



**NEWS**  
Space Center honoring late astronauts

**NEWS**  
Downey man reappointed to county commission

**EYE ON OUR SCHOOLS**  
Campus updates from the school board president

**OPINION**  
Community responds to Ojos Locos and city dress code

SEE PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 2

SEE PAGE 3

SEE PAGE 5

## Home prices drop in LA County

**DOWNEY** – Home prices declined across Los Angeles County in December 2023, mirroring a statewide trend, while statewide homes sales in 2023 experienced their steepest decline since 2007, the California Association of Realtors said Wednesday.

The median price of an existing single-family home in Los Angeles County in December was \$853,340, down from \$897,990 in November but higher than the \$799,670 in December 2022. The median price for the Los Angeles metro area in December was \$760,000, down from \$785,000 in November but higher than the \$716,500 in December 2022.

Orange County's median price was unchanged in December at \$1.3 million, up from \$1,131,760 one year ago.

Statewide, the median price of an existing single-family home was \$819,740 in December, down slightly from \$822,200 in November, but above the \$770,490 in December of 2022.

The state's highest median home price in December was San Mateo County's \$1.8 million.

December's sales pace was essentially unchanged from the revised 223,940 homes sold in November and was down 7.1% from a year ago, when a revised 241,070 homes were sold on an annualized basis. Sales of existing single-family homes in California have been below the 300,000 threshold since September 2022 and will likely stay below that level in the first quarter of 2024, CAR said.

For the year as a whole, the state recorded an annual sales level of 257,630, a decline of 24.8% from the revised sales level of 342,530 reported in 2022.

"The housing market had a tough year in 2023 as a shortage of homes for sale and high costs of borrowing continued to have a negative impact on housing inventory and demand," CAR President Melanie Barker said. "With mortgage rates expected to come down in the next 12 months, home sales will bounce back as buyers and sellers return to a more favorable housing market. Home prices should see a moderate increase in 2024 as well."

Sales in all major regions dipped in December on a year-over-year basis, including 6.2% in Southern California.

"Easing inflationary pressure and a soft economic outlook suggest that we will see some interest rate cuts in the upcoming year, which bode well for a housing market recovery," CAR Senior Vice President and Chief Economist Jordan Levine said.

"With rates declining to a 7-month low in late 2023, Americans are feeling more positive about the market, and we could begin to see some increase in market activity at the start of the year. The improvement is expected to be gradual as tight housing supply will remain the norm in 2024."

City News Service

## Twin brothers join Downey Police force

Jun and Jin Park, twin brothers, were hired by the Downey Police Department last month.

By Alex Dominguez  
Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** – No, you don't need to take a double take; two of Downey's newest officers are – in fact – twins.

There have already been some jokes shared by brothers Jun and Jin Park Yun's fellow officers about not being able to tell one from another.

At first introduction, Jin is the more introverted, Jun is the talker. But ask the brothers, and they'll offer a few more differences.

"As far as our appearance goes, Jun is a lot more bigger," said Jin. "He's more fit, more smart. He's like my big brother; I look up to him a lot."

Jun doesn't totally agree.

"I have a lot of positive things to say about my brother as well," said Jun. "I think he's intelligent; I think he's more intelligent than me, matter of fact. He's very fast; he does a lot of cardio and stuff like that. We work out together."

"To tell us apart, I think Jin has a smaller face compared to mine; I've just got 20 more pounds on him."

Jun and Jin, both 22, graduated from Golden West Police Academy on Dec. 14, and were subsequently sworn into DPD.

Both brothers call it "a dream come true" to be working together in Downey.

"We both wanted to work for the same agency, representing the same patch," said Jun.

According to Jun, both brothers, who emigrated from South Korea during their fifth-grade year, had their eyes set on



Jun and Jin Park credit their grandfather for inspiring them to pursue careers in law enforcement. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

careers in law enforcement at a very young age, having been inspired by their grandfather who was an officer and Korean War veteran.

"We grew up listening to his honorable stories wanting to be just like him, protecting and serving our community as a police officer," said Jun. "Our dad was also a first sergeant in the army in Korea, so we just kind of wanted to pursue our career that way, serving people."

Jin says that their tight bond is "really helpful."

"As brothers working in the same agency, I'm very appreciative to Downey for this awesome opportunity," said Jun. "Being able to share what we're going through, and the call for service, that we actually go out to help people. It's

really awesome to share ideas, thoughts, and also motivate each other."

Jun described their relationship as "like best friends" with "A super tight bond."

"We are super close," said Jun. "We help each other, we motivate each other. We kind of compete in a very good way."

Right now, Jun and Jin are focused on successfully passing their six months of field training. They've expressed thankfulness to their trainers, and are enthusiastic for hopefully long careers in Downey.

"I have a lot to say, but I just love [Downey Police Department]," said Jun. "Just the motto itself, 'Our community, our commitment.'"

It really touches my heart that Downey Police Department is very family oriented. It's not too big or two small, and also has a lot to offer as far as opportunity goes..."

He continued:

"All the officers here who I interact with are very, very friendly, very professional, very helpful, and very supportive."

Jin added that he and his brother feel "included."

"We feel like we're part of a Downey family," said Jin.

Jun and Jin said it was their "honor and privilege to be here in this position where we're at today."

"Without Downey, we wouldn't be here today."

## 5K early registration ends soon

**DOWNEY** – Registration for the 12th annual Downey TLC 5K run/walk is set to increase Feb. 1.

The fundraising event is scheduled for Feb. 24 at Apollo Park. The run/walk raises funds for the TLC Family Resource Center, which provides counseling, therapy and other services to Downey students and their families.

Registration is available at [runsignup.com](https://runsignup.com) (search "Downey TLC"). Anyone who registers after Feb. 1 is not guaranteed a t-shirt.

## Tickets on sale for Roaring 20s gala fundraiser

**DOWNEY** – Tickets are now on sale for a 1920's themed gala fundraiser benefiting the 10-20 Club.

"A Gala in Monte Carlo" will take place Friday, Jan. 26, at 6:30 pm at the Arc.

Proceeds benefit the 10-20 Club, a Downey-based non-profit that focuses on the mental wellness, intervention, prevention and diversion in youth of Downey Unified School District.

The event will include dinner, live entertainment, a magician, dancing, raffle prizes, and more.

In addition, the 10-20 Club will be presenting Luz Perez, director of the TLC Family Resource Center, with its 2023-24 Youth Legacy Award in recognition of her many years serving the Downey community.

"Luz Perez has partnered with 10-20 Club to provide essential services to Downey families in need of help with great dedication and commitment," said Ronnie Fernandez, executive director and CEO of 10-20 Club.

For tickets or more information, call (562) 294-3315, email [info@1020club.org](mailto:info@1020club.org) or visit [1020club.org](https://1020club.org).



Luz Perez, center, will be awarded the 2023-24 Youth Legacy Award by the 10-20 Club on Jan. 26. Tickets are on sale now.

Perez is pictured with Julie Garcia, left, and Carrie Redfox at an 80s-themed fundraiser for the 10-20 Club on Aug. 31, 2023.

## Weekend at a Glance

Friday 65°

Saturday 61°

Sunday 61°

### ON THIS DAY

**1911:** The first aircraft landing on a ship's flight deck was performed by American pilot Eugene Ely on the battleship Pennsylvania in San Francisco Bay.

**1912:** British explorer Robert Falcon Scott and four members of his expedition reached the South Pole, only to discover that Roald Amundsen had preceded them by a month; Scott and his men subsequently died trying to return to their base camp.

**1943:** To save on the costs of labour and equipment, the United States banned the sale of presliced bread during World War II.

**1958:** Willie O'Ree became the first Black athlete to play in a National Hockey League game when he debuted with the Boston Bruins against the Montreal Canadiens.

**1967:** Albert DeSalvo, the self-confessed serial killer known as the Boston Strangler, was convicted of sexual assault and various other crimes and sentenced to life; although believed to have killed at least 11 women, he was never tried for murder due to a lack of evidence.

**1969:** United Airlines Flight 266 crashed into the Santa Monica Bay, four minutes after departing LAX; all 38 passengers and crew members were killed.

**1975:** "The Jeffersons," a spinoff of "All in the Family," premiered on CBS; the show went on to become one of the longest running sitcoms in TV history.

**1986:** Martin Luther King, Jr., Day was first celebrated as a national holiday.

**1991:** Three teenagers died after they were crushed during an AC/DC concert in Salt Lake City.

### BIRTHDAYS

"Dances with Wolves" star **KEVIN COSTNER** (69), hockey hall of famer **MARK MESSIER** (63), wrestler **DAVE BAUTISTA** (55), Korn frontman **JONATHAN DAVIS** (53), "How I Met Your Mother" star **JASON SEGAL** (44), British singer **ESTELLE** (44), "Glee" actress **BECCA TOBIN** (38), singer and actress **ASHLEIGH MURRAY** (36), and Braves all-star pitcher **MAX FRIED** (30).

# Space center paying tribute to late astronauts Downey resident

**DOWNEY** – The Columbia Memorial Space Center (CMSC) will be hosting an 'Astronaut Commemoration' on Saturday, Jan. 27, to honor the loss of the Columbia Space Shuttle and her crew on Feb. 1, 2003.

Join the space center in celebrating the astronauts of the Columbia, along with those of NASA's two other lost spacecraft, Challenger and Apollo I, all of whom furthered our trek to the stars.

As NASA's official memorial to the Columbia shuttle and crew, CMSC is the appropriate place for these commemoration events.

All three NASA tragedies happened within the same week: Apollo 1 on Jan. 27, 1967, Challenger on Jan. 28, 1986, and Columbia on Feb. 1, 2003.

More than a memorial, the day will be one of celebration for all that Columbia and her crew did for science and discovery. On January 27th, learn about the lives of each of the seven astronauts that were part of that last Columbia mission, STS 107, and how they pushed our journey to space and the STEM forward despite the tragedy.

CMSC will host a variety of special activities for the entire family. Tour our Challenger Learning Center and feel what it's like to be in Mission Control and a future Space Craft. A special presentation will be held at 11 am.

"This is a special event and we hope you join us in commemorating these important events in the history of space exploration," the space center said.

The Space Center opens at 10am. Admission to this event is free.

For more information about The Columbia Memorial Space Center, call (562) 231-1200 or visit [www.columbiaspacecenter.org](http://www.columbiaspacecenter.org).

The Columbia Memorial Space Center is located at 12400 Columbia Way in Downey.

# reappointed to county board on alcohol, drug abuse

**DOWNEY** – Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn reappointed Downey resident and executive director of the Los Angeles Centers of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (L.A. CADA) Juan Navarro to the county's Commission on Alcohol and Other Drugs last week.

The commission, coordinated by the Department of Public Health, advises the supervisors with the goal of reducing the negative impacts of substance abuse.

Navarro was appointed executive director of L.A. CADA in 2013 after 26 years as the agency's Deputy Director of Finance & Operations.

Under his leadership, L.A. CADA has elevated the agency's emphasis on strong community relationships, instituting new partnerships with the office of the Fourth Supervisorial District, L.A. County healthcare providers, justice systems, and social service agencies, as well as the United States Probation Office and the U.S. Department of Health Services' Mental Health Services Administration.

"Juan has devoted his career to tackling the heartbreaking

impact that drug and alcohol abuse have on families and communities. He leads with innovation and with a lot of heart, which is exactly the type of leader we need on this commission," said Hahn. "I'm grateful for his commitment not only to expanding the work of L.A. CADA, but to deepening and diversifying it as well. He shares our dedication to serving our most vulnerable residents."

Navarro holds expertise in behavioral healthcare development and administration for high-risk populations. He has developed comprehensive care for criminal offenders, substance users living with/at-risk for HIV, persons of color, the LBGTQIA+ community, as well as the persons experiencing homelessness.

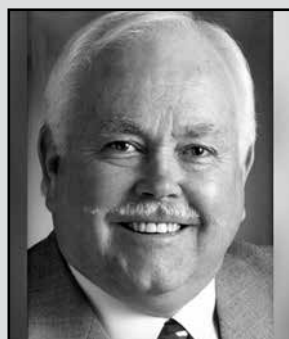
L.A. CADA services provide: 124 state-licensed treatment beds for adults and 332 Recovery Bridge Housing beds for homeless adults delivered at 31 sites in Los Angeles County.

"Supervisor Hahn has consistently maintained a strong focus on the health of our residents, with a focus on newly emerging issues such as historic mental health system transformation and achievement of greater equity in service access," said Navarro.

"It's my honor as CEO of Los Angeles Centers on Alcohol and Drug Abuse to work with Supervisor Hahn, other County Supervisors, and my fellow Commissioners to continue to improve L.A. County behavioral health services through landmark programs such as new behavioral healthcare housing and treatment settings."

## In Memory of Robert "Bob" Duane Thompson

January 22, 1946 - December 26, 2023



Robert "Bob" Duane Thompson, 77 went home to be with the Lord and his heavenly family on Tuesday, December 26, 2023 at UC Health Medical Center in the Rockies in Loveland, Colorado. He was born on January 22, 1946 in Downey, California to John and Dorothy Thompson.

Bob was the eldest of seven children, Eileen, Joan, Richard, Rebecca, John, and David. Bob attended Downey schools and graduated from Downey High School and California State University, Fullerton. He lived in Downey and several other southern California cities before moving to Colorado several years ago. Bob was a Viet Nam Veteran having served in the United States Army. He worked hard all his life as a marketing specialist and independent contractor. Bob was a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints.

Bob was a proud father, grandfather, and great grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Jerry Thompson and five daughters; Tiffany Pickel, Sara Menor, Jill Patterson, Jennifer Reichelt, Amy Gonzalez, two step-daughters, Crystle Southam, Kacina O'Donley, twelve grandchildren; Anthony Gonzales, Lily Gonzalez, Sean Pickel, Blue Gonzalez, Wesley Patterson, Dean Reichelt, Dylan Reichelt, Cire O'Donley, Jonathan, Nathan, Megan & Katelyn Southam, and five great grandchildren; Ava Gonzalez, Amia Gonzales, Millie Gonzales, Sebastian and Keara O'Donley.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, John and Dorothy Thompson, brother David and sister, Rebecca Romano. He was buried at Fort Logan National Cemetery in Denver, Colorado. There will be a Celebration of Robert's Life on Friday, January 26th at 11 am at First Christian Church, Huntington Beach Chapel at 1207 Main Street, Huntington Beach.

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EYES ON OUR SCHOOLS

# Updates from the Downey school board president

By Nancy Swenson  
Downey School Board President

Hi everyone, I'm back! I'm so happy to see that the Eyes on our Schools articles are still going strong since the initial kick-off in Feb. 2019, when I last had the opportunity to serve as your Board President. I hope you have enjoyed these monthly articles over the past few years. I'll do my best to continue to keep you interested during my year as President by sharing with you what I've seen this past month and what's in store for our students in Downey Unified.

Firstly, I can't believe it's already 2024. We have overcome many challenges and had many celebrations since I last wrote this article in 2019 and none of it would have been possible without the support of our Downey Unified family.

As we continue to look forward with the steadfast belief that "Our Students Deserve the Best", I want to thank ALL our staff - everyone who puts on a Downey Unified badge every day and comes to work!

Let's dive right into it! I had the chance to tour Sussman Middle School right before our Winter Break. In case you haven't heard, Sussman is now an International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme Candidate School!

Sussman's status as a candidate school is a continuation of our District's success with Carpenter Elementary's IB program, which in 2024-2025 will serve students through the 5th grade.

If you have a student who will be in the 6th grade in the 2024-2025 school year, applications for Sussman's program open on Feb. 1st at [web.dusd.net/sussman/ibmyp](http://web.dusd.net/sussman/ibmyp).

During my visit to Sussman, I noticed how our Pioneers enjoy such a beautiful campus since its extensive reconstruction, thanks to our voters for passing our Measure O Bond.

A new and amazing addition to campus has been the Wellness Center: a welcoming place where students feel safe and can receive emotional support and encouragement.

Additionally, there is a great new library and a spectacular Food Science classroom.

There is so much more I could say about the wonderful things happening at Sussman, such as "Team Unknown" winning the 2nd Annual District Middle School Esports Championship this past fall, as well as the outstanding work the Pioneer students are a part of, but you can read it all in

more depth in the Schools News section on their website at [web.dusd.net/sussman](http://web.dusd.net/sussman).

Also in December, all four of our middle schools competed in our Downey Unified VEX MS Robotics Tournaments, with Griffiths, Stauffer and Sussman middle schools advancing to the State Championships in San Diego later this month!

This was Doty's first-ever tournament and I know we are all very excited about the growth of VEX Robotics throughout Downey Unified. Let's keep it up!

Recently, two of our designated "Schools to Watch" middle schools (Griffiths and Stauffer) were visited by the California Director, Mr. Scott Steele, for their triennial redesignation visit.

The visit takes about a half-day at each site and includes reviewing paperwork, visiting classrooms, and talking to administrators, teachers, and parents, all ending with an opportunity to hear from my favorite group, the students.

I was very proud to hear comments from parents, describing our schools with phrases such as: "loving environment"; "my student is on the autism spectrum and is thriving and making friends"; and "I can't thank the teachers enough."

Another repeated phrase heard at both schools from

parents and students alike, was the impact of the positive "school culture". In Mr. Steele's review, he emphasized that the teachers and staff are the foundation of this positive school culture. Kudos to the staff at both schools!

He was also impressed that the District was able to fund for interventionists and other programs so the students could effectively transition back into the classroom after distance learning.

When Mr. Steele asked the students for one word to represent their school they said: Creative, welcoming, safe, exciting and friendly.

Then he asked, "What is one way to make your school better?" One student raised their hand and said: "I guess we as students could be better. We could take better care of our school. We could pick up trash and help make our school look better and have more responsibility."

Wow! What a way to close out the review. It was a real "drop the mic" moment for everyone there.

Both Griffiths and Stauffer are bound to keep their designation as "Schools to Watch" as our belief that "Our Students Deserve the Best" truly shines through.

A couple of quick shout-outs before closing:

Congratulations to Dr. Wayne Shannon! He has been recognized by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Region XIV as the Central Office Administrator of the Year.

Congratulations to Downey High for winning the Downey Unified High School Esports Championship in December. They are now in a 3-3 tie with Warren High School for most wins.

Watch for more music performances throughout the year at all the schools. I truly enjoyed the year-end music performances by Stauffer Advanced Band and WHS Choir Holiday Concert.

**Upcoming events:**  
Jan 17th - Jan 20th - Warren High School presents "Enemy of the People" with each performance starting at 7:30 pm each night. Visit [www.emersontheatre.net/](http://www.emersontheatre.net/) for tickets

Now through Jan 31st Intra-District Open enrollment (if you live in the district but you'd like to attend a Downey Unified school outside your attendance area) Visit [web.dusd.net/blog/24-25-intra-district/](http://web.dusd.net/blog/24-25-intra-district/) for more details

Now through Jan 31st - We are accepting applications for our GLAD dual language immersion program for grades TK & K. Apply today at [web.dusd.net/glad/](http://web.dusd.net/glad/)

Beginning Feb. 1st the 2024-25 application for incoming 6th graders at Sussman MS IB Program opens

Feb 7th is our Elementary Education Expo at Doty Middle School from 6-7 pm

Feb 8th & Feb 24th Sussman will be hosting their IB Information Sessions at 6 pm

More to come next month and remember to take the time to be KIND.

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**STOMP - See what all the noise is about.**

**8:00PM Wednesday, February 28th & Thursday, February 29th**

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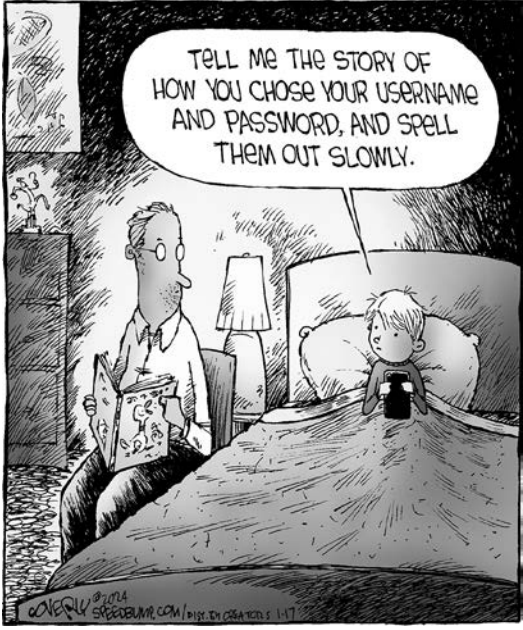
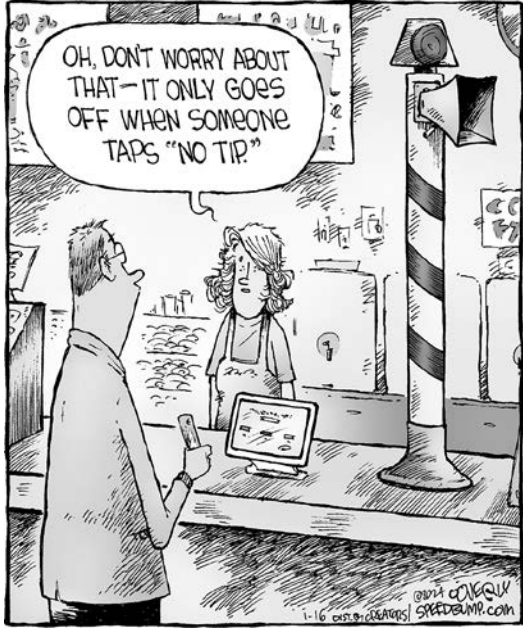
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## SPEED BUMP



## DAVE COVERLY



# Downey Community Calendar

### CITY MEETINGS

- 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 6:30pm: Planning Commission, Council Chamber at City Hall.
- 1st Tue., 4:00pm: Recreation and Community Services Commission, Council Chamber, City Hall.
- 2nd & 4th Tue., 6:30pm: City Council, Council Chamber.
- 3rd Tue., 6:00pm: Library Advisory Board, at Downey City Library.
- 3rd Thurs., 6:30pm: CERT, at Downey City Council Chamber at City Hall, for more info call 299-5462.
- 4th Mon., 5 pm: Green Task Force, at City Hall.

### Regularly Scheduled Meetings

#### MONDAYS

- 7 pm: Boy Scout Troop 2, at Downey United Methodist Church, call 869-6478.
- 4:30 pm: Courage Forward Meeting, at 10829 New St, 2nd Floor, call 213-545-6810.
- 4th Mon., 7:30 pm: Downey Numismatists, at Downey Retirement Center, call 862-6666.

#### TUESDAYS

- 9 am: Quilters group, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, call 803-4459.
- 9:30 am: Downey Seniors Club, at Apollo Park, call Irene Vallini at 328-7039.
- 10 am: Downey Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call John Fiorenza at 652-4399.
- 12 pm: Rotary Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Mel Sanchez 562-665-4125.
- 6 pm: Toastmasters Club 587, at First Baptist Church, contact Salvador Cervantes: tmsalcpuede@gmail.com.
- 6:30 - 9 pm: Civil Air Patrol - Los Angeles Cadet Squadron 138, at Downey Adult School, Room M104, call 714-402-5157.
- 7 pm: Downey Knights of Columbus Bingo, at 11231 Rives Ave., call 923-1932.
- 7 pm: Boy Scout Troop 441, at Apollo Park, email scoutmaster@downeyboyscouts.com.
- 7:30 pm: Downey Master Chorale, at Cornerstone Church, contact info@downeymasterchorale.org.
- 1st Tues., 7:30 am: Gangs Out of Downey, at City Hall training room.
- 1st Tues., 7:30 pm: Downey Amateur Radio Club, EOC room Downey Fire Station #1, 12222 Paramount Blvd.
- 2nd Tues., 6 pm: Downey Fly Fishers, at Apollo Park, call 425-7936.
- 3rd Tues., 12 pm: Downey Newcomers Club, call Marilyn 928-2623.
- 3rd Tues., 6:30 pm: Community Emergency Response Team meeting, Fire station 1, 12222 Paramount.
- 3rd Tues., 6 pm: American Legion #270, at Sizzler Restaurant, call 544-0372.
- Tues., Thurs. & Sat., 10 am: Downey Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call John Fiorenza 652-4399

#### WEDNESDAYS

- 7 am: Kiwanis Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Steve Roberson at 927-2626.
- 9 am: Quilters Group, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, call 803-4459.
- 10:30 am: Ballroom dance class, at Downey Community Center, call 776 7270.
- 1 pm: Women's Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call Marie Puch at 869-4366.
- 7 pm: Royal Rangers Outpost 132, at Desert Reign Church, call 562-861-6011.
- 1st Wed., 11 am: Woman's Club of Downey, call Cheryl Olson 833-8954.
- 1st Wed., 11:30 am: Downey Coordinating Council, Community Center, call Bobbi Bruce 440-5416.
- 1st Wed., 7:30 pm: Downey Stamp Club, at Maude Price School cafeteria, call 928-3028.
- 2nd Wed., 11:30 am: Christian Women's Club, call Marilyn 928-2623.
- 2nd Wed., 3:30 pm: Keep Downey Beautiful, at City Hall, call 904-7102.
- 2nd Wed., 7 pm: Downey Model A Club, at Gallatin School Cafeteria, call 484-8415.
- 3rd Wed.: Downey Dog Obedience Club, for information please call Gina 869-5213 or Valerie 420-2972.
- 3rd Wed., 10 am: Los Angeles County Quilters Guild, at Women's Club, call 860-8821 or 927-3635.
- 4th Wed., 7:30 pm: US Coast Guard Aux. Flotilla 5-10, First Presbyterian Church, call Brian 419-5420.
- Wed. & Fri., 10:15 am: Senior Bingo, at Apollo Park, call 904-7223

#### THURSDAYS

- 7:30 am: Connections Networking, at Bob's Big Boy, for info., call Nick Smith, 861-5222.
- 7:30 am: Soroptimist Int'l of Downey, for information, call Mia Vasquez, 806-3217.
- 12 pm: Bingo, at Woman's Club of Downey - Proceeds benefit Rancho.
- 12 pm: Optimist Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center.
- 6:30 pm: Downey United Masonic Lodge # 220, 8244 3rd St., call 862-4176.
- 7:30 pm: Downey Elks Lodge #2020, call 803-3557.
- 1st Thurs., 6 pm, All other Thurs. 12 pm: Kiwanis Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Roy Jimenez 283-2335.
- 2nd Thurs., 12 pm: Creative Purposes, call Bill Wallace 923-2311.
- 2nd Thurs., 7:30 pm: Beaming Rebel Foxes Collectors Club, call Carl D. Jones at 923-2400.
- 2nd & 4th Thurs., 6:30 pm: Downey Lions Club, at Mimi's, call Lenora (310) 283-9825.
- 3rd Thurs., 4 pm: Public Works Committee, at City Hall Training Room.
- 4th Thurs., 10 am: Assistance League, at Casa De Parley Johnson, call 869-0232.
- 4th Thurs., 7:30 pm: Downey Historical Society programs, at Community Center, call 862-2777.

#### FRIDAYS

- 7:30 am: Pro Networkers, at Mimi's Cafe, call Barbara Briley Beard at 869-7618.

#### SATURDAYS

- 9 am: Farmers Market, Downey Avenue at 3rd Street, call 904-7246.
- 2nd Sat., 9-11 am: Free pancake breakfast, at Trinity Baptist Church in Downey, 8219 Florence Ave.

The **DOWNEY GRAFFITI HOTLINE NUMBER** Report graffiti to this number. **923-4484**

### THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)  
**ACTIVE ANIMALS: With no outfoxing intended**  
 by Mark McClain

**ACROSS**

- 1 Electronic examination
- 5 Home to 4+ billion
- 9 Campfire fare
- 15 Periodical, in brief
- 18 Italian car, informally
- 19 November honorees
- 20 Northern Italian
- 21 Baja resort city
- 22 Enters by trickery
- 25 Spot for sledding
- 26 Impassive philosophy
- 27 Shining examples
- 28 Held back, as breath
- 29 Commanded
- 30 Compass point
- 31 Dress down
- 32 Vocal groups
- 35 Weasels out of responding
- 40 Mirthful sounds
- 41 Shirt feature
- 42 Drops dramatically
- 43 Suffix indicating approximation
- 44 Smirnoff rival
- 46 Be patient
- 48 Nova broadcaster
- 51 Declined due to fear
- 54 Responses
- 56 Bratty talk
- 57 Golf course measure
- 58 Supply with gear
- 60 OPEC charter member
- 61 Jo's Boys author
- 64 Ultimately reach
- 66 Barn nestlings
- 68 Ornery
- 69 Put in the lineup
- 70 Steps up to the plate
- 71 Apple offering
- 72 Entered carefully
- 75 Played boisterously
- 80 Former surname indicator
- 81 Source of malevolence
- 84 Well ventilated
- 85 Memoir, in brief
- 86 Vietnamese neighbor
- 87 \$, in exchange rate tables
- 88 Religious offshoot
- 89 Saved for the future
- 94 Smug expressions
- 96 Three straight strikes, in bowling
- 97 Notice
- 98 Arduous activity
- 99 Light-colored brew
- 100 Boots out
- 103 Some germs
- 107 Banjo cousins
- 108 Overdo it in cross-examination
- 111 Number-picking game
- 112 Rocky's first film foe
- 113 Humerus neighbor
- 114 Pacific state, slangily
- 115 Summer hrs. in DC
- 116 Traditionally rainy times
- 117 Texter's signoff
- 118 Biblical paradise

**DOWN**

- 1 Workshop tools
- 2 Clump together
- 3 Big hair
- 4 Angola neighbor
- 5 Steers clear of
- 6 Logical thinking
- 7 Short news piece
- 8 Stubborn beast
- 9 Oscar winner as Loretta Lynn
- 10 Bread spread
- 11 Thor's dad
- 12 Makes haste
- 13 Feast on
- 14 Wintry white, in brand names
- 15 Rum cocktail
- 16 \_\_ move (motile)
- 17 Especially valuable
- 21 Navigator's references
- 23 Lingering mark
- 24 Green Bay's st.
- 28 Assaults
- 30 Total amount
- 31 Kick off
- 32 Stylish
- 33 Breakfast side dish
- 34 Distracted greeting
- 35 Rarity at tearjerkers
- 36 Rotisserie rod
- 37 Hgt.
- 38 Sine \_\_ non
- 39 Put away, as groceries
- 41 Rand of fiction
- 44 Short parody
- 45 Held onto
- 46 Dictionary look-up
- 47 Eminent ornithologist/artist
- 48 French father
- 49 Unruly kid
- 50 IRS form data
- 52 High-tech replica
- 53 Lego inventor, by birth
- 55 As you wish, in radio lingo
- 58 Peanuts exclamation
- 59 "You can do it!"
- 61 Congregation affirmation
- 62 News story intro
- 63 Hamster's home
- 65 Cowpoke's pal
- 66 Actor Epps or Sharif
- 67 On guard
- 69 Bring together
- 73 More precious
- 74 Shade of white
- 75 Starter for sight
- 76 Took care of
- 77 Cab alternative
- 78 Pottery flaw
- 79 URL punctuation
- 82 Tiny, informally
- 83 Fannie \_\_ (mortgage agency)
- 86 "Do it thusly"
- 87 OPEC member
- 88 "Zip it!"
- 89 Gospel writer
- 90 Shuddered
- 91 Needing immediate attention
- 92 Texas ballplayers
- 93 Into the sunset
- 94 Gregarious
- 95 Oven glove
- 98 Lion-colored
- 100 Aroma
- 101 Citrus hybrid
- 102 Unload for cash
- 103 Sing loudly
- 104 Peruse
- 105 Land amidst water
- 106 D \_\_ "down"
- 108 Sound at sheep shearings
- 109 Phone download
- 110 Humble home

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116														116		
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### Advertising Policy

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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.

Louisa May ALCOCK (61 Across) wrote *Jo's Boys* in a Concord, Massachusetts home once occupied by Henry David Thoreau. An ancient game of Chinese origin, KENO (111 Across) helped to raise funds for the construction of the Great Wall. John James AUDUBON (47 Down) published his *Birds of America* in sections, in 1827 and 1838; in 2018, a complete first-edition copy sold at auction for \$9.65 million.

MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: [tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords](http://tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords)

## Should we send out kids outside to play even if it's unsafe?

Neighborhoods around the country are creating 'play streets' to protect their children.

By **Mary Sauer**

Mary Sauer is a freelance parenting and health writer living in Kansas City.

Parents like me are coming to understand what science has been saying for years: Children need more free-range outdoor playtime.

At a time when more kids are staying inside, glued to screens, a substantial body of research connects the dots between independent, outdoor play and a child's well-being. Still, we're nervous about the increasing risks associated with traffic. It would be easier to get on board if streets weren't full of dangerous distracted drivers.

So we're left at a difficult intersection. Do we send our kids out of the house to play, even if it's at their own risk? Enough standing at the curb, wringing our hands. The solution is more play streets — a time-tested, but inadequately supported, program that creates temporary car-free zones where kids can safely gather.

The idea of play streets was born in the early 20th century in New York City. Cars began to dominate the roads,

resulting in tragic deaths of children who were already using streets as play places. As a result, community leaders petitioned to shut down sections of streets so their kids could move around outside without risk.

Word spread. Britain enshrined play streets into law in 1938. Australia later adopted this program, and it's still present in some American cities today. Chicago, for example, has been issuing play-street permits since 2012 and aims to sponsor 150 or more play streets each summer. In Los Angeles, residents can apply for a closure of four to six hours that repeats on a weekly or monthly basis. The city even provides a "Box of Play" to encourage fun and physical activity during the closure.

But it's not just for our biggest cities or urban cores. Play streets would be perfect for quieter suburban neighborhoods like mine, where distracted drivers are used to having the right of way. I've watched the same driver barrel down the hill we live on twice a day, cellphone held in front of their face. The same literature that documented the widespread benefits of outdoor play also noted the negative effect traffic had on children: risk of injury, exposure to emissions and higher stress. My neighborhood lacks sidewalks, something that is also associated with increased traffic-related injuries for kids.

Unfortunately, organizing a play street event isn't easy or intuitive in most cities because there isn't funding or community-wide education. In Kansas City, Mo., our civic leaders gave play streets a loose framework during the pandemic, when the city was fast-tracking outdoor block party permits. Neighborhoods could use those permits to create traffic closures, allowing kids to play freely during

blocks of time throughout the summer.

"We had 13 children learn how to ride a bike," one of our councilmen, Eric Bunch, told me of the few months of street closures they had in their neighborhood. "I talked to many parents who said, 'There's no way we would have done this without having this space for our kids to learn.'"

Unfortunately, the city didn't provide barriers, leaving residents to set up folding chairs or collapsible tables as makeshift barricades. Drivers weren't happy, and many of the informal blockades were vandalized and thrown away. Bunch, whose own children spent two pandemic summers playing on their street during intermittent closures, detailed these issues. He felt they could be mitigated through better awareness, official signage and real traffic barriers.

Educating and engaging citizens to organize could reduce resistance to play streets. Cities like mine could tap into existing funding through initiatives like Vision Zero, which aims for zero traffic deaths. When I asked Bunch what citizens might do to get play streets going in their community, he said contacting the local official who represents your neighborhood is a good first step. He also suggested connecting with advocacy groups that focus on walkability and safe transportation for people of all abilities. They might already be advocating play streets where you live.

For a generation of children spending much of their lives indoors and in front of screens, play-street events are a small change that could have a lasting impact on preserving childhood play.

## Our fear of cancer is outdated

Nearly two-thirds of all cancers can now be treated so why do we associate a diagnosis with death?

By **David Ropeik**

David Ropeik, a retired instructor in the environmental management program at Harvard University's School of Continuing Education, is the author of "Curing Cancerphobia: How Risk, Fear, and Worry Mislead Us."

We need to rethink our fear of cancer. Our dread of the Emperor of All Maladies, learned decades ago, is now out of date and doing great harm on its own.

We have feared cancer more than any other disease since it became the No. 2 cause of death in the United States in the 1920s (after heart disease). Although the promise of "the cure" for cancer remains unfulfilled, we have made great progress. Cancer mortality in the United States is down 33 percent in just the past three decades. As many as two-thirds of all cancers can now be treated as chronic conditions or cured outright.

Yet our deep fear of the disease stubbornly persists. And no wonder. Progress notwithstanding, a diagnosis of cancer is still thought to be a death sentence. When a national survey asked people for the first word that came to mind when they heard the word "cancer," more than half replied "death." And, indeed, this family of more than 200 types of disease continues to be a cruel killer, of roughly 600,000 Americans a year. People we know. People we care for.

But for all that harm, consider the cost of our cancerphobia, a fear that in some ways no longer matches the facts.

We now know that tens of thousands of common breast, prostate and thyroid cancers that are detected early never go on to do any harm. People "overdiagnosed" with these types of cancer are understandably frightened and usually choose more aggressive treatment than their clinical conditions require. Such "fear-ectomies" cause great harm, leading to side effects that range from moderate to severe and include

death itself. We spend an estimated \$5.2 billion a year on such clinically unnecessary treatment, 3 percent of the total spent on all cancer care annually.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that in 2017, nearly 16 million people were screened for cancer even though they were younger or older than those for whom screening is recommended, based on who is more likely to be helped or harmed (by false positives, the side effects from follow-up diagnostic tests, and aggressive treatment for clinically non-threatening disease discovered in screening). We spend a minimum of \$9.2 billion per year on this overscreening.

A majority of people believe that most cancer is caused by environmental carcinogens. Yet we now know that cancer is principally a natural disease of aging, which allows DNA mutations that cause uncontrolled cell growth to accumulate. More than half of those diagnosed with cancer in the United States are at least 65 years old, while 87 percent of those who die of it are 50 or older.

Yet governments spend hundreds of billions of dollars each year to reduce the risk from environmental carcinogens, vastly more than on any other environmental health threat, including fine-particulate air pollution, which kills more than 100,000 people a year. We spend billions on organic foods, vitamins and supplements, as well as many other products that promise to reduce our risk of cancer but don't. The public has voted against fluoridating the drinking water in public supply systems serving 30 percent of Americans, despite a lack of evidence to support the fear that fluoridation is a cancer risk. Fear of ionizing (nuclear) radiation, a vastly smaller cancer risk than commonly believed, has driven the cost of building nuclear power plants so high that this source of non-greenhouse-gas-emitting energy struggles to compete in the energy marketplace.

Heart disease kills roughly 15 percent more people than cancer each year. Yet the National Cancer Institute budget is \$7.3 billion, while the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute spends only about \$2 billion researching and working on prevention of heart disease. There is no "war on heart disease," no "heart disease moonshot" to compare to the calls for a "cancer moonshot," a metaphor evoked since the Nixon administration and currently an initiative of the Biden administration.

Our fear of cancer resists change, in part, because of its

psychological nature. We are instinctively more afraid of threats that are personified by victims we know, that cause great pain and suffering, and over which we have no control — which is why screening is so appealing, because it at least gives us something we can do to protect ourselves.

Cancer fear also resists change because our beliefs still rest on what we learned long ago. The public is mostly unaware of the quiet, incremental progress that has made so many cancers treatable or curable. Very few know that many common cancers never kill. Our deep faith in screening belies the evidence that it has only modest benefit and does great damage, something people don't realize because screening advocates have vastly oversold the benefits and practically never mention the harm.

We cannot absolutely cure cancer, nor will we ever entirely erase our cancerphobia. The disease is an intrinsic product of our biology. The fear is driven by ancient psychological instincts. But in the interest of both our individual and public health, we need to promote awareness of the progress we've made fighting cancer. We need to understand and battle both the disease and our fear, because both are doing terrible harm.

## Ojos Locos challenges dress code

Dear Editor:

I just read the "Sports Bar Calls Downey Dress Policies Unlawful" article and had to laugh at the photo of the waitress scantily dressed. Even the waitresses at Hooters in South Gate wear more clothes.

It does not surprise me at the repercussions that Downey will face on this particular issue, which will undoubtedly be funded by Downey taxpayers for legal fees to challenge. When the dress code ordinance was approved in March 2022, one would assume that the bar agreed to follow the code before continuing on its path of opening this business.

I was one of those Downey residents hoping that the city council members at that time would not allow this business into Downey. But I guess gaining business tax revenues won out.

Good luck defending the city of Downey.

**Alexa Davis**  
Downey

Dear Editor:

I have a question about Downey's dress code policies for businesses. When exactly in the 18th century was that ordinance adopted?

**Richard Henry**  
Downey

Dear Editor:

I find it amusing that some people are offended because adult males patronize a sports bar where they can admire beautiful women's charms.

As far as I know, nobody is obliged to attend this place, minors under 21 are not allowed, and what is going on inside is not visible from the outside.

So if somebody is offended by what is practiced inside this place, simply don't go there. Problem solved.

I am more concerned with the display of gay male adults of their male spouses which is visible to every one. I think is not healthy for children to see these displays because they may get the idea that such behavior is normal. If that is normal what makes a straight male like me abnormal?

**Jorge Montero**  
Downey

## Clean-up efforts

Dear Editor:

How wonderful it is to see the areas of Downey (behind Aldi's, the empty lot next to Pieloon and the Lakewood Boulevard Walgreen's parking lot) cleared of the refuse and so much more in recent weeks.

Progress of any nature is appreciated and brings back the pride of living in our city.

**Roseanne Hernandez**  
Downey

Dear Editor:

Instead of trying to tell private businesses how to dress their employees, perhaps Downey should wonder why businesses such as Ojos Locos open here to begin with.

Could it be that Downey is not the upper middle class enclave it pretends to be? Something to ponder.

**Michael Trejo**  
Downey

**The Downey Patriot** STAFF

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10927 DOWNEY AVE., SUITE C, DOWNEY, CA 90241 | FRIDAY 9AM - 12PM  
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All requests for information (RFI) shall be in written form and shall be directed to:

**Mr. Ed Norris,**  
Deputy Director of Public Works  
E-Mail: [enorris@downeyca.org](mailto:enorris@downeyca.org)  
Tel: (562) 904-7110  
Fax: (562) 904-7296

No inquiries will be accepted later than five (5) business days prior to the bid opening date as this would not allow time to respond to all plan holders. Phone inquiries will not be accepted.

**NO LATE BIDS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

CITY OF DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA  
Maria Alicia Duarte, CMC  
City Clerk

The Downey Patriot  
1/11/24, 1/18/24

### NOTICES

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME**  
CASE NUMBER: 23NWC00461  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner STEPHANIE SYKES filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present name (1) STEPHANIE SYKES to Proposed name (1) STEFANYA ASIFA ARABYAN  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Date: FEBRUARY 9, 2024, Time: 9:30 a.m., Department: C, Room: 312  
The address of the court is 12720 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650  
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in the county. **The Downey Patriot** DECEMBER 6, 2023

JUDGE OLIVIA ROSALES  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Petitioner or Attorney for Petitioner  
**Stephanie Sykes**  
10440 Paramount Blvd Apt. #A211  
Downey, CA, 90241  
(310) 713-8200

[asifasykes@outlook.com](mailto:asifasykes@outlook.com)

The Downey Patriot  
1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24, 2/1/24

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME**  
CASE NUMBER: 23STCP04648  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner ROSARIA MINOZZI filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present name (1) ROSARIA MINOZZI to Proposed name (1) SARAH MINOZZI  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Date: FEBRUARY 5, 2024, Time: 9:30 a.m., Department: 26, Room: 316  
The address of the court is 111 NORTH HILL STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012  
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in the county. **The Downey Patriot** DECEMBER 28, 2023

ELAINE LU  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Petitioner or Attorney for Petitioner  
**ROSARIA MINOZZI**  
11410 DOLAN AV. #328  
DOWNEY CA 90241  
(562) 972-4792  
[smminozzi@outlook.com](mailto:smminozzi@outlook.com)

The Downey Patriot  
1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME**  
CASE NUMBER: 24NWC00009  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner ANTONIO PORTILLO LOPEZ JR filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present name (1) ANTONIO PORTILLO LOPEZ JR to Proposed name (1) TONY LOPEZ JR  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is

scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Date: MARCH 4, 2024, Time: 9:30 a.m., Department: C, Room: 312  
The address of the court is 12720 NORWALK BLVD NORWALK, CA 90650  
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in the county. **Downey Patriot** JANUARY 8, 2024  
JUDGE OLIVIA ROSALES  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Petitioner or Attorney for Petitioner  
**ANTONIO PORTILLO LOPEZ JR**  
101216 LAKEWOOD LN  
DOWNEY CA 90242  
(310) 877-1399  
[tlopez@lawa.org](mailto:tlopez@lawa.org)

The Downey Patriot  
1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24, 2/1/24

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME**  
CASE NUMBER: 24LBCP00003  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner JENNIFER TISZA filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present name (1) XAVIER FRANKLIN MICHAEL HALLOCK to Proposed name (1) XAVIER FRANKLIN MICHAEL TISZA  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Date: FEBRUARY 16, 2024, Time: 8:30 a.m., Department: S27, Room: 5400  
The address of the court is 275 MAGNOLIA AVE. LONG BEACH, CA 90802  
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in the county. **The Downey Patriot** JANUARY 3, 2024  
MARK C. KIM  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Petitioner or Attorney for Petitioner  
**JENNIFER TISZA**  
6445 DOWNEY AVE  
LONG BEACH, CA 90805  
(562) 446-6190  
[jennifertorpeza@gmail.com](mailto:jennifertorpeza@gmail.com)

The Downey Patriot  
1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24, 2/1/24

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME**  
CASE NUMBER: 24TRCP00012  
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner SOFIA MACDOUGALL WOLFE BY AND THROUGH NATALIA JACQUELENE MACDOUGALL AND MICHAEL WILLIAM WOLFE filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:  
Present name (1) SOFIA MACDOUGALL WOLFE to Proposed name (1) CAROLINA MACDOUGALL WOLFE  
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of

name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

**NOTICE OF HEARING**  
Date: MARCH 1, 2024, Time: 8:30 a.m., Department: M, Room: N/A  
The address of the court is 825 MAPLE AVENUE, ROOM 100 TORRANCE, CA 90503  
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once a week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in the county. **The Downey Patriot**

JANUARY 8, 2024  
DEIRDRE HILL  
Judge of the Superior Court  
Petitioner or Attorney for Petitioner  
**SOFIA MACDOUGALL WOLFE BY AND THROUGH NATALIA JACQUELENE MACDOUGALL AND MICHAEL WILLIAM WOLFE**  
7425 OGELSBY AVE.  
LOS ANGELES, CA, 90045  
(562) 712-1372  
[NataliaMacDougall@gmail.com](mailto:NataliaMacDougall@gmail.com)

The Downey Patriot  
1/11/24, 1/18/24, 1/25/24, 2/1/24

### In Memory of



### Williams Neri

**August 16, 1965 - December 29, 2023**

Williams Neri, 58, was born on August 16, 1965, in Ixtlahuacan De Los Membrillos, in the state of Jalisco, Mexico to Eleodoro Neri Neri and Maria Isabel Cervantes Constante. Williams entered into his eternal rest on December 29, 2023, in Downey, California. Williams demonstrated both intelligence and a strong work ethic throughout his Broadcast Media and Real Estate careers. With dedication spanning over four decades, Williams had the privilege of serving as one of the youngest lead news anchors for the Los Angeles TV news channel 26, a Spanish speaking television station during the early 2000s. After the birth of his seventh and final child, Williams relocated his family to Downey, CA where he resumed his real estate career as the Chairman of his real estate and mortgage brokerage team, The Neri Real Estate Group, alongside his Wife and Eldest son.

Williams is survived by his loving family: Wife, Martha J. Neri, 54, Sons, William B. Neri, 33, Williams Johnson Nehry, 31, and Dane L. Neri, 27, and Daughters, Bridgette P. Neri, 32, Elle J. Neri, 26, Sade O. Neri, 21, and Kathleen E. Nehry, 29. Williams will be greatly missed by everyone who knew and loved him.

Williams memorial service will be open to the public and held on Saturday, January 20, 2024 from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM at Risher Mortuary at 1316 West Whittier Blvd., Montebello, CA 90640.



Dear Downey Patriot Valued Reader,

On behalf of The Downey Patriot, I am thrilled to announce the establishment of the Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism, a non-profit foundation launched by the Downey Patriot newspaper. As a cherished member of our community, I wanted to share this exciting news and invite you to be part of our journey.

For several years, the Downey Patriot has been dedicated to providing reliable and unbiased news coverage, championing the principles of journalism, and serving as a beacon of truth in our community. We strongly believe that independent journalism is a cornerstone of a thriving democracy, and it is with this conviction that we have founded the Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism.

The Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism aims to ensure the sustainability and integrity of local news reporting, fostering an informed and engaged citizenry. Our mission is threefold: to support the training and professional development of journalists, to promote investigative journalism, and to enhance access to reliable local news for all residents of our community.

To achieve these goals, we are seeking tax-deductible donations from generous individuals like yourself who share our commitment to independent journalism. Your support will play a crucial role in empowering local journalists, enabling them to cover important stories, hold those in power accountable, and provide unbiased information to our community.

With your contribution, we will establish scholarships and training programs for aspiring journalists, ensuring that the next generation is well-equipped to uphold the principles of ethical and accurate reporting. We will also dedicate resources to support investigative journalism projects, fostering in-depth reporting that uncovers truths, reveals corruption, and sheds light on critical issues affecting our community.

Additionally, the Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism aims to address the challenge of access to local news in underserved areas. We will explore innovative approaches, such as expanding our digital presence, partnering with community organizations, and launching initiatives to bridge the information gap for those who face barriers to accessing reliable news sources.

We kindly invite you to contribute to the Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism and become a vital part of our mission. Your tax-deductible donation, no matter the size, will make a difference in supporting local journalism and nurturing a vibrant democracy.

Thank you for considering our request and for your commitment to the ideals of independent journalism. Together, we can make a lasting impact and ensure that our community remains well-informed, engaged, and empowered. I am happy to answer any questions you may have or provide further information on how your contribution will be utilized. Please contact our office at (562) 904-3668 or [jennifer@thedowneypatriot.com](mailto:jennifer@thedowneypatriot.com).

We look forward to your support and the possibilities that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer DeKay*

Jennifer DeKay  
Chief Executive Officer  
Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism

Donations can be mailed to:

**Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism**  
10927 Downey Avenue, Suite C  
Downey, California 90241



# Norwalk hears updates on community, safety development

■ The Norwalk city council heard updates on public safety in its first meeting of 2024.

By Vincent Medina  
Contributor

**NORWALK** – The Norwalk City Council heard updates on the One Ways Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program and the Sheriff's quarterly report during

the first council meeting of the year Tuesday evening.

## One Ways Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program update

Amanda Moreno, the program administrator and senior management analyst, presented the One Ways Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program update, an initiative

that aims to create healthier living conditions and provide residents living in the one-ways with essential home improvements.

The council allocated \$2 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to fund the One Ways Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program in July 2022. The Program approved 80 applications for roofing, painting and junk removal services.

Moreno highlighted the efficiency of the project, noting that 61% of the projects were completed under the estimated nine-week timeline.

"Our building inspectors, permit techs and our city clerk were pushing these agreements through and helping us complete these projects quickly," Moreno explained. "We had some contractors working on three to four roofs in one week."

However, staff initiated a study to address parking issues in the area and develop a Parking Action Plan, and fence repair services offered through the Program are paused until the parking study results are final.

The council members expressed their appreciation and the desire to expand such impactful initiatives. Councilmember Rick Ramirez said, "It's good that we were able to go outside the CDBG funding, the restricted funding that makes it very difficult for a lot of these people to make home improvements when they want to."

Mayor Margarita Rios expressed her gratitude for the project as well.

"This is just a testament

to when you're committed to making a difference," Rios said. "Once people see the change that it creates for a single resident, it just grows from there."

## Sheriff Quarterly Report

Sheriff Captain Richard Conti presented the quarterly sheriff report and explained the significant efforts and challenges in maintaining community safety.

Captain Conti expressed, "Overall, our city is safe," however, crime did increase in Norwalk by approximately seven percent. He quickly noted that crime in other areas increased by double-digits and emphasized the department's commitment to further improvement.

"We know that we can do better and we are dedicated to doing better this coming year," Captain Conti said.

Despite a decrease in shootings, the city experienced an uptick in homicides, with seven reported in 2023. The sheriff captain highlighted the effectiveness of the department's response, explaining that detectives solved each homicide within one month.

The meeting also touched on the issue of homelessness, with Captain Conti praising the city's investment in the HOPE team.

"Our community is safer and our deputies are safer," the Sheriff captain said. "It's a great program, and I thank you for it."

Councilmember Ramirez emphasized the need for more



Mayor Margarita Rios and councilmembers Jennifer Perez and Rick Ramirez at Tuesday's meeting. (Photo by Vincent Medina)

community engagement. "We can put more emphasis on our neighborhood watch and our business watch programs," Ramirez said, noting the importance of community vigilance.

Mayor Rios addressed the community engagement challenge and asked residents to participate in public safety initiatives. "If you've been to five Coffee With A Cop in one year, you need to bring a friend," she urged.

## POET'S CORNER

### LOVE POEM TO LOS ANGELES

with a respectful nod to Jack Hirshman

To say I love Los Angeles is to say  
I love its shadows and nightlights,  
its meandering streets,  
the stretch of sunset-colored beaches.  
It's to say I love the squawking wild parrots,  
the palm trees that fail to topple in robust winds,  
that within a half hour of L.A.'s center  
you can cavort in snow, deserts, mountains, beaches.  
This is a multi-layered city,  
unceremoniously built on hills,  
valleys, ravines.  
Flying into Burbank airport in the day,  
you observe gradations of trees and earth.  
A "city" seems to be an afterthought,  
skyscrapers popping up from the greenery,  
guarded by the mighty San Gabriels....  
lined by those majestic palm trees  
and like its people  
with solid roots, supple trunks,  
resilient.

Luis J. Rodriguez, Rattle #52, Summer 2016

The squawking wild parrots are famous. Has anyone seen any here? Poetry Matters is curated by Lorine Parks

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If you suspect an infant, child, or young adult of having a developmental delay or disability, they may be eligible for services, at no cost, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Services are provided on an individual basis in accordance with his or her needs. If you are aware of a child or student who may need services, please reach out to us using the contact information below.

Infants ages 0-3 years old: Downey-Montebello SELPA at **(562) 469-6793**  
or <https://web.dusd.net/selpa/>

Children and students ages 3-21: Downey Unified School District at **(562) 469-6500**  
Montebello Unified School District at **(323) 887-7900**

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