



The Downey Patriot



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Friday, December 7, 2007

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Trejo bows out; Gafin new mayor

■ City Council elects Mario Guerra mayor pro tem, to the surprise of some.

By HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY—Wednesday's Mayoral Transition ceremony that saw David Gafin installed as Downey's new mayor went smoothly enough for the better part of the evening, as public officials and other representatives showered outgoing mayor Rick Trejo with words of praise and thanks for his work in the Council, while Gafin's colleagues and other well-wishers offered their congratulations and wished him luck in his new role.

In his address, Gafin laid out a three-pronged approach to the city's growth and progress: 1) complete the city's ongoing programs, including Phase 2 of the Lakewood Boulevard widening project (essentially from Meadow to Gardendale), the construction of the new Discovery Sports Complex on Clark Avenue, as well as the 18,500-sq. ft. Columbia Memorial Space Science Learning Center, and the filling of the final three positions in the police force that will fulfill his earlier campaign pledge to upgrade the force by 10 percent; 2) re-emphasize these long-term projects: the consolidation of the city's scattered public works yards as a cost-saving measure; revitalize the Rancho Los Amigos site on Imperial Highway, and re-energize the city's neighborhood watch programs; and 3) undertake new projects, including Phase 2 of the Imperial Highway Improvement Project (covering Bellflower east to the city limit), the review of parking requirements for multi-family residential developments, initiation of a Traffic Calming Program, e.g., speed humps and other speed-reducing techniques especially in school and residential areas, and the establishment of a Police Cadet program—to provide qualified home-grown police officer candidates.

The only fly in the ointment came in public comment. Three citizens—former mayor Diane Boggs, realtor Maria Larkin, and citizen Lennie Whittington took exception to the Council's vote to elevate Councilmember Mario Guerra to mayor pro tem, bypassing Councilmember Anne Bayer in the "traditional Council rotation." Whittington promised to look further into the matter.

The first regular public City Council meeting of Gafin's term will be at 7:30 p.m. this Tuesday, Dec. 11.

Dead body found at Wilderness Park

DOWNEY—A 54-year-old Long Beach man was found dead in a lake at Wilderness Park Sunday, Downey Police Sgt. Jeff Calhoun said this week.

A father and son discovered the body while fishing in the park's north lake at about 2:20 p.m. They immediately alerted park attendants, who called police, Calhoun said.

Downey firefighters and police found the man dead, said Calhoun, who added that there was no evidence of foul play.

The victim, who has not been identified pending notification of kin, had been reported missing with the Long Beach Police Department, possibly through a clinic of some sort, Calhoun said. The man is believed to have been missing for three or four days.

An autopsy was performed Monday, which revealed water in the lungs, a sign consistent with drowning, Calhoun said. No other signs of visible trauma were found on the body.

The Los Angeles County Coroner's Office is assisting the Downey Police Department with the investigation.

Anyone with information regarding the incident is asked to call Detective Steve Aubuchon at (562) 904-2361. — *Eric Pierce*



Mayor Pro Tem Mario Guerra, Councilmember Anne Bayer, and Mayor David Gafin helped ring in the holiday season with a tree-lighting celebration Monday outside City Hall. The event, done at the request of Bayer, featured raffles and Christmas caroling by the Warren High School choir. Photo by Eric Pierce

City Charter
According to Page 3 of the official City Charter: "At such time as the term of a member of the City Council commences, and at any time when there is a vacancy in the office of Mayor, the City Council shall meet and shall elect one of its members as its presiding officer, who shall have the title of Mayor... The City Council shall also designate one of its members as Mayor Pro Tempore, who shall serve in such capacity at the pleasure of the City Council. "The Mayor Pro Tempore shall perform the duties of the Mayor during the Mayor's absence or disability."

Source: City Charter

Welcome home, Ms. Lavery

■ Sharon Lavery chosen to lead Downey Symphony.

By JOYCE SHERWIN, DOWNEY SYMPHONY

DOWNEY— Now it can be told. The Downey Symphony has been placed in the firm, capable, inspiring hands of Sharon Lavery, the orchestra's newly-appointed conductor and artistic director.

The announcement came this week from the Symphony Board, following an extended search for a replacement in the position held by the late Tom Osborn.

"I am elated and honored to become the new Music Director of the Downey Symphony," Lavery said. "I look forward to joining arms with this talented group of musicians and with its diligent and hardworking board members to create a future filled with excitement, success and lots of great music. Now I just can't wait to get started!"

"The long search is over," said board member Lorine Parks, who chaired the search committee's work. "And we have a wonderful new conductor to lead us into a new era. We took 16 months to fill this position: 95 applicants, 17 interviews, nine guest conductor try-outs at concerts, polls with orchestra and audience involvement, four finalists, one winner. And the real winner is the Downey community."

Lavery led the orchestra's evening concert last January to a standing ovation, and more recently the three morning performances for the city's third-graders, who had a wonderful time of it.

"I was especially happy that the students had fun getting involved in the music," Lavery said afterwards.

Downey is just a hop across from the campus of the University of Southern California, where Lavery is currently professor of conducting, and resident conductor of the Thornton Symphony, the Chamber Orchestra and Wind Ensemble. She holds master of music degrees in clarinet performance and orchestral conducting.

"She also has great enthusiasm," reported a member of the Downey Symphony Board, "and is full of ideas to help us strive to develop a larger audience and more concerts."

(And how is "Lavery" pronounced? Think of "laugh" to get you started right. Not "lave.")

Members of the search committee which carried on the exhaustive process of finding our new conductor are Chairman Lorine Parks, Harold Tseklenis, Lea Fratello, Ruth Hillecke, Bill Hare, Larry Lewis and Mark Artusio, who is principal bass and contractor/librarian with the orchestra.

"The search committee can get back to their normal lives now," Parks added. "But I wouldn't have missed doing this for anything."

Lavery's first concert as permanent conductor of the Downey Symphony will be on Feb. 2 at 8 p.m. in the Civic Theatre. Her appointment is another exciting event in the year-long celebration recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Downey Symphony, and we invite everyone to



Sharon Lavery endured a 16-month selection process to finally be named the Downey Symphony's permanent conductor, replacing the late Tom Osborn. Her first concert is Feb. 2 at 8 p.m. at the Downey Theatre.

join us in the good times ahead.

Go get out those 2008 calendars, mark Feb. 2, and watch the *Patriot* for details. For information, call (562) 928-4122, or (562) 403-2944.

Banking on a new mode of transportation

■ Maglev proponents looking beyond L.A.'s crowded freeways.

By ERIC PIERCE, CITY EDITOR

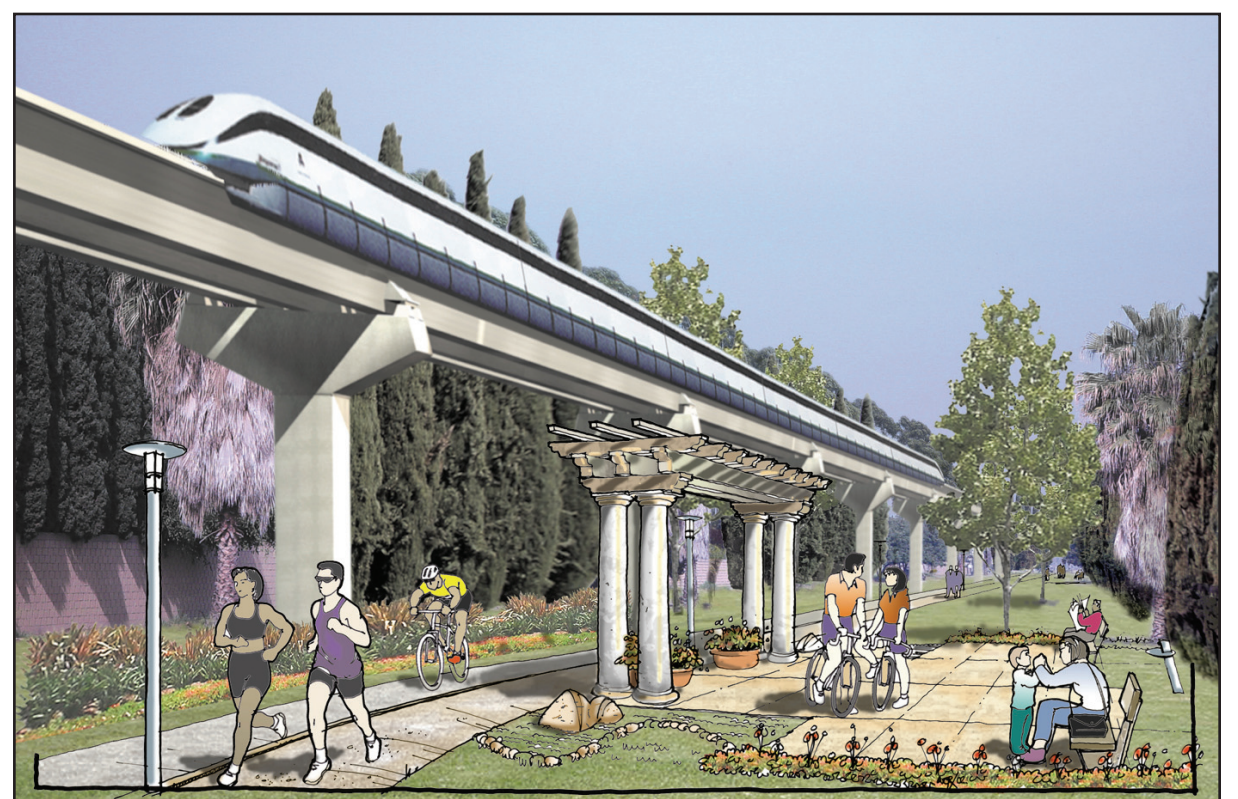
DOWNEY— The MTA board of directors announced this week it was considering converting Los Angeles freeway carpool lanes into toll roads, possibly as soon as summer 2009, a plan they say will reduce traffic congestion currently clogging the Los Angeles Basin.

But a growing number of cities, citizens and legislators are starting to think beyond cars and freeways, and are pushing for the implementation of a high-speed magnetic levitation transportation system, more commonly known as Maglev, to service the growing Southern California population.

Downey City Councilman Kirk Cartozian is the current chair of the Orangeline High Speed Maglev Authority, a JPA (joint powers authority) comprised of 14 member cities pushing to have a mostly privately-funded Maglev system installed along a 108-mile unused stretch of land from Irvine to Palmdale.

The Maglev, which has the appearance of a monorail but capable of traveling at much faster speeds, would cost approximately \$19 billion to construct, Cartozian said.

"I'm asking people to be visionaries here," Cartozian said. "We need to make decisions for 50 to 100 years from now. People are still thinking lanes, not trains. That will keep our region in the prehistoric age of transportation.



Local legislators are trying to advance the idea of a Maglev transportation system in Southern California. In the concept above, officials point out the twin monorail guideways for green space and walking paths. A Maglev system would cost an estimated \$19 billion to construct. Rendering courtesy Kirk Cartozian

This needs to change." Maglev is still a relatively new technology, with the first commercial operation dating to 1984 when England installed a short Maglev system at its Birmingham airport. Germany and Shanghai, China, however, are the two countries to most benefit from high-speed Maglev, employing it as a major mode of transportation.

In fact, Assemblymember Hector De La Torre, who represents a portion of Downey, visited Shanghai and rode its Maglev system, and gave it rave reviews. De La Torre served as the Orangeline

What do you think?

Give us your thoughts on Maglev by writing to downeypatriot@yahoo.com

Authority's chairperson in 2003 and 2004, when he served on the South Gate City Council.

"It really is the technology of the future," De La Torre said. "The people up in Palmdale are really excited about this. Right now they only have one route to Los Angeles, and if that ever goes down, like with that recent truck accident, they're stuck."

A number of local cities have thrown their support behind the Maglev project, including Downey, which pays \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year to be a part of the Orangeline Development Authority, according to Cartozian, who joined the Authority in 2003, taking the place of then-Councilman Keith McCarthy.

The Maglev line would travel over an abandoned railroad line and above freeway systems between Irvine and Palmdale. It is projected to travel between 140

See MAGLEV, page 3

Credit Union hosts new book drive

DOWNEY – Downey Federal Credit Union (DFCU) is sponsoring a new book drive for Lewis Elementary School, the credit union's adopt-a-school.

New or gently-used books suitable for children ages 5 to 10 are asked to be donated by this Wednesday to DFCU's main branch on Third Street, or to the express service office located at Downey Regional Medical Center.

Those who donate can fill out an entry form for a drawing for a \$100 supermarket gift certificate for each book donated. The drawing will be held on Dec. 14 and the winner will be notified that day.

DFCU is located at 8237 Third St.

Book Club discusses 'The Namesake'

DOWNEY – The Downey City Library Book Lover's Club will discuss "The Namesake," by Jhumpa Lahiri at their next meeting on Thursday at noon in the Cormack Room.

The literary novel tells the story of Gogol, a second generation Indian immigrant and his search to find a place in the community.

New book club members are welcome to join and refreshments will be served.

Reservations are requested by calling (562) 904-7360, ext. 32.

Polar Express night at city library

DOWNEY – Children ages 3-12 are invited to "hop on board the Polar Express" at a special library storytime Dec. 13 at the Downey City Library.

"Polar Express Night" will feature Chris Van Allsburg's beloved Christmas book from 7 to 7:45 p.m. Children and their parents will hear the story of a magical train ride on Christmas Eve that takes a boy to the North Pole to receive a special gift from Santa Claus.

Everyone who attends can enjoy hot chocolate and cookies at the free event, sponsored by the Friends of the Downey City Library. Santa Claus may also make a special appearance.

For more information, call Children's Services at (562) 904-7360, ext. 4.

Rose Float topic at Citizens for Downey

DOWNEY – Gary DeRemer, president of the Downey Rose Float Association, will discuss the details of this year's Tournament of Roses Parade entry at the Citizens for Downey meeting this Wednesday at 7:15 a.m. at the Rio Hondo Event Center.

This year's float will depict a Wild West town.

A buffet breakfast will be offered at 7 a.m. No reservations are required.

Pay off library fines with canned food

DOWNEY – The Downey City Library will accept new canned and packaged staple goods as payment for overdue fines on returned library materials during the month of December.

The food will then be donated to local needy families.

"There are many families in need at this time," the Downey Council PTA HELPS center said in a statement. "We are so pleased by the generosity for those who donate each year."

Goods used in payment for fines will be accepted through Dec. 31 at the library's Circulation desk. The donated value of each item will be 50 cents.

Residents who do not owe fines are also encouraged to donate. For more information, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 28.



Members of the Gauldin Dolphin Fitness Club planted flowers at their school and helped clean up Independence Park last month, capping the day with a community barbecue. The club has been active in the community all year, working closely with Keep Downey Beautiful to help beautify the community. Photo courtesy Alex Gaytan

Roybal-Allard honored as 'Leader of the Year'

■ Congresswoman honored for "civic leadership, inspired action and community outcomes."

LOS ANGELES – The Southern California Leadership Network (SCLN) honored Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34) with its Elected Leader of the Year Award along with four other distinguished community leaders at its annual Southern California Visionaries luncheon Tuesday.

"I sincerely thank the Southern California Leadership Network for this honor, and I commend this wonderful organization for its successful efforts to enhance the quality of life in our communities through the development of visionary leadership and collaborative skills," said Roybal-Allard. "I also congratulate my fellow honorees for their outstanding leadership and many contributions to our community."

The Southern California Leadership Network (SCLN) presents awards to individuals in the Southern California region who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in civic leadership, and celebrates those whose vision has inspired action, collaboration and positive community outcomes.

The other honorees are former California Governor George Deukmejian, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award; Thomas Priselac, president and CEO, Cedars-Sinai Health System, who received

the Southern California Leader of the Year award; Shelley Freeman, regional president, Wells Fargo, who received the Excellence in Civic Leadership award; and Karen Baker, executive director, California Volunteers, who received the Graduate of the Year award.

"Outstanding leadership takes many forms, as is seen by the wide range of experience reflected in our honorees today," said Gary Toebben, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce president and CEO. "Whether exhibited from elected office, corporate America or the world of nonprofit management, good leadership is visionary, and is vital to affecting positive change."

Roybal-Allard received the honor in recognition of the countless ways in which she has affected change in California during her six years of representation in the California State Assembly and subsequent 15 years in Congress.

"The Southern California Visionaries awards luncheon allows us all to take a step back and acknowledge the tremendous work being done in our communities," said SCLN chair Tony Buzzelli. "It is precisely by looking through the lens of such outstanding leaders, that we all become better leaders in our own endeavors."



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Cheryl Olson was recently elected as president of the Downey Woman's Club. Olson is a Downey resident and joined the Woman's Club in 1986. She is a licensed real estate agent and has worked for Century 21 My Real Estate Co. for 21 years and is an active member of the Downey Board of Realtors. She is also active in other organizations including the Su Casa Domestic Abuse Network.



Gangs Out of Downey President Darrell Jackson and Treasurer Barbara Lamberth presented a check in the amount of \$32,000 to Downey Police Chief Roy Campos and DUSD Superintendent Wendy Doty this week in support of the nationally-recognized High School Resource Program in DUSD.

Moravian Christmas concert Dec. 10

DOWNEY – The Moravian Trombone Choir, under the direction of Doug Shabe, will present their annual Advent & Christmas Concert this Monday at the Moravian Church of Downey, 10337 Old River School Rd. The concert will begin at 7:30. The event is free with a freewill offering.

For more information, call (562) 927-0718.

MAGLEV

Continued from page 1

and 150 miles per hour, Cartozian said. Tentative plans call for about 18 boarding stations, with one potentially located near the south campus of Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center.

The timing would be ideal, Cartozian said, since the city is exploring ways to redevelop that land anyways.

Cartozian said the boarding stations could also be used to spur local development; he envisions TODs (transit-orientated developments) comprised of residential units, retail centers, restaurants and possibly hotels surrounding the stops.

The Maglev would be elevated, traveling above ground and over trains and cars, eliminating the potential for collisions. With its quick ability to accelerate, the Maglev's average speed would be about 90 miles per hour, and it would connect to Palmdale, Burbank and John Wayne airports.

Still, the Maglev project isn't without its roadblocks. The abandoned railway still needs to be negotiated and purchased, construction financing needs to be obtained (possibly through municipal bonds, to be repaid from passenger fees and cargo revenues), and some cities still need to be convinced that Maglev transportation is the way to go.

"A lot of elected officials are not informed of the advantages of advanced Maglev technology and are focused only on widening roads, which usually leads to more traffic and more congestion," Cartozian said. "But throwing money into old systems that will never serve as a long-term solution will not meet our needs. We need to start thinking outside of the box."

That was evidenced when it was recently announced that extending the 710 Freeway to Pasadena would cost an estimated \$600 million per mile, according to city officials.

And while the Orangeline Development Authority has snagged the support of some key cities, including Palmdale, Santa Ana and Santa Clarita, it lacks the backing of the cities of Irvine and Los Angeles, among others.

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, it should be noted, is First Vice Chair on the MTA Board of Directors.

The Orangeline Authority also has the distinct hurdle of changing some people's sometimes negative connotation of public transportation, and getting people to climb out of their cars and into a train (although inflated gas prices are helping those efforts).

Cartozian said he currently spends about 20 hours per week trying to advance the Maglev project, and anticipates exerting more time in the future, as motorists realize they have alternatives to clogged freeways.

"People feel they don't have any options," Cartozian said. "People think they don't have alternatives."

How realistic is a Maglev system in Southern California? According to the Orangeline Development Authority, over \$10 million has been spent on Maglev planning studies over the past six years to ensure that such a system is economically viable. Cartozian said the Authority has met with investment banks on several occasions, and that there is a willingness for them to fund the Orangeline development project.

Now it's just a process of drawing more cities into the Authority, getting more people "on board" with the plan, and moving the project forward. "This is why I serve in office. I feel it's my responsibility to do this," Cartozian said. "The same old ways of thinking will only get us the same results. Accepting the same old mode is a loser."



John and Julieta Meillon, brother and sister, were among 12 winners of the Character Counts coloring contest sponsored by Downey Federal Credit Union. The winning art work is currently on display in the credit union's main branch.

Student artwork on display at credit union

DOWNEY – Downey Federal Credit Union (DFCU) is displaying the work of the winners of the Lewis Elementary School Character Counts coloring contest in the lobby of its main branch. This is the second year DFCU has sponsored a coloring contest during Character Counts week.

All students from grades K-5 were encouraged to enter the contest, displaying their interpretation of one of the six pillars of Character Counts. Finalists were given a gift certificate, coloring book and crayons, and a Kirby Kangaroo Club newsletter.

Coloring contest entrants were also given a coloring book, crayons, and a Character Counts pencil.

Twelve winners, a boy and a girl from each grade, were selected. The winners include Arturo Zuñiga and Julieta Meillon (kindergarten); Lindsay Adams and Anthony Rivera (grade 1); Kennedy Rodriguez and John Topete (grade 2); Antonio Franco and Lucia Rios (grade 3); Mercie Barahona and Andy Subdias (grade 4); and Ivette Guillen and Luis Meillon (grade 5).

"Downey Federal Credit Union is happy to be a partner with the Character Counts program at Downey Unified School District," said DFCU Executive Vice President Orlandus Waters. "We support the district's adoption of the Character Counts tenets, including trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship."

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Mimi's Cafe, Downey
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If you've been waiting for the right time to buy a home, you should know the facts about homeownership. Right now, interest rates are still at historic lows, conventional financing is available, and FHA-insured mortgage applications are on the rise. The more you know, the more you'll realize it's a decision you shouldn't postpone any longer.

On average, the value of a home nearly doubles every 10 years.¹ That's a return most investments can't match. During the past three decades, home values have increased an average of 6.6% per year.² And because most buyers invest only a small part of their home's total value in a down payment, their return on that initial investment is much greater, thanks to the power of leverage.

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NAR existing home sales historic series.
¹Ibid.
²Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances.
³U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "Homeownership and Its Benefits," Urban Policy Brief No. 2, 1995.
⁴Ibid.

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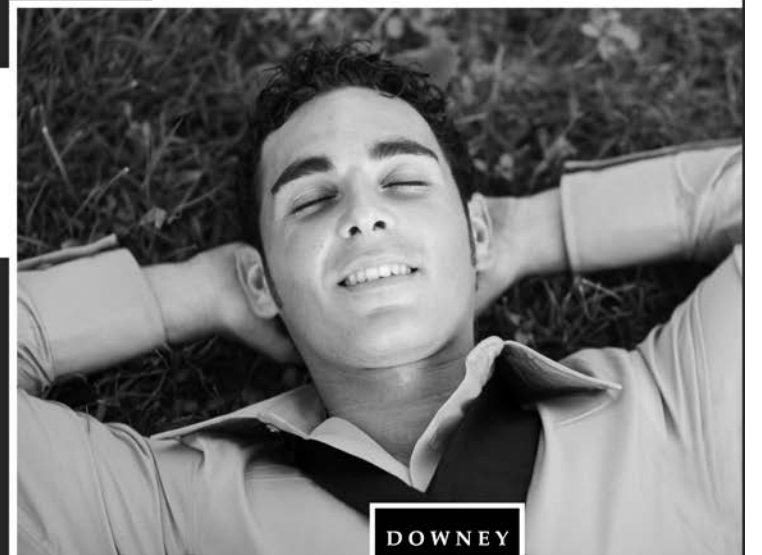
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Downey Unified School District Superintendent Wendy Doty was recognized with the Continuing Service Award from PTA Council President Angel Kellogg.

Holiday recipes can be found online

DOWNEY – The Downey City Library will offer a new class, “Holiday Recipes and Ideas on the Internet,” this Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. to noon in the computer lab.

Instructor Claudia Dailey will show students how to easily find holiday recipes on the Internet. Each class member will also be given a list of useful cooking websites for the future.

To register for the free class, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 3.

Bernabé taking soccer sign-ups

DOWNEY – The Bernabé Community Center After School Sports Program is now taking sign-ups for boys and girls ages 11 to 14 who are interested in playing soccer.

Volunteers are also needed to serve as coaches, referees, photographers and journalists.

Sign-ups are being taken at Lakeside Middle School.

For more information, or to sign-up over the phone, call Dennis Dennehy at (562) 863-1899, or email dennis@bernabec.org.

YMCA Christmas dinner on Thursday

DOWNEY – The Downey Family YMCA’s Active Older Adults & Aquatics group will hold their Christmas dinner this Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m. at Gourmet Café, located at the corner of Firestone Boulevard and Downey Avenue.

The menu will include ½ chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, soup or salad, dessert and drinks.

The cost is \$7, which includes tax and tip.

RSVPs and payment for the dinner is due by Tuesday. Call Tommy Sue at (562) 862-4201 for more information.

Quenching early the need to read

By HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

I was eleven going on twelve when I really first gained entrance to a magical world like no other—the wonderful world of books. Before this, I was exposed to the usual staple of text and story books that went by the name of ‘elementary instruction’, “taught” by uninspired and uninspiring teachers.

This is a terrible thing to say, passing judgment on people who must have, in their own way, tried their darndest to teach us according to their capabilities and resources. After all, I am referring to those early formative years, when I was growing up in that central, rice-growing, and heavily provincial, part of the Philippines, and I have no recollection of having set foot in a library, or desiring to borrow a book for its own sake.

But something monumental happened in my 11th year that was to significantly change the course of my life. My eldest brother was a priest and, either as a disciplinary measure or a sincere desire on his part to set me on the path to true learning, deposited me in the care of Jesuits in Manila, the big city. Too young to comprehend why and where I was at first, I yielded to the place’s strict regimen of prayer, study, and athletics. I had become a first year seminarian!

You can imagine my shock when I first opened a book on Latin grammar. Declensions, conjugations, reading about Julius Caesar’s exploits in Gaul, etc., dominated the first months’ lessons. There was Bible History, religion (of course), history proper, algebra, and Tagalog (the national language). But I didn’t expect my English class to be so enjoyable. We first read “*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*” and today I still see in my mind’s eye, no matter how dimly, Coleridge’s albatross and “water, water everywhere!”

Anticipating Christmas, our English teacher, a Fr. Quirke from Maryland, made us read Dickens’ “*A Christmas Carol*.” Again, I was not prepared for his dramatic Christmas surprise to us, a film showing of this Christmas classic starring Lionel Barrymore as Scrooge.

But I’m getting ahead of my story. In this same English class, we were told to read this and that, and at the same time he encouraged us to read whatever interested us. Born a lover of dogs, my extra reading gravitated to Albert Payson Terhune’s “*Lad of Sunnyside Farm*,” and such. Oh, I also read Stevenson’s “*Treasure Island*” and “*Kidnapped*” and so on, as well as Swift’s “*Gulliver’s Travels*” and, if I recall correctly, the Tom Brown stories. Fr. Quirke made us copy words and write down their dictionary meanings, to increase our vocabulary; as a further enrichment, he made us write sentences using these words. He gave us lessons as well on critical reading: persons, places, or things strange to us we had to research. The habit has stuck. A natural, and more important, extension of this practice is, of course, critical thinking, highly prized but seldom practiced.

The point of all this is to affirm that the love of reading, especially intelligent reading, affords one of life’s greatest joys. Bacon wrote: “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.” Having read much, and conversed much especially in convivial circumstances, and written much, am I then entitled to being called a “full, ready, and exact” man? I hope so. If nothing else, I know in my gut that I continue to derive great, great pleasure from reading my books and magazines.

Later, in college, there was this journalism professor (again, a Jesuit) who kept barking to us: “If you want to write, read, read, read!” A more up-to-date, if economically-tinged, version, I guess, would be: “If you want to succeed, read!”

Take your pick.

The Poets’ Corner

Teddy’s Confession

Life as a teddy bear has been quite a stir,
I’ve been wrapped in vivid ribbons and fur.
Although my nose is dull and full of glue,
Listen to this story, here’s my debut.

I was born in a factory along with my friends.
They cut me and sew me, on and off ends,
And shipped me inside the sack.
I was such a sight upon the sleigh on Christmas night.

The bells are chiming as Santa began,
To drop us all off hand, telling us where to land.
But me, oh so clumsy, I lost grip,
And fell down from the group; my stuffing flipped.

I panicked as the ground got closer and gave out a shout,
As I plummeted into the chimney in a pout.
I realized, to my dismay, that I was in the wrong house!
I wept and sobbed until my eyes grew wet,
Despite of it all, I fell asleep in my fret.

When I woke up - there were you!
I burst out, stuffing and all; then my hope grew,
And here we are, on Christmas morn.
Chatting about my being born
And appreciating how blessed I am today,
For in my heart, I know our friendship is here to stay!

--Shaina Marie C. Sta. Cruz,
Downey

Christmas

Christmas time is the season for giving
But we must remember the supreme being

Girls like gifts and toys
And so do all the boys

Men and women give gifts
And it gives them many lifts

Mary gave birth to Baby Jesus
And we must remember this

Some people don’t even go to church
Leaving God in the lurch

--Don Davis,
Downey

Chamber hosting holiday open house

DOWNEY – The Downey Chamber of Commerce will host their Annual Holiday Open House on Dec. 14 from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Chamber is located at 11131 Brookshire Ave. RSVP by calling the Chamber at (562) 923-2191.

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Dear Mr. Postman

By Eric Pierce

Mailman take notice: After several years at our current place, a small white building next door to the YMCA, we've outgrown the office and are moving just up the street to 8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100 (at the intersection of Florence and Downey Avenues).

This is our last month at our current office before we pack up and move. We should be situated at the new office by the first week of January.

On behalf of the entire staff, I want to thank the YMCA for their hospitality the past four-plus years. Their office was a huge improvement over where the *Patriot* originally materialized from, in the abandoned boys locker room at Columbus High School (although we appreciated that, too).

It's always a pain to switch offices, but in this case it was necessary. We're packed tight here (I share my room with two other people), making concentration difficult.

When two people are speaking, the conversation flutters throughout the entire office. When the sales staff has a meeting, I have no choice but to eavesdrop.

And when clients or visitors drop by (as they do every day), sometimes they're forced to stand because there's no place for them to sit.

Our new office has, I think, about twice the amount of space we have now.

So next month please feel free to stop by our new office and say hello. We'll be on the bottom floor, behind the big glass door, in suite 100, beginning January 2.

...

The tree lighting ceremony at City Hall this past Monday was a grand old time, with everybody jolly and in great spirits. Councilmember Anne Bayer should be commended for implementing the event; I hope it becomes an annual tradition.

Maybe my eyesight is slipping, but I think I actually caught Bayer and Mario Guerra speaking and joking with each other.

Talk about a Christmas miracle!

Unfortunately, by Wednesday night, the magic was gone. David Gafin's first night as mayor was effectively ruined when the Council elected Guerra mayor pro tem, shunning Bayer, and upsetting a portion of the audience.

The City Council should be bustling at its meeting Tuesday, when it will (I hope) explain its rationale in skipping over the council woman.

The Council's actions Wednesday weren't criminal, but they do, at the very least, seem a little fishy without proper explanation.

Letters to the Editor:

Some questions for Team Kool-Aid

Dear Editor:

It looks like someone fell into the Kool-Aid bowl again. Someone is obviously responding to my letter supporting the troops and our commander in chief that was fairly elected by the 51 percent majority of our country, again.

Oh, I know how crucial President Bush's National Guard record is, his drug and alcohol addictions, his working for the terrorists so he can steal all the oil, blah, blah, blah. These 49 percent haters are exactly where the terrorists want them to be. While they are busy researching their hero - Michael Moore's fairytale documentary - the terrorists are moving into their neighborhoods and planning their next cowardly slaughter.

How about another glass of Kool-Aid for the trip to the airport to fly to a better country than our? And don't you ask for a mid-flight refueling from our troops because they are fighting the war the left won't fight.

I have three questions for Team Kool-Aid: 1. What is the goal of the terrorists? 2. Why did they bring down the towers? 3. Why hasn't there been an attack on our soil since 9/11/01?

Is it possible that our intelligence gathering is working? Suddenly it doesn't sound so bad to run a little water over a savage murdering animals' nose for intelligence gathering does it? Listening to our phone conversations? Don't we want to know if they are planning another attack? Is Team Kool-Aid hiding something in their phone conversations? Make a note of that Home Land Security. Thanks to our soldiers and our president, when one of these cowards are captured, we know that they will talk.

God Bless our troops and 51 percent of the American voters. The rest of you should go to the airport - now.

—Tim Smick,
Downey

Oops, wrong guy

Dear Editor:

Last Friday you published a poem and gave me credit ("It's Not Merry X-Mas," 11/30/07). Unfortunately, the only credit I deserve is sending it to you, not writing it. The author displayed a great deal of talent of which I have none. Appreciate your associating my e-mail address with my name.

Question: Would Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard consent to being the Downey Holiday Parade Marshal if it was the Downey Christmas Parade?

—Randy Evans,
Downey



A community united by a single book

BY JAN PALEN, SENIOR LIBRARIAN, DOWNEY CITY LIBRARY

What would happen if everyone in a city reads the same book together? That was the question posed by Nancy Pearl and Chris Higashi of the Washington Center for the Book at the Seattle Public Library. In 1998, they launched a city-wide reading program, "If All Seattle Read the Same Book," inviting the public to read "The Sweet Hereafter" by Russell Banks. Residents were encouraged to read the book and join discussion groups and programs throughout the city.

"I hoped that by getting people together in a public place like a library or community center, to talk about the same book, it would help grow a community out of a group of diverse individuals," Pearl said.

At first, Pearl was nervous that people wouldn't show up. Not many people had heard of the book, a literary novel about residents of a small New York town dealing with the aftermath of a terrible school bus accident. Then a tragic case of life imitating art occurred. Three weeks before the reading program began, a similar, devastating bus accident happened in Seattle.

Residents were looking for answers, a way to deal with their sudden loss. People who had rarely read a book chose to read and talk about their grief with others. The book's author spoke at a library program that blended literature with life experiences. People began talking about the book in line at the grocery store, at the gas station, at the bank and on the bus. Although an estimated 7,000 people joined in that first year, Higashi says that it is the experience of participating that matters.

Letters to the Editor:

Bring back Christmas

Dear Editor:

Three or four years ago I wrote a letter to the *Patriot* asking, "Which holiday are we celebrating?" To date, I've received no answer.

I know on New Years Day we celebrate the beginning of another year. On Valentine's Day we celebrate a contrived holiday to boost the sale of candy, cards and flowers. Then comes Easter Sunday (Resurrection Day), but it has been changed to Spring Break. No one has explained to me why we have no fall break or summer break. Then we celebrate Memorial Day, which is self-explanatory. After that the Fourth of July to honor the birth of our country - most commendable! Then we celebrate Labor Day, also self-explanatory, and then Halloween, another day which promotes good sales for candy, costumes, parties, etc.

Next, Thanksgiving Day! This day has been set aside to thank God for the bountiful provision and remembering the hardships the pilgrims went through and how thankful they were to God for keeping them through extremely difficult circumstances and giving them freedom to worship. Or, I thought it was until I heard the History Channel say that the pilgrims came here because they liked to travel. Then, after lo this many years, the Seattle School Board told their students that it was "a day of mourning for the Indians." Somewhere along the way I was taught that the pilgrims and the Indians celebrated together - I've even seen paintings that depicted them celebrating together!

But now the most celebrated holiday of all is coming, the holiday that puts merchants in the "black," the holiday that closes schools for two weeks. I'm referring to the holiday that ONCE was called Christmas vacation, now "winter break." The most astonishing thing that no one can explain to me is why we are celebrating a holiday that has no reason or

"Reading is usually a solitary habit," she said. "But you build a community by meeting face to face."

Since then, more than 500 "One Book" initiatives have been planned across the United States and around the world. The titles selected are as diverse as the cities themselves. Portland chose "Kite Runner," Khaled Hosseini's remarkable first novel about Afghanistan. Residents of Chicago read Harper Lee's classic, "To Kill a Mockingbird." With its "surf and celebrity" image, the city of Malibu read "Gidget," the story of a girl's discovery of surfing and love. These annual programs may be varied but the goal is the same: to bring people together through the power of reading and shared ideas.

The idea that started in Seattle could also transform Downey. Members of the Downey City Library's monthly book club say that talking about a book changes their perspective and gives them a chance to speak about issues that matter. In a city-wide reading event, you might discover new aspects of another culture or time period. You could reconnect with your neighbors or discuss the book over dinner with your family. You might join a book circle at church or chat over lunch with your co-workers. A library, community center, school classroom or monthly Board meeting may be the perfect forum for an exchange of ideas.

What could happen if everyone in Downey reads the same book together?

In the coming weeks we will discuss other successful "One Book" programs and how you can get involved.

occasion to celebrate - it's just a holiday. Our own chamber of commerce sponsors a very elaborate parade every year for this "nothing" holiday.

It seems in the distant past this holiday once was called Christmas. It was celebrating the birth of Christ. (Get it - Christmas?) Does that give you a clue as to why this day is celebrated?

Of course, we must remember that that was before the ACLU (a godless group of attorneys) decided that we shouldn't have freedom to celebrate it. I have an idea with which the mighty ACLU might agree. Let's have separate holidays: Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. However, the ACLU doesn't seem to object to any religion being taught in our schools - except Christianity.

Perhaps each of the above listed could celebrate their special day whenever they choose and leave Christmas for Christians to have their special holiday. Maybe the ACLU could have a special holiday for the goddess and take a day to relax, since they are always so "uptight." In fact, I wouldn't care if they took a permanent "holiday."

I just read "Oh, Holiday Tree" by Eric Pierce (*The Downey Patriot*, 11/30/07) - keep up the good work and maybe our voices will be heard and we can celebrate Christmas once again - openly!

—Elsa Van Leuven,
Downey

Letters to the editor may be submitted by writing to *The Downey Patriot*, 11525 Downey Ave., Suite A, Downey CA 90241 or by e-mail to downeypatriot@yahoo.com. Letters may be edited for style and/or content. Letters must include a full name and address for verification.

The Downey Patriot



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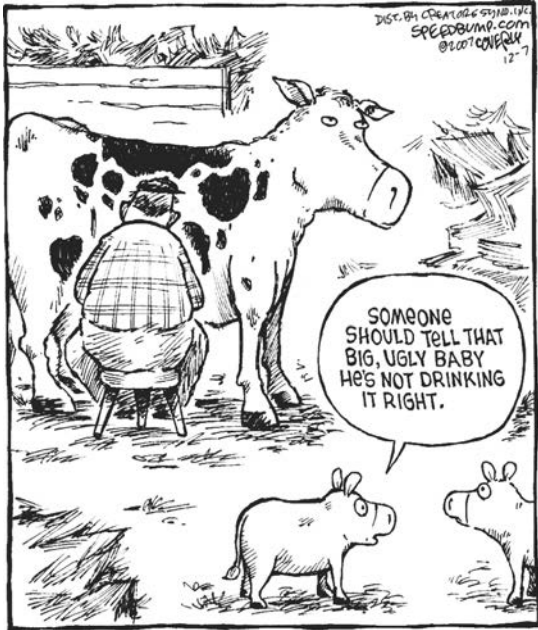
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SPEED BUMP



DAVE COVERLY



On This Day...

- Dec. 7, 1796:** John Adams, the politician, not the editor, becomes the second president of the United States.
- 1842:** The New York Philharmonic, this country's oldest active symphony, gives its first concert.
- 1941:** The U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor is attacked by Japanese warplanes, claiming the lives of 2,300 Americans.
- 1963:** Instant replay is used for the first time during an Army-Navy football game.
- 1973:** Football player Terrell Owens is born. Also born Dec. 7: Larry Bird (51) and Aaron Carter (20).
- 2002:** Iraq, in a declaration to the United Nations, denies it has weapons of mass destruction.

Downey Community Calendar

Events For December

- Sat. Dec. 8:** "The Nutcracker," Downey Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
- Mon. Dec. 10:** Trombone Choir Concert, Moravian Church of Downey, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed. Dec. 12:** Rose Float Discussed, Citizens for Downey, 7:15 a.m.
- Thurs. Dec. 13:** Polar Express Storytime, Downey Library, 7 p.m.

City Meetings

- 1st Tuesdays, 6:15 p.m.:** Redevelopment Project Area Committee, Cormack Meeting Room at Downey Library.
- 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 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 Thursday, 9 a.m.:** Traffic Committee, Training Room, Second Floor of City Hall.
- 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.:** City Council/Community Development Commission, Council Chamber.
- 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 6 p.m.:** Design Review Board, Council Chamber at City Hall.
- 3rd Thursday, 3:30 p.m.:** Parking Place Commission, Second Floor Training Room at City Hall

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Mondays

- 6:30 p.m.:** Metropolitan Masonic Lodge #352 dinner, mtg., for information call 426-6786.
- 6:30 p.m.:** Overeaters Anonymous, at Downey Regional Med. Center Conf. Room A, for info. call 426-6786.
- 1st Mon., 4 p.m.:** 2nd Century Foundation, at City Hall, 1st floor, call 927-9790.
- 2nd Mon., 11 a.m.:** American Legion Auxiliary #270, at United Methodist Church, for info. call 923-2481.
- 2nd Mon., 3 p.m.:** Keep Downey Beautiful, at City Hall, for more information call 904-7159.
- 3rd Mon., 7 p.m.:** American Legion Post 270, Los Amigos Country Club, call 869-1053.
- 4th Mon., 7:30 p.m.:** Downey Numismatists, at Downey Retirement Center, call 862-6666.

Tuesdays

- 9 a.m.:** Downey Bocce Club, at Apollo Park, for information call Vince Zoida at (714) 761-4439.
- 9:30 a.m.:** Downey Seniors Club, at Apollo Park, for information call Nadine Morris at 923-9422.
- 9:30 a.m.:** Adventure with the Bible, at the First Baptist Church call 928-4153.
- 12 p.m.:** Rotary Club, at Rio Hondo, for information call Darren Dunaway at 806-5400.
- 12 p.m.:** Exchange Club of Downey, at Sizzler, for information call Don Hollister at 927-5871.
- 6:00 p.m.:** Toastmasters Club 587, at First Baptist Church, for info call 928-2658.
- 7 p.m.:** Boy Scout Troop 2, at Downey United Methodist Church, for information call 869-6478.
- 7 p.m.:** Boy Scout Troop 441, at Apollo Park Activities Room, for information call 923-3659.
- 7:30 p.m.:** Southland Harmony Chorus of Sweet Adelines, at Downey's Woman's Club, for information call 947-6802.
- 2nd and 4th Tues., 7:30 a.m.:** Chamber "Rise&Shine" Networkers, at Nordic Fox. for info. call (562) 923-2191.
- 2nd and 4th Tues., 6 p.m.:** Sertoma Club, at Bakers Square. for information call (562) 927-6438.
- 2nd Tues., 7 p.m.:** Downey Fly Fishers, at Apollo Park, for information call 943-3904.
- 3rd Tues., 7:30 p.m.:** Writer's Workshop West, at at Downey High School library, for info call 862-3106.
- Last Tues., 11:00 a.m.:** Los Companeros Service Club, at Los Amigos Country Club, for info call 863-1549.

Wednesdays

- 7 a.m.:** Kiwanis Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center. Call Steve Roberson at 927-2626.
- 1 p.m.:** Women's Bocce Club, for information call 869-8782.
- 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.
- 1st Weds., 7:30 p.m.:** Downey Emblem Club #309, at Downey's Elks Lodge, for information call 868-4386.
- 2nd Weds., 7:30 p.m.:** Downey Model A Club, at Gallatin School Cafeteria, for information call 928-4132.
- 2nd Weds., 7:30 p.m.:** Downey Sister Cities Ass'n, at Maude Price School, Call 862-7197.
- 2nd Weds., 11:45 a.m.:** Downey Christian Women's Club, at Los Amigos CC. Call 927-8488.
- 2nd & 4th Weds., 11:00 a.m.:** - AARP, at Barbara J. Riley CC, Call Lorene Frazier 861-6075.
- 3rd Weds., -** Downey Dog Obedience Club Apollo Park.
- 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 Furman Park West Bldg., call 943-5513.
- Wed. & Fri., 10:15 a.m.:** Senior Bingo, at Apollo Park, for information call 904-7223.

Thursdays

- 7:30 a.m.:** Soroptimist Int'l of Downey, for information, call Pat Heineke, 904-3534.
- 7:30 a.m.:** Connections Networking, at Nordic Fox 10924 Paramount, for information call 869-1414.
- 12 p.m.:** Kiwanis Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Roy Jimenez 923-0971.
- 12 p.m.:** Downey Christian Businessmen's Committee, for information call 928-4153.
- 12 p.m.:** Optimist Club of Downey, at Sambi's, for information call Steve Allen at 622-7655.
- 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.
- 4th Thurs., 7:30 p.m.:** Downey Historical Society programs, at Community Center. Call 862-2777.
- 2nd Thurs., 7:30 p.m.:** Beaming Rebel Foxes Collectors Club, for more information call Carl D. Jones at 923-2400.

Fridays

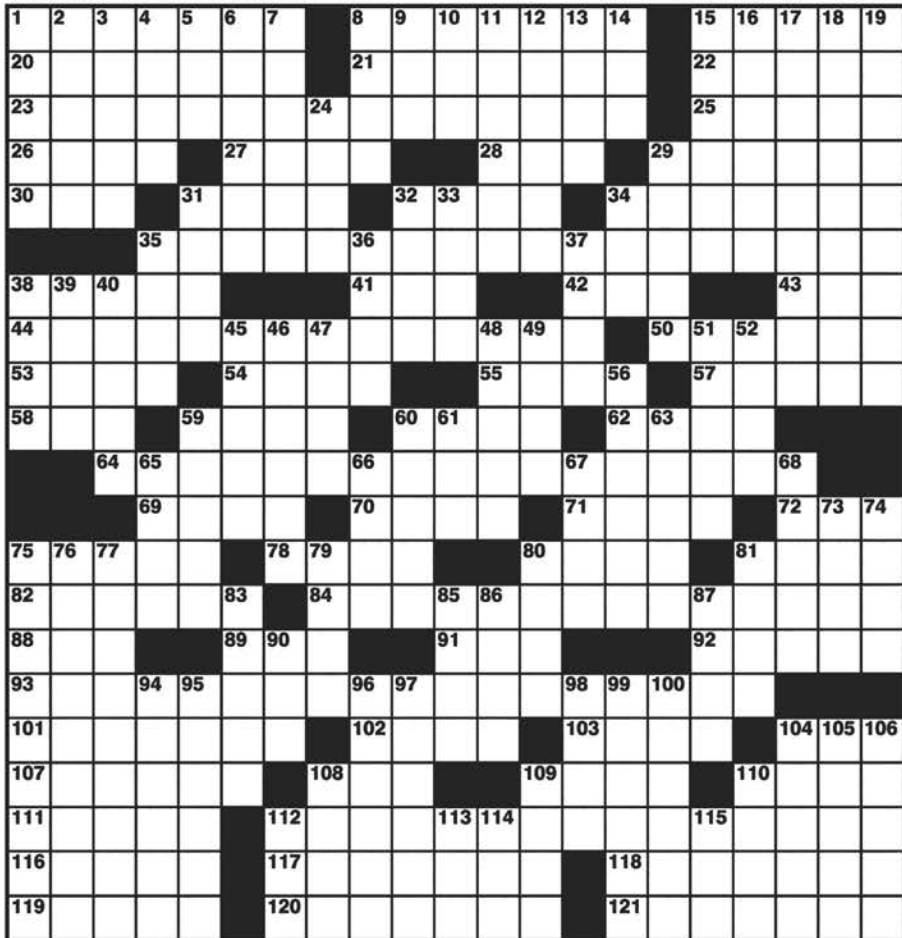
- 7:30 a.m.:** Pro Networkers, at Mimi's Cafe, for information call Barbara Briley Beard at 869-7618
- 3rd Fri., 8:30 a.m.:** Women's "In His Glory" Ministry at Los Amigos C. C. (562) 622-3785.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)

CROSS-COUNTRY TOUR: A tuneful trip
by Merle Baker

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 - 37 Pirate, e.g.
 - 38 Slant
 - 39 Opposite of exo-
 - 40 Make sense
 - 45 Intermixably
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 - 48 Two-Oscar actress
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 - 56 Type of antenna
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 - 65 Erupter of September '07
 - 66 Rich supply
 - 67 Buyer's caution
 - 68 Mature
 - 73 Art Deco artist
 - 74 Big lug
 - 75 Most ill-tempered
 - 76 Wagner's Der fliegende _
 - 77 Rash
 - 79 Envelope abbr.
 - 80 Trade grp.
 - 81 Trouble-free
 - 83 Rob Roy writer
 - 85 Microwave
 - 86 Part of EMT
 - 87 Stir-fry cookers
 - 90 Call for help
 - 94 Crème de la crème
 - 95 Plural of Mr.
 - 96 Declaimer
 - 97 Upcoming
 - 98 Gull kin
 - 99 Tanzania neighbor
 - 100 Inducement
 - 104 Prone to sulking
 - 105 Lofty nest
 - 106 Less than happy
 - 108 Diamond play
 - 109 Slicker's place
 - 110 Pita sandwich
 - 112 _ for Alibi
 - 113 Exec's deg.
 - 114 Diminutive suffix
 - 115 Earned

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.

Steve Martin portrays evil dentist ORIN SCRIVELLO (54 Across) in the 1986 film version of the Broadway musical "Little Shop of Horrors." The wide variety of artists who have recorded the country tune "BLUE MOON OF KENTUCKY" (93 Across) include Elvis Presley, Ray Charles and Paul McCartney. The Japanese vegetable UDO (10 Down), of the ginseng family, is often served in sushi bars and in miso soup.



Paging Dr. Alan Frischer...

BY DR. ALAN FRISCHER

Wonder Bread, anyone? What is the difference between white bread and 100% whole grain bread? America has an unfortunate love affair with simple carbohydrates. Is there scientific evidence to support the value of eating whole grains?



Let's start with some background. Soluble fiber and insoluble fiber do not digest, so they are not absorbed into the bloodstream, and when they leave our bodies they have not contributed energy. So what good does fiber do?

Insoluble fiber passes through our intestines largely intact, and provides bulk to move stool through the intestine. This promotes regular bowel movements. Examples of insoluble fiber include vegetables such as green beans and dark leafy vegetables, fruit skins and root vegetable skins, whole-wheat and oat products, corn bran, seeds and nuts.

Soluble fiber, on the other hand, binds with fatty acids in the stomach and forms a gel. This gel lengthens the time it takes for your stomach to empty, allowing sugar to be released and absorbed more slowly, lowering total cholesterol including LDL (bad) cholesterol, and regulating blood sugar (critical for diabetics). Examples of food sources for soluble fiber include oat and oat bran, dried beans and peas, nuts, barley, flax seed and carrots, and fruits such as oranges and apples.

Scientific studies have shown that eating whole grains can lower your risk for several serious conditions, and refined grains have no impact:

- Four major studies, encompassing over 150,000 people, showed a significantly lower risk of heart disease (18% to 36%) among those who ate at least one serving of whole grains per day. This is a result, as explained above, of lowering LDL (bad) cholesterol. Whole grains also appear to

improve insulin metabolism, which lowers the risk of heart disease.

- Whole grains have been found to reduce the severity of diabetes by as much as 20% to 30%. The soluble fiber in whole grains keeps carbohydrates from entering the bloodstream too quickly. This puts less stress on the pancreas and insulin production. It's important to note that the effect on blood sugar doesn't depend on simply whether you're consuming whole wheat or white flour. Rather, what matters is whether the grain is finely ground, or intact in its native form like bulgur or brown rice. Refined whole grain flour, although certainly more nutritious, doesn't help to slow down digestion, and makes your pancreas work just as hard as non-whole grain (white) refined flour.

- Whole grains may have their biggest impact in the bowel. To put it simply, insoluble fiber keeps things moving along. The average American consumes about 16 grams of fiber per day, but should probably consume closer to 32 grams per day. Current research is

investigating whether consuming insoluble fiber directly lowers the risk of colon cancer; stay tuned.

We also need to improve our daily diet. What should be a reasonable goal? Eating "100% Whole Grain Chips Ahoy" is healthier than eating refined flour Chips Ahoy, but it's still a cookie and certainly not, say, a piece of broccoli.

This may seem like a step in the right direction, but we need to make a shift toward natural whole grain products that are nutritionally dense (filled with good nutritional ingredients). Also, don't be fooled by products that contain a small amount of whole grain mixed in with mostly refined flour.

So the next time you go shopping for food, try to select more natural products that contain fiber, such as fruit, nuts, vegetables, barley, oats, beans, and brown rice.

As always, I wish you healthful eating.

Dr. Alan Frischer is former chief of staff at Downey Regional Medical Center. Write to him in care of this newspaper at 11525 Downey Ave., suite A, Downey, CA 90241

Dr. Gerald Coy discusses sports injuries on KidzNSports radio show

BY GWYNN GUSTAFSON, CO-OP CACHE CONSULTING

DOWNEY – Kids and sports injuries were the topic of discussion on a recent radio show, KidzNSports, hosted by Coach Mike Davis. Special guest Gerald Coy, chiropractor of Downey's CHER Foundation and CHER Clinic, voiced many of the concerns that parents have regarding their children's participation in various sports programs and the potential for injury.

Coy discussed the main cause of injuries and how they can be prevented. "Each sport has its rewards and sports activities are still the best way for children to get daily exercise – whether during school hours or at after school community programs – and a great means of social interaction," said Coy. "The key to injury prevention is 'preparation.'"

When your child first decides that they want to join a sport, they beg until you say okay – then you sign them up. Start the "preparation to prevent injury" by getting your child a thorough physical exam. See your doctor and see a chiropractor.

A simple physical exam may not be adequate in learning if your child is ready for sports. Consider the benefit of a more thorough examination by a chiropractor. For those parents who may not be able to afford an extensive evaluation, the CHER Foundation through the CHER Clinic makes spinal evaluations, even x-rays, available on an ability-to-pay basis, or even free depending on your financial need.

Not enough attention is paid to preparing young bones and muscles for the strain of the chosen sport, such as stretching or warming up. Seeing medical professionals before beginning sports is the best way to evaluate the condition of your child's muscles and bones. Once you know that your child is physically ready for sports, be sure to buy the proper protective sports equipment and then go have fun.

You can contact the clinic at (562) 776-1727. For more information about the CHER Foundation, visit www.coychiropracticinstitute.org.

For details on KidzNSports, visit www.kidznsports.com.

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

You should know that there are factors other than brushing and flossing that affect your oral health. In fact, research shows that smoking is the leading factor independently associated with the progression of gum disease. According to one study, more than 41% of the study subjects with progressive periodontal (gum) disease were smokers. You may also be interested to know that the second most important factor is sleep. Researchers found that subjects who got seven to eight hours of sleep per night, had less progressive periodontal disease than those who got less than six hours of sleep nightly. It was also found that high stress levels and daily alcohol consumption had a significant impact on the progression of gum disease.

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Fri, Dec 14th & 21st
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Tue, Dec 18th
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Hometown Buffet
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Montebello

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Sizzler
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Norwalk

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Dinner and dance for Downey kids

DOWNEY – The City of Downey Community Services Department is holding a Holiday Dinner and Dance for middle school-age children Dec. 14 at the Gary P. McCaughan Gymnasium at Apollo Park. Kids should dress in semi-formal attire.

Children must attend school or live in the city of Downey to attend. The cost is \$10 and includes an Italian dinner, dessert and dance music provided by DJ Rudy.

For an additional \$5, kids can have their pictures taken and receive a CD of the pictures as a holiday keepsake.

The dance runs from 7 to 10 p.m. For more information about the dance or its dress code, call (562) 904-7238.

Downey resident 'surprised' with sinking

BY BROOKE KARLI, STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 23, the MS Explorer, a Canadian-operated cruiser built in 1969, struck an iceberg and sank off Antarctica while on a 19-day Spirit of Shackleton Tour of Antarctica and the Falkland Islands. All 154 passengers and crew members spent hours in life rafts before Nordnorge, a Norwegian cruise ship, picked them up and delivered them to two military bases on King George Island.

Downey resident David Williams was aboard the MS Explorer for a 10-day Antarctica Classic Tour Feb. 12-21. According to Williams, the tour was very similar to that of the ill-fated Shackleton Tour, minus trips to the Falkland Islands and South Georgia.

Williams, 26, said his trip was like taking a college course while on vacation, learning about the history of Antarctica, wildlife preservation and human impact on the environment.

He observed various wildlife such as penguins, sea lions, seals, dolphins, whales and numerous species of birds, and even had the chance to observe some of his own species participating in downhill body sledding and Antarctic swimming.

The cruise liner, owned by Great Adventure People (GAP) Adventures of Toronto, provided environmentally oriented excursions and was a pioneer amongst tourist ships, plowing through waters of the Amazon to the Arctic and Antarctic circles, reported npr.org.

"I never had any worries or concerns while I was on the boat," said Williams, a 1999 Warren High School graduate. "That boat was built to break through ice and I'm extremely surprised that it sank – it was the first to visit the Antarctic islands and the first to sink."

"It's bad that accidents happen, but it's good at the same time because it forces the industry to better regulate cruise liner safety."

News accounts reported the 246-foot long MS Explorer struck ice early that morning, puncturing a hole in the boat's hull. Water began rushing in, later triggering a blackout and shutting down bilge pumps. More than 15 hours later, the boat had fully submerged into the ocean.

The *New York Times* reported that the incident was yet another indication of how the tourism boom not only threatens Antarctica's environment, but also puts passengers at risk.

"If a ship like that can go down, it really should be a wake-up call about allowing vessels that are not ice-strengthened and do not have double hulls to go down there at all," Jim Barnes, executive director of The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, told the *Times*.

In addition, the Associated Press reported that the Antarctic's blinding sleet, fog, high winds and treacherous seas – even in the October-to-April



David Williams, pictured here on Paulet Island, spent 10 days in February aboard the MS Explorer, a Canadian-operated cruise liner that sank off the coast of Antarctica Nov. 23. The ship struck ice and immediately began filling up with water, completely submerging into the ocean over 15 hours later. Photo courtesy David Williams

summer when cruise ships flock to the area by the dozens – make sailing treacherous for even the most rugged vessel.

Although The Antarctic Treaty was established in 1959, there is no single authority to enforce regulations, allowing the Antarctic tourism industry to be largely self-regulated.

The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operations was later founded by seven companies promoting safe and environmentally responsible travel. The group now has 99 members, but there are tour groups working outside the association which may not follow its safety and environmental guidelines, reported the *Times*.

Even though GAP Adventures is an association member, Williams hopes what happened to the MS Explorer prompts other treaty organizations to discuss tourism safety.

New Entertainment this week

<p>CD Releases</p> <p>Pink Floyd - <i>Oh By the Way</i> (Box) Wu Tang Clan - <i>The 8 Diagrams</i> Phillip Glass - <i>Book of Longing</i> Sheryl Crow - <i>Hits and Rarities</i> Keane - <i>Night Sky</i> Dave Matthews - <i>Live at Piedmont Park</i> Mario - <i>Go</i> Celine Dion - <i>Taking Chances</i> Sevendust - <i>Retrospective, Vol. 2</i> Bow Wow & Omarion - <i>Face Off</i> My Chemical Romance - <i>Live & Rare</i></p> <p>Source: Amazon.com</p> <p>DVD Releases</p> <p>MOVIES</p> <p>"The Bourne Ultimatum" "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" "High School Musical 2" TV/MISC.</p> <p>"Frasier" Season 10 "Lost" Season 3 "Celine Dion - Live in Las Vegas" "Beverly Hills 90210" Season 3</p> <p>Source: Amazon.com</p> <p>Video Game Releases</p> <p>Daisenryaku Exceed - PS2 NCAA March Madness 2008 - PS2, X360, PS3 NeoGeo Battle Coliseum - PS2 Elder Scrolls: Shivering Isles - PS3 BlackSite: Area 51 - PS3 Unreal Tournament III - PS3 Half Life 2 Orange Box - PS3 History Channel: Battle for the Pacific - PS3 Jenga - Wii Indoor Sports - Wii Pimp My Ride - Wii Showtime Boxing - Wii Super Swing Golf Season 2 - Wii</p> <p>Source: ebgames.com</p>	<p>Concerts</p> <p>FRIDAY, DEC. 7</p> <p>Spice Girls - Staples Center Enrique Iglesias - Nokia Theatre Deborah Harry - Henry Fonda Th. Boogie Knights - HOB Anaheim Jonathon Davis - Coach House</p> <p>SATURDAY</p> <p>John Mayer - Nokia Theatre David Beniot Quartet - Coach House</p> <p>SUNDAY</p> <p>Coco Montoya - Coach House Cult - HOB Anaheim Dane Cook - Honda Center David Gray - Wiltern Michael Smith - Nokia Theatre</p> <p>MONDAY</p> <p>Tool - Nokia Theatre David Gray - Wiltern Hawthorne Heights - HOB Anah.</p> <p>TUESDAY</p> <p>Fuel - Grove of Anaheim Squirrel Nut Zippers - El Rey</p> <p>WEDNESDAY</p> <p>Bjork - Nokia Theatre High School Musical - Kodak Th. Tori Amos - Copely Symphony Hall Alice in Chains - Gibson Amph.</p> <p>THURSDAY</p> <p>High School Musical - Kodak Th. Social Distortion - HOB Anaheim Tori Amos - Arlington Theatre Santa Barbara</p> <p>Source: Casenet</p> <p>Book Releases</p> <p>"<i>Hand of Evil</i>" by J. A. Jance "Metal Swarm" by Kevin J. Anderson "Rules of the Game" by Neil Strauss "Secret Gratitude Book" by Rhonda Byrne</p> <p>Source: barnesandnoble.com</p>
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'The Nutcracker' playing in Downey

DOWNEY – Tickets are on sale now for "The Nutcracker" ballet to be presented by the Southern California Dance Theatre at the Downey Theater, 8435 Firestone.

Performances will be held tomorrow and Dec. 15 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday and Dec. 16 at 2:30 p.m. For ticket information, call (562) 496-1766.

Celebrate Christmas with Christian club

DOWNEY – The Downey Christian Women's Club will celebrate Christmas at their meeting on Wednesday at Los Amigos Country Club.

The special feature will be Joy Grades of Edible Arrangements. Linda Bagley will be the meeting's speaker. Her topic is "Life is Like a Box of Chocolates." Diane Pierce will provide music.

The lunch meeting starts at 11:45 a.m. and the cost is \$12. The community (including men) is invited. Reservations are requested by calling Sonja at (562) 862-4347 or Delores at (562) 868-7135.

Chanukah presentation at Stonewood

DOWNEY – Stonewood Center will host a public Chanukah presentation by clergy and members of Temple Ner Tamid on Sunday at 4:30 p.m. in the J.C. Penny court.

Chanukah is an eight-day Jewish celebration that commemorates the victory of faithful Jews against Syrian-Greek rulers who tried to destroy Jewish culture in 165 B.C.E.

Rabbi Len Muroff and Cantor Ellen Jaffe-Gill will explain the significance of Chanukah for Jews and describe some of its rituals. Members of the temple will then join the rabbi and cantor in lighting a "chanukiah," a candelabrum with nine branches, followed by the singing of holiday blessings and songs.

For information, call Temple Ner Tamid at (562) 861-9276, or email templenertamid1@juno.com.

Meeting includes Hanukkah luncheon

DOWNEY – The Sisterhood of Temple Ner Tamid will have their next meeting on Wednesday at 11 a.m.

Following the business meeting, members will enjoy a Hanukkah luncheon.

The community is invited to attend and donation for the luncheon is \$6 for Sisterhood members.

Temple Ner Tamid is located at 10629 Lakewood Blvd. in Downey. For information, call (562) 861-9276.

Books up for silent auction at library

DOWNEY – The Friends of the Downey City Library have selected a variety of books for their Holiday Silent Auction.

The books include "In Search of America," by Peter Jennings; "Frank Sinatra – An American Legend," by Nancy Sinatra; and an illustrated children's book, "Who Was Born on This Special Day."

Bid cards are available in the Friends Gift Shop inside the library. The auction ends tomorrow at noon.

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AUGUST RUSH PG (11:25, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30)

ENCHANTED PG (11:15, 1:55, 4:35, 7:10, 9:50)

HITMAN R (11:40, 2:20, 4:55, 7:30, 10:10)

THE MIST R (11:20, 2:10, 5:05, 7:55, 10:45)

FRED CLAU PG (11:05, 1:40, 4:25, 7:05, 9:55)

TIMBER FALLS R (11:10, 1:20, 3:25, 5:35), 7:50, 10:15 (35MM)

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Rowan Robertson 'shreds' for guitar club

By Brooke Karli, Staff Writer

Over 20 students occupied Chris Donahue's classroom after school on Tuesday at West Middle School. No, they weren't there for detention, or classroom cleanup, or homework help. They were there for guitar club.

This week's guitar club featured Rowan Robertson, lead guitarist for metal rock band DC4.

Rowan, 36, explained to the students that his love for music and the guitar began at a young age.

"My dad always had guitars around the house," said Rowan. "So I started playing when I was four years old and began taking lessons shortly after. I was lucky enough to have parents that always supported my ambitions."

At the age of 17, Rowan got his big break in the United States as lead guitarist for heavy metal band Dio.

"I was very lucky in getting that gig," Rowan said. "I had only played in local pubs in London up until then, so it was like a fairytale story for me."

He performed with Dio from 1989-91, releasing "Lock up the Wolves."

Rowan went on to say that some of his influences include Jimi Hendrix, Gary Moore, Brian May, John Sykes, Randy Rhoades, Angus Young, Eddie Van Halen and more. Some of his favorite bands include Black Sabbath, The Police, The Beatles, Van Halen, Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, and more.

"Rock 'n' roll will always be my favorite," said Rowan. "But I listen and appreciate all other types of music. I've been listening to a lot of Bob Marley and classical music lately."

Rowan joined current band, DC4, in 2006. The band is comprised of three brothers - Shawn, Jeff and Mike Duncan - and Rowan. The band's Myspace, www.myspace.com/dc4duncan, says Rowan is the only one of the four not related by blood, but might as well be.

"Rowan just happens to be another brother in that he comes from the same school," drummer Shawn Duncan says on the website. "He likes powerful, strong music. From the first time we played with him, we knew it was gonna work."

The band recently released a new album, "Explode," and is currently looking to sign with a record label.

Between questions, Rowan jammed on his guitar, doing some serious 'shredding.' The students watched in amusement as Rowan's fingers moved effortlessly and quickly along the guitar, manipulating the guitar by picking and bending its strings.

His advice to the aspiring musicians?

"Know basic chords, learn alternate picking, play in time and have a good stretch between fingers," he advised. "The best thing is to never stop to ask a question - just practice instead."

DC4's next performance will be at The Key Club in West Hollywood on Dec. 14 at 10 p.m. Rowan will also be performing at the 2008 National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Show Jan. 17-20 at the Anaheim Convention Center.

More information on Rowan Robertson can be found by visiting www.rowanrobertson.co.uk, or www.myspace.com/rowanrobertson.



Rowan Robertson of metal rock band DC4 shared about his life as a musician at the West Middle School guitar club on Tuesday. The club meets every Tuesday after school. Photo courtesy MMVII GIA Photo

'Too Many Tamales' opens tonight

LOS ANGELES - For the 11th year, the Bilingual Foundation of the Arts (BFA) will present "Too Many Tamales" in Spanish and English at Teatro Carmen Zapata through Dec. 30.

Based on the story by Gary Soto and adapted to the stage by Margarita Galban and Lina Montalvo, "Too Many Tamales" is set on Christmas Eve when Maria plays with her imaginary friends while her mother tends to last minute preparations. After helping her mother make tamales, Maria discovers she had misplaced her mother's engagement ring. Believing that the ring got into the masa, she convinces her cousins to eat the whole batch in an effort to find the ring. After eating all the Christmas Eve dinner, Maria learns a lesson and witnesses a Christmas miracle of love that brings to life her imaginary friends.

"Too Many Tamales" is under the direction of Alejandra Flores; set design by Estela Scarlata, BFA's associate producer and set designer; lighting designer Edward Motts; musical director Gabriela Crowe; and puppeteers Jorge Luna and Ivonne Perez.

The English opening of the production is tonight at 8 p.m. Performance are Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays at noon, 2 and 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 for children 12 and under and \$17 for adults. Reservations are requested by calling (323) 225-4044.

'Disney on Ice' returns to L.A.

LOS ANGELES - "Disney on Ice presents Princess Wishes," an ice-skating event featuring favorite Disney characters, will begin a three-week Southern California engagement Dec. 19 at the Staples Center.

"Disney on Ice" will also be featured at the Los Angeles Sports Arena Jan. 3-6 and at the Long Beach Arena Jan. 9-13.

Tickets are priced from \$16 to \$65. For tickets, visit www.disneyonice.com or call (213) 480-3232.

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- **"Drop Dead Beautiful"** by Jackie Collins. Gorgeous Lucky Santangelo is preparing for the opening of her multibillion dollar hotel complex in Las Vegas, but a vicious killer is out to stop her any way he can.
- **"Star Trek Academy: Collision Course"** by William Shatner. This long-awaited novel features both crews of the "Enterprise" in an epic adventure that spans time and space.
- **"Swan Island"** by Elizabeth Gill. During the 1920's in Durham, England, young Ella is forced to leave her childhood home on Swan Island, but vows to return one day.

Non-Fiction

- **"The Boomer Century, 1946-2046"** by Richard Croker. From Dr. Spock and Vietnam to iPods and the new retirement, how 78 million baby boomers will set trends, influence entire industries and transform American society.
- **"Brothers in Battle, Best of Friends"** by William "Wild Bill" Guarnere and Edward "Babe" Heffron. Two WWII paratroopers, portrayed in the HBO miniseries "Band of Brothers," tell their story.
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- **"Honor's Reward: How to Attract God's Favor and Blessing"** by John Bevere. The author shows how the spiritual law of honor has the power to greatly enhance your life.
- **"You, Inc."** by Harry Beckwith. Whether you want to make a good impression on a prospective client or employer, a business expert shows how to package and present the most important product of all: yourself.

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AUGUST RUSH PG	(10:45 1:35 4:25) 7:15 10:05
BEO WOLF PG13	(11:00 1:50 4:40) 7:30 10:20
MR. MAGORUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM G	(1:30) 7:30
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BEE MOVIE PG	(12:15 2:40) 5:05 7:30 9:55

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Roberta O'Dell was volunteer with church

DOWNEY – Roberta O'Dell, Downey resident for over 30 years, passed away Nov. 30 at the age of 83.

O'Dell was born on Feb. 2, 1924 to Anthony and Eva Sweet Winter in Nortonville, Kans. At the age of two, her family moved to Los Angeles. She attended St. Columkilles Catholic Grade School and graduated from Catholic Girls' High in 1942. On Dec. 9, 1943, she wed Samuel Bernard O'Dell. Their first home was in Bell, where they resided for 11 years. As their family grew, they relocated to Lynwood in 1956, later settling in Downey in 1976.



O'Dell was an active member of St. Raymond Catholic Church for over 30 years and ran the duplicating office at Pius X High School in the mid-seventies. She was also a "Pink Lady" for the DCH Auxiliary, accruing over 4,500 volunteer hours. O'Dell was a skilled seamstress and enjoyed cooking and dancing.

She is survived by husband Samuel; children Michael (Bette) O'Dell, Donna (John) Dittus, James (Peggy) O'Dell and Teresa (Daniel) Traversi; grandchildren Linda, Nancy (Hiram) Trillo, Daniel, David, Rebecca (Paul) Durniok, Devon, John (Gail), Jessica, Samantha, Victoria and Prescott; great-grandchildren Ethan, Emma, Desiree and Dana; siblings Rita Ellison, Donald Winter, Mary Rita Winter, Jean Towner and Carol Long; and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held yesterday at St. Raymond Catholic Church. Interment followed immediately at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Culver City. Visitation and rosary services were held on Wednesday at Miller-Mies Mortuary.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in her name to the charity of your choice.

City collecting toys for children

DOWNEY – The city of Downey is hosting their 22nd Annual Holiday Toy Collection Program, collecting new toys for underprivileged kids that will be distributed through PTA HELPS and other local children's programs.

The toy collection begins Monday and will continue through Dec. 14. Organized by the Public Works Department's Recycling Office, drop-points include City Hall, Downey City Library, Downey police station, Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center, all Downey fire stations, all Downey public schools, and local businesses displaying a City toy collection box.

For more information on how you or your organization can help in the Holiday Toy Collection Program, call (562) 904-7103.



Gary Baker was a vice principal and teacher at Columbus High School for 34 years before retiring in June. He passed away Dec. 1.

Vice principal, teacher Gary Baker passes away

DOWNEY – Gary Baker, a longtime teacher and vice principal at Columbus High School, died Dec. 1 at his Lakewood home surrounded by his family.

He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Terry; sons, Jason (Becky) and Jared (Gina); daughter, Lauren; mother, Betty; brothers, Dave and Neil; and grandchildren, Joshua and Jessica.

Baker retired in June of this year from the Downey Unified School District after 34 years of service at Columbus High School as a teacher and vice principal.

Baker grew up in Lakewood, marrying his high school sweetheart, Terry. He was an active member of his community and church. He was involved with the Boy Scouts of America, coached Little League, and helped couples locally and nationally through Marriage Encounter.

He enjoyed camping, hiking, tackling do-it-yourself projects, and traveling with his wife to Napa Valley, Moonstone Beach, Maui and, most recently, England.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow, Dec. 8, at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church at 6210 E. Willow St. in Long Beach at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family requested donations be sent to Episcopal Marriage Encounter at 2621 W. Pershing Ave., Phoenix, Ariz., 85029 or to the St. Gregory's Memorial Fund.

Michael Joseph Doyle was longtime parishioner

DOWNEY – Michael Joseph Doyle, a 50-year parishioner of St. Raymond Catholic Church, passed away on Dec. 3. He was 81.

Doyle, a longtime Downey resident, was born on Jan. 18, 1926 in Liverpool, England. He was an electrician with Western Electric for 20 years.

He is survived by daughters Annie Smith, Nancy Rose and Polly Montelone; sons Mark and Brian; sixteen grandchildren; and sister Maureen Carey.

A vigil will be held tonight at Risher Downey Chapel at 7 p.m. Funeral Mass will be held tomorrow at St. Raymond Catholic Church at 10 a.m., followed by interment at Calvary Cemetery in Los Angeles.

For directions to Risher Mortuary, visit www.RisherMortuary.com.

Madeline Grothe lived in Downey 49 years

DOWNEY – Madeline Grothe, a 49-year Downey resident, passed away on Nov. 15. She was 90.

Grothe was born on May 22, 1917 in Mapleton, Minn. She married Arnold Grothe in 1936 and they moved to Downey in 1958.

She was preceded in death by husband Arnold in 1984 and son Jake in 1990.

She is survived by brother Jerry Carey; children Harriet, Margaret, Frances, Joanne, Benjamin and Patricia

The family will be hosting a gathering tomorrow at the Davern residence located at 4548 Blanca Dr. in Cypress. If attending, please RSVP at (714) 828-3368.

David W. Shepherd was longtime resident

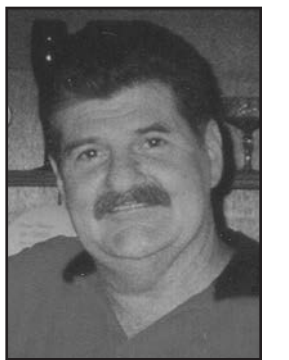
DOWNEY – David W. Shepherd, longtime Downey resident, passed away on Nov. 12 at the age of 54.

Shepherd was born on Dec. 19, 1952 in Downey, where he resided until 1976. He then moved to Vacaville, Calif., where he met and married wife Bobbi and worked as a welder, also having his general contractor's license.

He was preceded in death by father John, Sr. and brother John, Jr.

He is survived by wife Bobbi; son David, Jr. (Maggie); stepson Brian (Marlena); two grandsons; mother Hazel; brothers Roger (Sybil) and Jim; sister Shirley (Tony) Schifano; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Services were held in Vacaville on Nov. 16.



Dorothy Louise Young served during WWII

DOWNEY – Dorothy Louise Young, a longtime Downey resident, passed away on Nov. 20. She was 86.

Young was born on July 30, 1921 in Attleboro, Mass. She served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and was second cousin to Rene Gagnon, one of the soldiers depicted raising the American flag on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima in WWII.



She was survived by children Raymond McCormick, Linda Lucarelli and James Young; grandchildren Deborah Anderson, Don Lucarelli, Elizabeth Young, Vanessa Young, Jennifer Young and Kevin Young; great-grandchildren Jason Arellano, Kayla Arellano, Amber Arellano and Brant Anderson.

Services were on Nov. 27 at Downey Zrelak Family Mortuary.

John R. Heckman survived by family

DOWNEY – John R. Heckman, a 17-year employee with the IRS and a former officer in the U.S. Army, passed away from a stroke on Oct. 6. He was 88.

Heckman enjoyed photography and earned a commission of Warrant Officer in the Army. He married Esther G. Harbaugh on Aug. 22, 1942, and together they raised a family of five children.

Heckman worked 17 years with the Internal Revenue Service before going to work for the Western Renegotiation Board. He was responsible for returning to the United States Treasury millions of dollars in surplus profit from companies who worked on publicly-awarded military contracts during World War II.

Heckman is survived by his wife of 65 years, Esther, of Downey; sons, Michael Heckman of San Rafael and Mark Heckman of Long Beach; daughters, Maureen Tischler of San Rafael, Marianne Heckman of Downey, and Melinda (Bran-D) Heckman of Honolulu; and two grandsons, Daniel and Sean Tischler, both of whom are currently serving in the U.S. military.

The family was assisted by Miller-Mies Mortuary.

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OLPH Women's Guild Christmas lunch

DOWNEY – The OLPH Women's Guild will hold their Christmas luncheon, "Christmas around the World," tomorrow at the Rio Hondo Event Center.

Christine Pohlen will provide the music and every centerpiece will be raffled off. Socializing begins at 10:30 a.m. and a buffet lunch, including champagne, coffee and tea, will be available at noon.

Reservations are \$30 and are due by Dec. 1. Send your check, payable to Catholic Women's Guild, to Polly Glenn, 7314 Cleargrove Dr., Downey, CA 90240.

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The DJAA fourth grade mustang division football team recently beat Bell Gardens 27-6 and Cerritos 27-0 to win the Southern California Municipal Athletic Federation Southeast Division. The team will compete in regionals in Oxnard on Dec. 18.



Wanda Peterson and her fourth grade class at Unsworth Elementary School collected numerous boxes of food during their November Community Service Project. The food was donated to the Food Help Program at Downey First Christian Church, who will in turn distribute the food to those in need in our community.

Mormon Choir to perform tomorrow

DOWNEY – The Southern California Mormon Choir will perform in a Pre-Christmas concert at the Downey Stake Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints tomorrow at 7 p.m.

Since its formation in 1953, the Southern California Mormon Choir has performed throughout the country, including performances with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Glendale Symphony, Utah Symphony and Pacific Symphony Orchestra. The choir features a broad repertoire of classical, sacred, folk and patriotic music, and will perform a collection of songs tomorrow called, "The Songs of Christmas," under the direction of Frank Turner.

"Based on our past experience, I can assure you that it will be a fun and memorable evening of quality, uplifting entertainment and a wonderful part of our Christmas season celebration," said Stephen Bills, choir president.

The concert, as well as parking, is free and tickets and reservations are not required. Refreshments will be served following the concert.

The Downey Stake Center is located at 12425 Orizaba Ave. in Downey.

For information, call (562) 851-8450.

Class of 1978 reunion next September

DOWNEY – The Downey High School class of 1978 will be having their 30-year reunion on Sept. 20, 2008.

For more information, call Mike Schroeder at (909) 597-9300, or email Marlene Masone at mtmyl@msn.com.

Santa Claus is calling Downey children

DOWNEY – Children ages 4 to 8 can receive a surprise phone call from Santa Claus through a program by the City of Downey Community Services Department entitled, "North Pole is Calling You."

To participate in the free program, parents or guardians must fill-out a card from the Community Services Department at City Hall with information on each child, including their name, pronunciation of name, parents or guardians' name, sex of the child, address, hobbies and interests, school, and holiday "wish list."

Those who are filling out cards for multiple children in the same family need to fill-out cards for each child and staple them together before turning them in.

The cards are now available and must be submitted back to Community Services by 5 p.m. on Dec. 14.

Santa Claus will make his calls Dec. 19-20 between 6 and 7 p.m. He will have a brief chat with each child.

For more information on the program, call (562) 904-7238.



Ivan and Maxine Stenerson celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 29, at the Southland Care Home in Norwalk. The couple has lived in Downey since 1952 and have two children – Paul, who is deceased, and Gail Griffith, who currently resides in Sacramento.

Two separate winter camps for kids

DOWNEY – The City of Downey Community Services Department is offering two distinct winter camps – one for kids ages 6 to 14 plus a "Camp for Champs" for ages 6 to 18 from Dec. 26-28 and Dec. 31 to Jan. 4 at Wilderness Park.

The fee for each camp is \$80 per week, and \$75 for a second child from the same family. Extended care is also available for \$35, and \$30 for a second family member. The weekly fees include supervision, lunch beverage, daily snack and the weekly excursion.

Camp hours are 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and extended care is available from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Registration is now open at the Community Services Department, 11111 Brookshire Ave. For more information, call (562) 904-7238.

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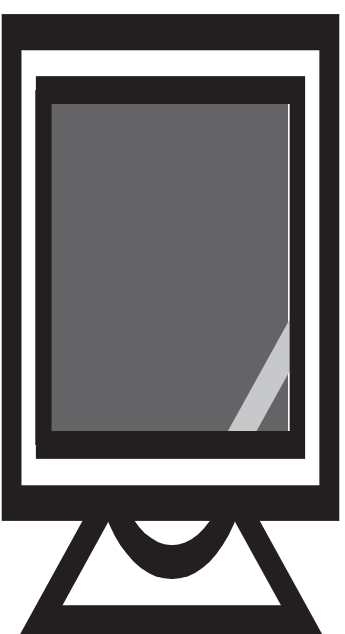
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Century 21 My Real Estate Co. welcomes Jorge and Maria Luz Gutierrez, a husband and wife real estate team, to their office. "Years of experience in office procedures, notary public and strong work ethics will enhance their services provided to the clients," said Steve Roberson, broker and owner of Century 21 My Real Estate Co. Jorge and Maria can be reached at (562) 927-2626.



Doris Morejon recently joined the team at Century 21 My Real Estate Co. "She is sharp and well-prepared to give great service to the clients," said Angie Pierce, office manager. Morejon can be contacted at (562) 927-2626.



Century 21 My Real Estate Co. welcomes Lila Valenzuela to their office. "We look forward to having Lila's quality skills in our company," said Roger Nordin, vice president of relocation and marketing. Valenzuela can be reached at (562) 927-2626.



Rose Jarusasi recently joined the team of realtor associates at Century 21 My Real Estate Co. Jarusasi has a master's degree in sociology and is a notary public. "Rose Jarusasi's education, experience and work ethic with certainly be a valuable asset to her clients," said Steve Roberson, broker and owner of Century 21 My Real Estate Co. To contact Jarusasi, call (562) 927-2626.

Patriot's publisher to speak at meeting

DOWNEY – Jennifer DeKay-Givens, owner and publisher of *The Downey Patriot*, and Joline Huren of Downey Care Center, will speak at Tuesday's meeting of the Rise 'N Shine Networking Group at Nordic Fox restaurant.

The cost is an order from the menu. To attend, RSVP with the Downey Chamber of Commerce at (562) 923-2191.

It's not easy investing in eco-friendly homes - roadblocks stopping residential green building

CONTRIBUTED BY GLENN SCHERER, BLUE RIDGE PRESS

In these times of combined threat from climate change, peak oil, pollution and toxic waste, green home building not only makes sense, it is imperative.

But the roadblocks put up to stop residential green building (some on purpose, some accidental, some absurd) are keeping Americans from investing in eco-friendly homes.

Let's start with financial lenders. Though big banks will readily lend money at high risk to sub-prime home buyers, there is astoundingly little money available if you're building green – no matter how good your credit.

Take the case of my wife and I. We sought a home construction loan to build off the grid using solar photo voltaic cells for all our electricity needs – hardly experimental construction, since solar panels have been on the market for decades.

But a query to a big lender, Wells Fargo Bank, turned from thumbs-up to thumbs-down the moment we proposed going off the grid with solar. "Unusual construction," said the apologetic broker. "We can't take a risk on that kind of loan." But the house we sought financing for is not unusual – it's a house.

Likewise with other large lending institutions we contacted. Ultimately we borrowed much of the money needed from a personal friend and bypassed the banks. But it shouldn't be this way. Federal home construction loan guarantees should be made available to banks that invest in "unusual construction" including solar, wind, geothermal and other alternative energy technologies.

Next roadblock: building codes. Many electric, water and septic rules preclude green building. Take, for example, the straw-clay with which we built our home's walls. The technology is tried and true – thousands of years old and utilized from ancient Persia to modern Africa, and even in England (think Tudor-style cottage construction). However, most building codes around the U.S. would forbid such construction in favor of sheetrock, fiberglass insulation, Portland cement and other non-green materials.

So too with septic systems. In Vermont, where we built our green home, state rules disallow some of the newest high-tech waste disposal systems, including living machines, grey water systems, and composting and incinerating toilets. Instead, traditional systems that require heavy earthmoving equipment, many gas-guzzling truckloads of gravel and topsoil, and a 1,000-gallon concrete holding tank are required. While this statewide Vermont law is meant to protect groundwater and wetlands, it was also lobbied through the legislature by septic engineers and excava-

tors who make an excellent living designing and constructing traditional-but-wasteful septic systems.

So long as outdated technology is codified in our building ordinances, green building will be unable to move ahead apace in most areas. State and federal governments should be helping cities and towns to rewrite their codes to include all kinds of green alternatives.

Next conundrum: builders. Many contractors won't touch a green building project because it means teaching old dogs new tricks, and new tricks take time to learn, and time is money. Developers continue to build helter-skelter on the landscape, with no attention given to even the simplest green building techniques, such as orienting a home for south-facing windows that maximize solar gain in winter, or planting deciduous trees to maximize cooling in summer. Government should fund free education courses that help contractors leave behind the wasteful building practices of the past. Green building consultants could be hired to staff state and county offices, much like the agricultural extension services of the past.

Another key area of neglect is research. Instead of billions in federal dollars going to the fossil fuel industry, why not put some of those already available tax dollars into setting up regional research institutes for green home building. Such institutes would make a study of locally available building materials, recycled materials, and other eco-friendly techniques appropriate to that region, and pass the information on to homebuilders and homeowners.

All the news isn't bad. The Energy Policy Act enacted by Congress in 2006 offers a federal tax credit of up to \$2,000 for homeowners who install solar-electric generators. New York State similarly offers incentives that help defray the cost of installing a solar system by 30 to 70 percent. Vermont gave us \$1,000 back on our \$15,000 off-grid solar system. But such assistance barely scratches the surface of what is needed.

Tax credits need to be implemented which not only support alternative energy, but that reward ecofriendly site planning, houses with smaller footprints (under 2,000 square feet), and that utilize all kinds of green building materials.

The average U.S. home today emits about four metric tons of carbon-dioxide equivalent per person, per year – about 17 percent of all U.S. emissions – according to research by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. With the Arctic ice cap melting at an alarming and accelerating rate and oil prices soaring to the \$100 per barrel mark, it's time we helped the homebuilding industry to discover its green future.

Glenn Scherer is co-editor of *Blue Ridge Press* and is building an off grid home in central Vermont.

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