girls' water polo team stand today as a team that is more productive and excited than ever before. The fall preseason schedule was also kind to the lady Bears, who walked away from a tournament undefeated, easily defeating Cerritos and beating Downey by 7 points.

With a recent 14-11 win against Perris High in the El Dorado Benson Varsity Tournament, the girls are well on their way to a successful season, even if a majority of the team is relatively new.

"The team is very young, mostly consisting of sophomores and juniors," said head coach Josie Cordero. "Senior Saree Waugh is the primary center player who is

currently being recruited by Division I schools across the country to play water polo."

Many of the team's young players have already made quite a splash as National Team and Junior Olympic participants. Junior Ivana Castro, a USA National Team member is accompanied by a freshman, Kayla Casas, from Commerce club water polo. At this summer's Los Angeles-held Junior Olympics, Castro was a member of the 16U team, who won the bronze at the Junior Olympics and Casas' 14U team took home the gold.

Cordero feels both girls will "provide leadership and experience to this young and talented team." Another junior, Elisa De Luna, is looking to stand out in the starting lineup as the team's center.

Sophomores Alexis Huerta, Alma Najera, Celeste Moreira and Star Meza are also standouts at a young age and are looking to receive a regular spot in the starting rotation. Goalie Joanne Svendsen, with already one year under her cap, has worked exten-

sively over the summer with a goalie coach, Janine Boutte, to improve her accuracy and is more prepared than ever. Freshman Destiny Hernandez, a Commerce Club player, is said to be an early standout on the offense.

While many teams face the same competition year after year, the lady Bears are ready to take on a tougher set of waters this season.

"The team's schedule now puts the program up against some heavy-hitting programs in Division I," said Cordero. "The strength of the schedule will not only greatly challenge this young and talented team, but looks to give the girls as much experience and exposure to a higher level of play that is more up-tempo. This experience and exposure will obviously help prepare the girls for league play and also playoffs."

A lot of times with sports programs, coaches and faculty have to worry about the commitment their athletes put into the program and whether or not they will take it seriously. Thankfully for Cordero, the



JOSEPH APODACA

Warren girls' water polo team is fully committed to the game, to the point that it even catches her by surprise.

"There is a kind of energy that you feel around them, and it's something I haven't seen in the team in a long time," said Cordero. "They are growing and improving, and having fun doing it. It's contagious. Our coaching staff sees it, the kids see it, and so do the parents."

Vikings appear dominate in early games

■ **BOYS BASKETBALL:** Dami Adefeso named tournament MVP.

BY SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Downey boys' basketball swept their way to the top of the La Quinta Basketball tournament last week, routing all four teams they faced to a championship and a four game winning streak to start their season.

Double-digit point margin victories highlighted all four games they played, and the Vikings also had players named to the all-tournament team.

Forward Dami Adefeso was named the tournament MVP and named to the all-tournament team averaging 20 points and 14.5 rebounds per game. In the championship game, Adefeso had 24 points and 19 rebounds in the Vikings' 53-38 blowout win against San Clemente.

Guard Garrett Neilan and guard Vincent Quigg were also named to the all-tournament team. Neilan averaged 19.5 points, 8.5 rebounds, and 4.5 assists per game, and Quigg was recognized as the tournament's defensive stopper, finding himself guarding every team's best offensive player.

"We are very happy to win the tournament and get off to a good start," Vikings' head coach Larry Shelton said. "I thought our effort was good throughout the tournament and we showed people that we do have a good team. All the kids should be proud of their accomplishment."

While the tournament was a success, Shelton also said that not everything was all glitz and glamour.

"We also found some things we need to work on for the future," he said. "We certainly feel that winning the tournament will not be our No. 1 season highlight at the end of the year. We have high expectations and expect to accomplish a lot more before this season is over."

Downey opened up the tournament with a blowout win against Saddleback last Monday, dismantling them 83-26. Two days later, the Vikings cruised to a 30 point victory over Westminster, 68-38.

Things started to get a little tighter when they faced off against Pacifica last Friday in their toughest challenge of the tournament, but still winning by 13 points, 54-41.

Without any days off in between Pacifica and the championship game, Adefeso and Neilan helped lead the Vikings to the 15-point win over San Clemente to claim the championship.

Warren hangs on for win over Chiefs

■ **BOYS BASKETBALL:** Head coach Ryan Hart unhappy with Bears' defense.

BY SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

SANTA FE SPRINGS – Going into the fourth quarter up 10 points would be a comfortable lead for most teams, but Warren's boys' basketball made it interesting with seconds to go on the floor to pull out a 64-61 win over Santa Fe on Tuesday night on the road.

With seconds left and Santa Fe in possession of the ball, David Jasso came up with a steal on the Chiefs' inbound play to clinch the game. But before Jasso's forced turnover, it was one of four blocked shots by John Elam that protected the lead and his activity in the second half that propelled the Bears to the victory.

"We did everything we could to

make it interesting," said head coach Ryan Hart. "[Elam] was a beast for us inside. He got us some blocked shots and some easy ones inside. We're not used to getting easy ones, but he played real big tonight."

Elam's activity came all in the second half of the game where he scored all of his 16 points in the paint, along with six rebounds, and the two rejections. The junior center made it look easy with Santa Fe's small lineup. No one was able to challenge his shots on the inside.

But before Elam took over in the second half, seniors Cejay Anderson and James Reyes were the offensive catalysts. Anderson had a double-double with 14 points and 11 rebounds before sitting in the fourth quarter, and Reyes had 18 points and five rebounds in the game.

"They're a couple seniors that we're really relying on," Hart said.

"The seniors have to step up. Those two know their roles and they accept it and embrace it."

Most of Reyes' points also came in the paint, an area that the Bears dominated all night long. Warren outrebounded the Chiefs 33-27 with the Bears' offensive rebounding proving to be the difference.

Along with Elam and Anderson's activity under the basket, forward Greg Vallez's length bothered many shots and kept many plays alive under the rim. A lot of the rebounds led to fast break points, specifically in the second quarter where the Bears really started to pad the cushion that allowed them to squeak out the win.

After the first quarter, both teams were tied at 15, but the Bears took the lead and never relinquished it, going up by 7 points at halftime, 33-26. Warren forced

nine turnovers in the quarter, but Hart was still not satisfied with the defense shown.

"We took a step backwards," he said. "Last week we came out with some energy. We try to defend first in this program. We came out...I don't know, a different team out there."

Warren held serve in the third quarter, going into the fourth 51-41, but started to play at a fast, ragged pace with Santa Fe.

After the lead dwindled down to 5 points with just over two minutes to go, Warren finally started to get into their half court offensive sets and burned some clock. But the Chiefs refused to go away hitting some jumpers and a 3-pointer with nine seconds to go to pull them within 3.

But Jasso's steal sealed the victory for the Bears.

Downey midgets reach finals

DOWNEY – The Downey No. 1 team from DJAA won the Southern California Municipal Athletic Federation's Southeast Division tournament and will advance to the finals Dec. 18-19.

The Downey team, comprised of players from the DJAA's Midget Division football league, defeated Cerritos, 33-0; Bell Gardens, 54-0; Downey Bulldogs, 28-0; and Hawaiian Gardens, 20-12.

The team is coached by Tim Hill, Robert Garcia and Steve Morris. The finals will be held next weekend in Fontana.



Downey youth football players defeated four local teams to advance to a tournament final next week. From left: Trevor Hill, Justin Reyes, James Ellison, Andres Herrera, Pablo Alvarez, Jacob Lopez, Eddie Esparza, David Mendoza, Sean Morris and Eli Garcia.

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Christmas concert at Messiah

DOWNEY – Messiah Lutheran Church will hold its second annual Christmas concert Dec. 18 featuring church organist Kyle Black.

A spaghetti dinner will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., followed by the concert at 7 p.m.

For tickets, call the church office at (562) 923-1215.

Newcomers Club installing officers

DOWNEY – Downey Newcomers Club will install its new slate of officers Monday at the Rio Hondo Event Center.

For information on attending the luncheon, call Melba Willbanks at (562) 862-2799.

Resident competes on 'Millionaire'

DOWNEY – Zach Baker, a computer programmer for Downey, competed on two episodes of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" which aired Wednesday and Thursday on KTLA-5.

Baker, a 1993 graduate of Downey High School, selected his wife, Jenny, as his on-air companion. Taping took place in New York City.

Producers did not divulge how Baker did on the show, and this newspaper went to press before the show had finished airing. But Baker said if he became a millionaire, he would purchase season tickets to the Anaheim Ducks and take a family cruise in the Greek Isles.

Baker and his wife have two children, Alex, 5, and Daniel, 2.



Warren High School choir members recently went caroling at a Downey fire station. The entire 300-member choir will present its annual Holiday Concert this Tuesday night at the Downey Theatre. The public is invited.

Warren choirs to present holiday concert

DOWNEY – The six Warren High School choirs will present its annual Holiday Concert at the Downey Theatre on Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Featuring the 114-voice Men's Choir, the concert "promises to be an evening of fun and holiday spirit," organizers said. The entry-level choir is also a hit with audience members every year.

The concert will also feature performances from the elite Vocal Ensemble, a small group representing the most advanced singers in Warren's vocal music department. This year the Vocal Ensemble has already performed at Universal City Walk and for several community groups, including Rotary, the American Association of University Women and the district-wide PTA.

The ensemble also regularly sings at local hospitals and convalescent centers. The group recently sang carols for Downey firefighters

– a first for the ensemble – and will be caroling throughout Downey neighborhoods this month.

Warren's choir program also features the entry-level Mixed Choir, and the advanced Varsity Men's, Varsity Women's and Concert Choirs. More than 300 students sing for Warren choir, which is under the direction of Robert Petersen.

Tickets to the concert are \$5 and will be available at the door. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

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Gangs Out of Downey board members presented a \$25,000 donation to the Downey Police Department on Tuesday.

Donation ensures campus officer

DOWNEY – The Downey Police Department was presented with a \$25,000 donation from Gangs Out of Downey on Tuesday to help fund a school resource officer.

The donation ensures that a police officer will be assigned to Downey, Warren and Columbus high schools through the end of the school year.

The School Resource program began more than a decade ago and allows each of the area public high

schools to be staffed with a police officer. Officials said having an on-campus police officer not only helps to provide a safer learning environment, but also allows for officer interaction with the students, providing mentoring opportunities and law enforcement education.

Thad Phillips, president of Gangs Out of Downey, presented

the donation to Police Chief Rick Esteves during GOOD's monthly meeting Tuesday.

"The funding of this program has become a great example of the collaborative effort and close working relationship shared with the Downey Unified School District, GOOD and the city of Downey," the police department said in a statement.

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Deserving students earn scholarships at Cerritos College

NORWALK – The Cerritos College Foundation awarded scholarships to eight female re-entry students last Thursday.

The \$500 E. Maude West Scholarship was presented to Patricia Perez of Norwalk. The scholarship was established by long-time Artesia resident E. Maude West, who was renowned in the community for her charitable work and her commitment to women's issues and the pursuit of educational goals.

Anita McLaughlin, of Bellflower, was presented with the \$750 Ellen Carver Re-Entry Scholarship. This scholarship was established by the Woman's Club of Artesia-Cerritos in memory of the late club member Ellen Carver, who was very active in the community.

Another scholarship sponsored by the Club is the Woman's Club of Artesia-Cerritos Scholarship. An

award of \$750 each was presented to Samantha Navarro of South Gate, Victoria Ramos of Huntington Park, and Danielle Thomas of Norwalk at the club meeting.

The scholarship is awarded to female students re-entering the academic world.

Thomas received additional help with completing her educational goals with a \$500 scholarship from the Norwalk Woman's Club, which is also awarded to a female re-entry student.

The Golden Girls Scholarship, established in 2008 by five women, also aims to help female re-entry students.

The "golden girls" decided that instead of spending money on birthday and Christmas gifts for one another they would use that money for a scholarship. The \$700 scholarship was presented to Martha Ruiz of Lynwood.

Norma Gutierrez, of Norwalk, received the \$1,000 Jean O. Michael Scholarship. Jean Michael, wife of retired Cerritos College President Dr. Wilford Michael, presented Gutierrez with the scholarship that was established in her honor by her daughter and son-in-law. The scholarship is for a re-entry woman who is majoring in business.

The Cerritos College Foundation also awarded 25 student

scholarships totaling \$16,800 during its board meeting on Nov. 18.

Among the organizations presenting scholarships were the Habib American Bank, the Woman's Club of Artesia-Cerritos, GST, NHK Laboratories, Norwalk Woman's Club, and the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association. A number of scholarships awarded were established by private individuals as well.

The Robert W. Collins Scholarship for Administration of Justice Students was presented to Jarrod Schultz, of Lakewood and Nayeli Duenas, of Downey, who received a \$500 award each. The scholarship was established in memory of Robert W. Collins, father of administration of justice faculty member John Collins. Robert Collins was a veteran of World War II and the Korean War, who rose through the ranks to become chief of police for the City of Monterey Park.

The \$500 Mark & Barnett Chen Physical Therapist Assistant Scholarship was presented to Llanell Florendo of La Mirada. Established in memory of Mr. Chen who himself devoted much of his life to the health care field, the scholarship aims to assist compassionate and outstanding students in the physical therapy assistant education program.

It also honors his wife, Barnett, who dedicated her life to the care of others.

Florendo was also honored with another scholarship that assists physical therapy students, the Marijean Piorowski Physical Therapist Assistant Scholarship. The scholarship was established in honor of Marijean Piorowski, a retired physical therapy faculty member of Cerritos College.

Julio Castro, of Bell Gardens, received the \$250 NHK Laboratories Chemistry Scholarship. Established by NHK Laboratories, the scholarship is awarded to a qualified chemistry student.

The \$500 John Moore First Step Scholarship was presented by Moore to Alejandra Ramirez of Long Beach. The scholarship was established by John Moore, a now-retired 19-year member of the Board, to help first semester college students who show the promise of succeeding.

The Alice Wang Scholarship, an award of \$500 each, was presented to Claudia Gonzalez of Downey, Mary Helen Moreno of Whittier, and Maria Santos of Bellflower. Established by J.P. Wang, Foundation board member and owner of GST, in honor of his wife Alice Wang, the scholarship recognizes a single mother majoring in child development.

Newborn surrendered at fire station

INDUSTRY – A newborn baby boy was safely surrendered at a Los Angeles County fire station Tuesday, county officials have announced.

The mother entered Los Angeles County Fire Station 87, located in the unincorporated area of the city of Industry, Tuesday at 3 p.m. She presented the crew with a newborn baby, about three hours old.

As is standard practice, the baby was placed in protective custody as it awaits adoption.

Los Angeles County approved a law nine years ago that allows infants no more than three years old to be surrendered at fire stations and hospitals. Since the Safe Surrender program was adopted, 81 infants have been safely turned in.

DMV imposter arrested

LOS ANGELES – A man accused of scamming victims of as much as \$10,000 by posing as a DMV employee is facing seven years in prison.

Julio Cesar Alvitres, 54, allegedly carried fake DMV employee identification card and – for a fee – offered to help victims register their vehicles, and obtain drivers' licenses and social security cards.

Each victim paid Alvitres between \$100 and \$4,500, prosecutors said.

Indigents buried in mass grave

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe presided over the burial of 1,440 indigents who were buried in a mass grave Wednesday at L.A. County Cemetery.

Many of the people buried Wednesday were homeless or poor, with no known family members.

"This holiday season many of us are reminded of how fortunate we are to be surrounded by our loved ones. Sadly, not everyone shares this blessing," Knabe said. "Regardless of what their status in life was, each one of their lives mattered."

A moment of silence was held at Tuesday's County Board of Supervisors meeting in honor of those buried.

Hit and run driver sought

DUARTE – Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person responsible for the fatal hit-and-run of 86-year-old Gabriel Barragon on Dec. 1 in Duarte.

Barragon was struck by a vehicle – described only as being black – traveling southbound on Buena Vista Street in Duarte.

Anyone with information on the case is asked to call Sgt. Anthony Haynes of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department at (626) 285-7171.

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Celebs tapped for boat parade

MARINA DEL REY – Barry Williams, who played the eldest son on the hit TV series “The Brady Bunch,” will take part in the 48th annual Holiday Boat Parade taking place Saturday night in Marina Del Rey.

“The Brady Bunch” show ran in prime time from 1969-74 and continued for decades in reruns; by the 1990s the show and its cast had become nostalgic icons.

In March of 2002, Williams appeared on Fox TV’s “Celebrity Boxing” in a match with Danny Bonaduce.

The boat parade will also feature an appearance by Brittany Wagner, recently crowned Miss California International 2011.

The boat parade will follow a fireworks display over the main channel of Marina del Rey.

For more information, visit www.mdrboatparade.org.

Children’s author signing books

LONG BEACH – Children’s author Suzanne Sumner Ferry will sign copies of her latest book, “Corinna the Christmas Elf,” Dec. 18 at Roy Robbins Gifts & Stationery in Long Beach.

The book-signing begins at 2 p.m.

The store is located at 4244 Atlantic Ave., in the Bixby Knolls district of Long Beach.

CareMore opens ‘rest stop’ in mall

DOWNEY – Downey seniors are invited to take a “rest stop” while shopping at Stonewood Center, courtesy of CareMore.

The company recently opened a rest stop inside the mall for seniors to sit and rest while shopping. A CareMore representative is on-site to answer questions about Medicare or CareMore health plan options.

The rest stop resembles a living room designed to feel as comfortable as home.

“This is a new way to educate seniors about their local health options and to provide respite during the busy holiday season,” said Leeba Lessin, president of CareMore. “We know seniors and their families have a lot of questions about the changes in Medicare, so we’re providing a comfortable place for them to ask questions and learn about their options with local Medicare programs.”

The rest stop will be in operation through the end of December.

The remarkable Christmas truce of 1914

By **JIM MURPHY**, SPECIAL TO THE DOWNEY PATRIOT

Today, the economics of the holiday season and the hoped for signs of an improving economy seem to overpower any other possible message, including peace. While this should be a time of “peace on earth, good will toward men,” it feels as if it would take a miracle today to make peace happen.

Yet at Christmas time, nearly a century ago, there was just such a miracle. In the midst of a world war, weary soldiers from both sides put down their guns and declared a moment of peace. The story is likely to sound vaguely familiar because the Christmas Truce of 1914 has achieved all but legendary status.

However, the Christmas Truce is not the stuff of legend, but of history. And, regardless of how familiar you think you are with the particulars, the realities of this extraordinary occurrence nearly 100 years ago are even more remarkable and moving.

In December 1914, long before U.S. involvement, the countries of Europe were engaged in a terrible war. In less than six months the fighting had torn up farmland, leveled villages, and killed over a million soldiers.

Exhausted, bogged down in muddy trenches with the enemy just yards away, most soldiers thought the war would never end. And then it did. Briefly. Here are four things you should know about the Christmas Truce of 1914.

The truce lasted weeks. Most people assume that the truce lasted for just one day. Yes, the truce began on Christmas day, but in the majority of locales, it lasted until after New Year’s Eve or even longer.

A British soldier, for example, took photographs of his German counterparts on Christmas Day and gave his new German friends copies on New Year’s Day.

In another section of the front, the ceasefire lasted even longer. The truce stretched until Easter, a span of nearly four months!

Throughout the duration of the truce, soldiers from both sides of the trenches shared a kind of camaraderie. In many places, they

sang songs together, shared an occasional meal, and exchanged small presents of food and tobacco. They helped each other bury their fellow soldiers, and even held joint religious services to mourn those who had been lost.

The truce involved many, many soldiers. Although oft-told versions of the story say that only a few hundred soldiers were involved, the actual number was far, far greater. In fact, more than 110,000 soldiers along the western front spontaneously stopped fighting.

The number of soldiers, Germans and Austrians on one side and British, French and Belgian soldiers on the other, was so great that many commanding generals went out of their way to suppress the news, fearing that they would be blamed for such a wide scale mutiny. This remarkable, massive act of civil disobedience actually involved even more participants than one of history’s most famous moments -- the civil disobedience showdown in China at Tiananmen Square over two decades ago!

Commanding officers participated as well. While many commanding officers for both sides condemned any truce, hundreds of officers in the field encouraged the halt to fighting and willingly participated in it.

They knew their men were exhausted, both physically and emotionally. They also realized that the military tactics used at the time -- especially the massed charge at machine gun and artillery positions -- were a futile waste of the lives of these men.

More German soldiers than Allied soldiers initiated the truce. This is a surprising fact.

Frequently, German soldiers would suggest a break from fighting, either by holding a sign or waving a white flag above their trenches. They’d climb over the parapet holding their hands up in the air to show they carried no weapons.

While this often took the allied soldiers by complete surprise, the allied soldiers would then respond in kind.

While this truce was clearly miraculous, the Christmas Truce did not, ultimately, put an end to the war. It dragged on for four more years. Although labeled “the war to end all wars,” this war did not put an end to world wars. And, perhaps, even more tragically, historians now agree, that this was a war that did not need to happen.

They believe that a mix of missed messages, incompetent leadership, personal fears and jealousies created an inevitable march to war that could not be stopped.

However, the truce remains a piece of history worth remembering and recounting as often as possible. The spirit of the truce lived on in the hearts of all those who participated. Those fighting on both sides recognized that what they shared in common was greater than what tore them apart.

The Christmas Truce of 1914 also proved to the rest of the world that, at least for a moment, it really is possible for peace to reign over a war weary world.

Historian *Jim Murphy* is the author of *Truce: The Day the Soldiers Stopped Fighting*. More information about his other award-winning books, such as *An American Plague* and *The Great Fire*, can be found on jimmurphybooks.com.

Tom Finn biography difficult to put down

■ Resident Ron Davis tells a gripping story in the biography of his father, Tom Finn.

By **HENRY VENERACION**, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – At nearly 500 pages, Ron Davis’ self-published biography of his grandfather, “Tom Finn, An Uncommon Odyssey,” is impossible to read in one sitting.

But because it’s about a truly colorful and interesting man, who, following Irish Catholic tradition, emigrated from County Mayo on the Emerald Isle’s west coast to the immediate vicinity of the Black Hills in South Dakota, and otherwise brawled and drank his way through an unrelenting series of crises, the reader will find much here to hold his interest.

As his story unfolds, Davis’ grandfather becomes bigger than life, one of those instances when fact is stranger than fiction. For even as a young kid, Tom Finn showed power in his fists and was fearless even against older opponents. In barroom and street fights (and there were plenty), he invariably emerged victorious. Standing nearly 6-feet and wiry-strong, his many adventures included employment at the shipyards where the Titanic was being built, prairie life, and encounters with the KKK.

A haunting sense of unease threaded throughout his life due to the “curse” cast on him by the mid-wife-friend of his mother, Mary, when he figured in an accident that caused the midwife’s ire.

He negotiated the distance from Sioux Falls to Lead, and vice-versa, in courting his future wife, Kate, hobo-style, riding in boxcars.

Now married, family spats and separations became frequent, exacerbated mostly by his intemperate drinking and insensitive ways. Kate nevertheless bore him seven kids,



Ron Davis

some of whom had to be cared for by an orphanage after her untimely death. Tom himself died at the ripe old age of 89.

The book is dotted with bits of background Irish history as well as Irish and English Gaelic language especially in the early chapters (a glossary of terms is provided). There is also insightful narrative about the potato famine that impoverished and decimated Ireland in the mid-1880s.

Educated in Ireland and in the U.S., the 18-year Downey resident Davis got his Bachelor’s degrees in philosophy and English (minor in classical languages, Latin and Greek) at Loyola University in Chicago. He later earned, among other things, a master’s in research psychology from Cal State Long Beach.

Davis said working off-and-on on the book, his first attempt at biography, took him five years to write. It’s not that it was difficult to write. Once his research and interviews were done, “the words just flowed,” he said.

A book signing at the Downey City Library has been scheduled for St. Patrick’s Day. The book sells for \$16.95.

He is now at work on a book on the evolution of religious belief systems. Davis had taken 21 units of theology while at Loyola.

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The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 11/25/10, 12/2/10, 12/9/10

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE T.S. No. GM-220286-C Investor No. 5073275 Loan No. 0359394583 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 10/18/2006... UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE...

The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/2/10, 12/9/10, 12/16/10

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recourse. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid... THE PURCHASER SHALL HAVE NO FURTHER RECOURSE AGAINST THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGEE, OR THE MORTGAGEE'S ATTORNEY...

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Code 2923.54 the undersigned, on behalf of the beneficiary, loan servicer or authorized agent, declares as follows: [1] The mortgage loan servicer has obtained from the commissioner a final or temporary order of exemption pursuant to Section 2923.53 that is current and valid on the date the notice of sale is filed...

The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 11/25/10, 12/2/10, 12/9/10

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The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/2/10, 12/9/10, 12/16/10

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 24594 A Loan No. 3013214669 Title specified herein is subject to the mortgage... UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE...

The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/2/10, 12/9/10, 12/16/10

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current and valid on the date the notice of sale is filed; and 2. The timeframe for giving notice of sale specified in subdivision (a) of Section 2923.52 does not apply pursuant to Section 2923.52 or Section 2923.55... CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY, as Trustee (714) 259-7850 or www.fidelityasap.com (714) 573-1965...

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The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/2/10, 12/9/10, 12/16/10

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Sale, the "mortgage loan servicer" as defined in California Civil Code Section 2923.53(k) (3) declares that it has obtained from the Commissioner a final or temporary order of exemption pursuant to California Civil Code Section 2923.53 and that the exemption is current and valid on the date this Notice of Sale is recorded... CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY, as Trustee (714) 259-7850 or www.fidelityasap.com (714) 573-1965...

The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/9/10, 12/16/10, 12/23/10

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The Downey Patriot, #BS124251 12/9/10, 12/16/10, 12/23/10

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Roybal-Allard encourages residents to get tested for HIV

DOWNEY — Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34), chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Health Care Task Force and a senior member of the Appropriations Subcommittee responsible for funding federal health programs, released a statement earlier this month on the occasion of World AIDS Day.

"Today, December 1, we commemorate World AIDS Day — a day to celebrate, to remember, and to commit ourselves to an AIDS-free future. We have made tremendous progress in the 22 years since that first World AIDS Day in 1988, and there is much to celebrate. Because of our investments in domestic and international HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and research, we have seen this disease progress from an acute terminal illness to a manageable chronic disease. The over 5 million people now getting AIDS drugs in the developing world are living proof that investments can translate into lives saved.

"This is also a day to remember all those living with HIV/AIDS

and those we have lost to this devastating disease. Amidst all of the progress we have made, there were 2.9 million new HIV infections in 2009, drastically outpacing the 1.2 million newly placed on treatment. In the United States there are significant disparities in the rates of new infection in both minority communities and among young gay men. Although African-American and Hispanic persons represent about one-quarter of the country's population, more than half of new AIDS cases reported to CDC are among these populations. Among children, the disparities are even more dramatic, with African-American and Hispanic children representing more than 80 percent of pediatric AIDS cases.

"While there are many difficult challenges ahead in the battle against HIV / AIDS, there is one very real and attainable goal that we can all commit ourselves to in the short run. Worldwide more than 1000 children are born with HIV every day. Although 90 percent of those children are born in Africa, new childhood infections here in

the United States continue to have negative impacts on children's health, their families, their communities and their opportunities.

"There is existing treatment to reduce a mother's chance of transmitting this disease to her child from around 40 percent to less than 1 percent. Regrettably, only half of the women who need this treatment have access today. Across the globe and here in our own communities, we need to commit ourselves to ensuring that all pregnant women are tested for HIV and, if found to be positive, have access to treatment to control their disease and prevent transmission to their babies.

Today I am urging all young women in my District, and across Los Angeles, who may be considering becoming pregnant to get tested for HIV. Talk to your sisters, your daughters, your cousins, and your girlfriends and encourage them to do the same. If we all work together, we can help create an AIDS-free generation on children by 2015."



PHOTO BY FLICKR USER ABMJG/CREATIVE COMMONS

Cal State Long Beach posted record numbers of admission applications, according to figures released this week by the Cal State University system.

Cal State Long Beach leads in first-time freshmen

LONG BEACH — Less than a week after the closing of the application deadline to attend any of the 23 California State University (CSU) campuses in fall 2011, the final numbers are in, and Cal State Long Beach leads the way as the system posted record numbers of applications, including those from first-time freshman.

CSULB received more applications from potential undergraduate students for the fall 2011 semester than any of the other 22 CSU campuses in the system, according to CSULB President F. King Alexander. He reported a preliminary count of more than 70,500 freshman and transfer student applications.

Overall, the CSU Chancellor's Office received more than 611,000 undergraduate applications system-wide, slightly above last year's record high.

The priority application period for undergraduate students interested in attending any CSU campus next fall ended Nov. 30, and the number of electronic applications

submitted for enrollment at CSULB was 69,261. With the inclusion of international students and actual paper applications, the Long Beach campus received 70,536 applications in all, breaking the 70,000 mark for the second straight year.

"Having the highest number of undergraduate applications of any CSU campus speaks well of the quality of education and student life at Cal State Long Beach," Alexander said. "At the same time, another record number of applications for the CSU system clearly demonstrates the strong demand for a CSU education.

"While these numbers point to the recognition of our campus' reputation, we are tempering our enthusiasm a little bit," the president added. "With another projected \$20-plus billion shortfall in next year's state budget, we don't know what that means for the 2011-12 CSU budget. If our campus budget is reduced, then obviously we will be limited in the number of these students we can admit in the fall."

CSULB led the CSU system in

first-time freshman applications with 49,764 received. That number is more than 2,000 higher than last year's 47,683 first-time freshman applicant total. The campus also received the largest number of transfer student applications with 20,039.

Of the more than 611,000 undergraduate applications received in the two-month fall 2011 priority application period (Oct. 1 through Nov. 30), the number of prospective first-time freshman applications received was 426,992, a sizeable increase of 14,819 from the previous year.

HS counselors learn about Cerritos

NORWALK — Cerritos College hosted the 2010 High School Counselor Conference on Dec. 3, a day-long conference featuring more than 70 high school counselors who learned what Cerritos College has to offer their

students in post-secondary education.

Dr. Linda Lacy, president of Cerritos College, spoke of progress around campus, including changes to the college's infrastructure, edu-

cational programs and partnerships.

She also stressed that students should utilize various student support services in order to succeed in college.

A student panel addressed the counselors as well, and shared their campus experiences and how they have benefited from attending Cerritos.

"Students and professors are very close here at Cerritos College," said athletic training major Devin Ocampo, a member of the student panel. "Professors care about us and want to go above and beyond to make sure we succeed."

Crime Report

Saturday, Dec. 4

At 4:30 a.m., officers responded to the 9200 block of Telegraph Road regarding a fight involving several subjects. Officers detained one of the suspects a short distance away. He was arrested for fighting in public.

Monday, Dec. 6

At 5:15 a.m., a carjacking occurred at Rio San Gabriel Park. The victim was parked in the north parking lot sleeping when another vehicle backed up to his. The suspect exited his car, pointed a gun at the victim and demanded his clothing and other items. The suspect drove away with the victim's vehicle, while a second suspect drove away in the suspect vehicle. The victim was not injured during this incident.

Tuesday, Dec. 7

At around 4 a.m., officers responded to a call of a suspicious vehicle in the 10000 block of Lakewood Boulevard. Officers determined this vehicle had been taken in the carjacking the day before at Rio San Gabriel Park. Officers found a male suspect inside the vehicle who was in possession of a handgun. The suspect was arrested for the carjacking.

Information provided by Downey Police Department.

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I Have To See This...
Nice size condo with 3 bedrooms and 2 baths. Central heating and A/C, 2 underground parking place, inside laundry and in a nice location.

Great Duplex
1 unit has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, unit 2 is 2 stories with 3 bedrooms and 1 bath and large living room with fireplace downstairs. Units feature new carpet, new paint and new tile floor.

Wait No More!
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The Holiday Lane Parade drew thousands of spectators Sunday. Pictured above is Downey Girl Scout Troops No. 2485, which proudly represented a Charlie Brown Christmas. The girls handmade the masks using paper mache.



Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard hosted her 11th annual service academy workshop last month at the Downey City Library, where students and their parents learn about academy admission requirements and the application process. U.S. service academies offer a free college education in return for at least five years of military service after graduation.



Duke, a 2-year-old chocolate labrador, is a drug-sniffing canine purchased by the Downey Police Department (see story on Page 1).



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