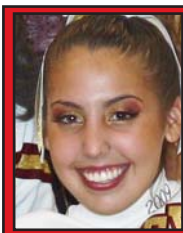


The Downey Patriot



Realtors have new president
See Page 4



Downey cheer gets first place
See Page 10



Advice for loan modifications
See Page 9

Friday, December 12, 2008

Vol. 7 No. 34

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



Porto's Bakery, makers of cakes, tarts and other desserts, along with lunch and breakfast, will open a new location in Downtown Downey after the City Council agreed to provide \$750,000 in economic incentives. Photo of Porto's Bakery in Burbank by Jessica Lander

City makes sweet deal with Porto's

■ City agrees to pay \$750,000 in economic incentives to lure Porto's Bakery to Downtown Downey. In turn, Porto's will invest \$16 million into the downtown area, officials say.

BY ERIC PIERCE, CITY EDITOR

DOWNEY – Bolstered by assurances that more money exists in city reserve funds than originally speculated, the City Council this week approved a \$750,000 agreement to bring Porto's Bakery to Downey.

The Cuban bakery, with two other locations in Burbank and Glendale, will open their new bakery at 8233 Firestone Boulevard.

The agreement is part of a massive \$16 million investment Porto's Bakery will pour into Downtown Downey, which includes the purchase of the mostly vacant property, rehabilitation of a five-story office complex, and construction of a new parking garage, city officials said.

As part of the agreement, Porto's Bakery will be required to produce 40 full-time jobs for at least five years, although city officials said they expect the restaurant to employ up to 90 full- and part-time staff.

"It will be a stimulus to get the entire downtown redeveloped," Councilman David Gafin said of Porto's Bakery.

The deal initially failed last week after the City Council hedged at depleting the city's entire redevelopment reserves on a single project.

But Gilbert Livas, the city's deputy city manager for economic development, said about \$700,000 in related redevelopment funds exists.

"With the new circumstances that there was a heck of a lot more money in reserves than I was led to believe a week ago, I am very willing to go forward and grant \$750,000 because that will leave \$950,000 for other projects..." Gafin said.

City officials hope Porto's Bakery, which could begin construction as early as May, will bring a "spark" to Downey's downtown.

On average, Porto's draws 2,000 customers per day to each of their Glendale and Burbank locations, Livas said.

Conservative estimates by Tierra West Advisors, an independent economic consultant hired by the city, say Downey will receive about \$808,000 in new sales and property tax income over a 10-year period as a result of the project.

The amount could double to \$1.6 million under "optimal conditions." "We couldn't find a better business (to bring downtown)," said Mayor Mario Guerra. "I think this...agreement in relative terms is a very good deal for the city with the future to come."

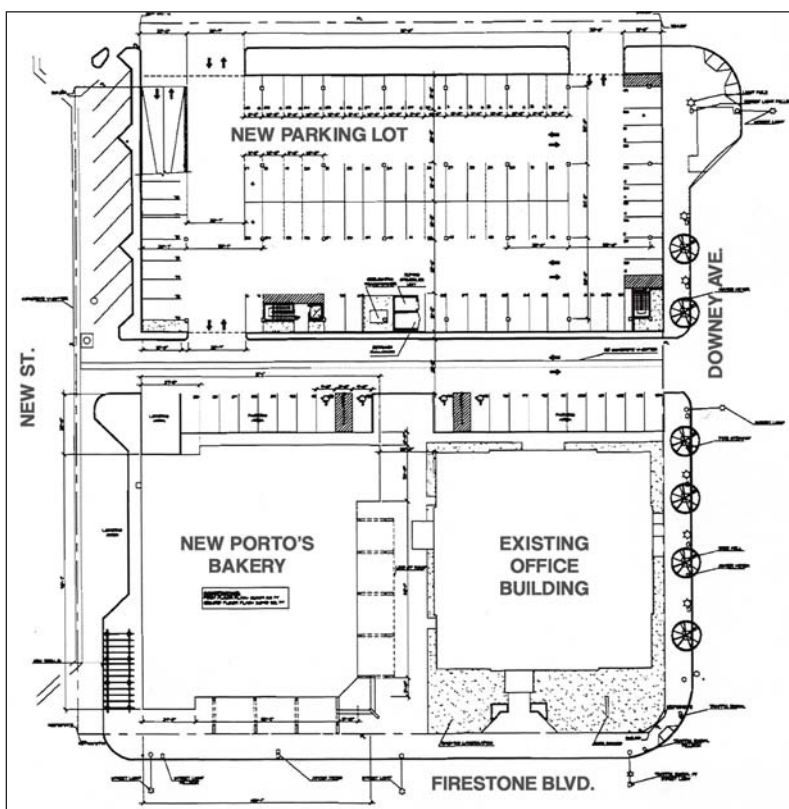
Newly-elected Councilman Luis Marquez agreed.

"I see this as being a good project, a great project," he said. "This is what the downtown community needs."

Mayor Pro Tem Anne Bayer, the lone council member to vote against the deal, praised Porto's Bakery but said she hesitated to grant one business such a large amount of money.

"I feel that we are so blessed to have Mr. Porto who wants to come in and put his bakery with us," she said. "The problem I have is giving this type of money to one entity. There are lots of businesses that can be helped in the redevelopment section that I think we need to look at."

Earlier this year, the city took control of the Avenue Theatre and Verizon building with an eye towards redeveloping the downtown.



Porto's Bakery will build their latest addition at 8233 Firestone Boulevard. The \$16 million project includes construction of a new parking structure and renovation of the existing office building at Downey Avenue and Firestone Boulevard. Courtesy city of Downey

Woman faces animal cruelty charges

■ Dog was dragged by truck for several blocks to SEAACA shelter.

BY MARY FORNEY, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Animal cruelty charges against a 25-year-old Norwalk woman are being sought by the Southeast Area Animal Control Authority in Downey.

On Dec. 4, the woman pulled into the SEAACA shelter after dragging her 1-year-old pit bull behind her truck. The dog had either jumped or fallen from the truck bed when its leash became caught in the tailgate.

"She tried hard to balance but to no avail," said SEAACA Director of Operations Aaron Reyes.

Appearing unaware that someone was following behind her and honking to get her attention, the woman continued dragging the dog on asphalt streets for several blocks. Shocked bystanders unleashed the bloodied, unconscious dog after the truck stopped at the shelter.

The owner of the dog denied knowing that the dog had been dragging behind the truck and said she was bringing it to the shelter to be put to sleep because it suffered from mange.

The dog, who's name is Prada, is being treated for her injuries. According to Reyes, the dog's mange is also treatable.

"She is doing well. We are trying to control infection and we are winning that battle," Reyes said. "She is in great spirits – a real trooper."

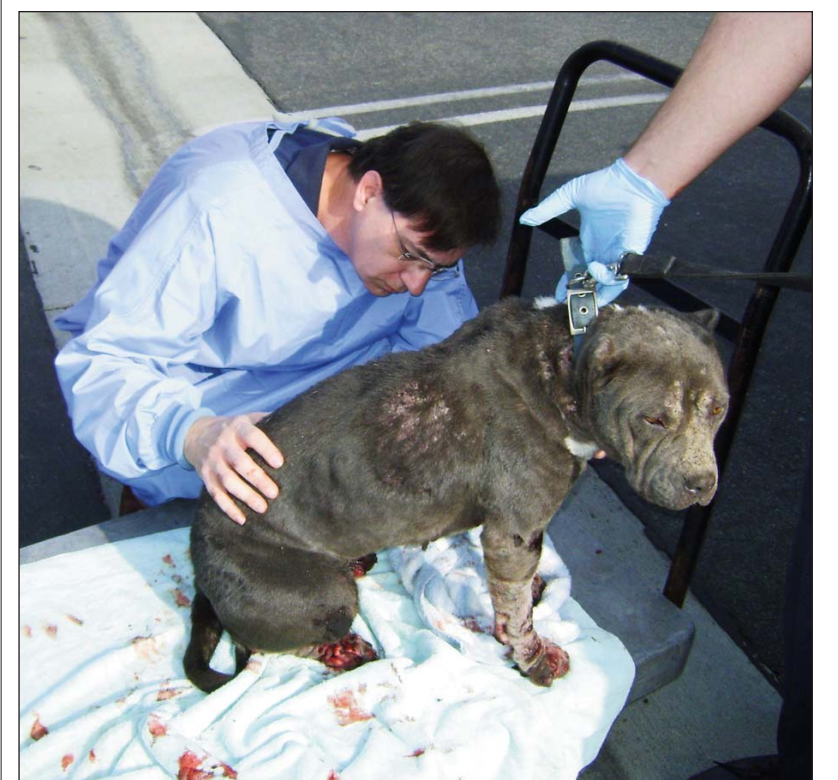
Prada's former owner now faces felony animal cruelty charges, as well as a local municipal ordinance charge for illegally transporting an animal, and a state vehicle code violation.

"This is a perfect example of what can happen and why you have to be aware when transporting animals," Reyes said. "Even if you have had success before transporting in the back of your pickup truck – don't do it. Ideally, put a beach towel on your seat and strap them in or use a carrier."

Prada will be available for adoption once she is healed from her injuries. Described by Reyes as having a "very sweet disposition and loving people," SEAACA employees sit with her daily, stroking her head until she falls asleep.

"The ultimate goal is for her to leave here to a loving new home," Reyes said.

If you would like to adopt Prada or another shelter animal, call SEAACA at (562) 803-3301.



Prada, a 1-year-old pit bull, suffered serious but non-life threatening injuries when she was dragged behind her owner's truck, on its way to the SEAACA animal shelter in Downey. Photo courtesy SEAACA

DUSD articulates ambitious CTE plan

BY HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

At the beginning of the 2007-08 school year, a mandate was given by the Downey Unified School District's board of education to director Phil Davis' department of support programs/career and vocational education to fully articulate its new Career and Technology (CTE) program's mission and strategy.

Hewing faithfully to the standards and guidelines set by its author and funding source, the Carl D. Perkins CTE Improvement Act of 2006, Davis

See CTE, page 2

HOLIDAY DEADLINES

DEC 26 EDITION CLASSIFIED ADS ARE DUE 12/23 BY 3PM
DISPLAY ADS ARE DUE 12/19 BY 3PM

JAN 02 EDITION CLASSIFIED ADS ARE DUE 12/30 BY 3PM
DISPLAY ADS ARE DUE 12/24 BY 3PM

CTE: Career programs part of DUSD's overall plan for student achievement.

Continued from page 1

delivered his department's 2008-2012 Local CTE Plan last month. Not counting appended worksheets, it runs to some 60 pages. It fulfilled the board of education's stated sixth goal for 2007-08 of "developing a three-year to five-year strategic plan to integrate career-technical education paths at the secondary schools." The board had set 12 significant goals in all.

DUSD makes no bones about it. It says at the outset that the plan is "an important part of our overall plan for student achievement and success for the next five years because we believe that CTE courses are a critical component of our overall educational program for all of our students."

Indeed, CTE courses already in place in the high schools include: construction technology, film and video production, graphics design, animation, culinary arts, law enforcement, careers in education, sports therapy, professional dance, computer assisted drafting (CAD), and commercial photography. In the planning stage or already in the works are a state-of-the-art automotive technology facility and another in culinary arts.

CTE's aim is to work seamlessly with such resource agencies as the L.A. County Office of Education Regional Occupations Program as well as a number of local community (Cerritos, Rio Hondo, and Long Beach City) and four-year (Long Beach State, and Cal State Fullerton) colleges.

These career pathways are meant to "attract students that might not otherwise be fully engaged in school" or otherwise serve to "provide additional motivation for students to attend our schools." DUSD notes that the district "is already strong in academics, sports, performing arts, visual arts,

and many other areas." He expects, though, that over the next five years, "our CTE student pathways will rival these successful programs in both scope and quality."

CTE's features include alignment with the State Plan and Perkins IV requirements (involving the participation of parents, students, academic, and CTE teachers, faculty, administrators, career guidance and academic counselors, representatives of business and industry, labor organizations, representatives of 'special populations', and other interested parties) and counseling, professional development, accountability and evaluation supports.

Davis wants to make it clear that CTE's vision goes beyond mere vocational/technical implications: its rationale is to "prepare students for technical careers or college level classes with both technical and academic skills that will help them to adapt as industry needs and their fields change."

Aside from Perkins monies, funds for the CTE program come from "Measure D" earmarks. Approved in early 2002, "Measure D authorized the DUSD to purchase up to \$67 million in general obligation bonds for structural modernization, technology upgrade, and CTE-related improvements."

Already some of CTE's pathway programs have won widespread recognition. A few have risen to the status of models in the area. CTE is definitely on a clear path to further development and success.



Air Force Reserve Airman David A. Trujillo has completed basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Tex. During the six weeks of training, Trujillo studied the Air Force mission, organization, core values, and military customs and courtesies, performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises, and training in human relations. Trujillo is the son of Jose and Veronica Trujillo of Downey, and graduated from Warren High School in 2003.

New council's first meeting is a rough one

BY HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Much of the excitement Tuesday revolved around issues (Porto's Bakery, labor negotiations with various city employee associations) juriedicated by the City Council acting as the Community Development Commission.

The proceedings provided newly installed Councilmen Luis Marquez and Roger Brossmer with a rough introduction to the conduct of city affairs. It was also the first time new mayor Mario Guerra banged the mayor's gavel to start the Council meeting, prompting him to exclaim, "This is cool!"

The Council then:

- Approved the contract with HF&H Consultants, LLC, for services regarding negotiations for an amended contract with Calmet, the city's solid waste disposal franchisee, which will resolve the dispute primarily about commercial bin service billing rates and the annual process involved to calculate fee increases based on CPI figures;

- Authorized the police department to enter into a participation agreement with the Glendora Police Department to participate in the "Avoid the 100" DUI Task Force comprising numerous county law enforcement agencies, whose goal is to increase drunk driving awareness and enforcement

during high traffic holiday periods through DUI checkpoints, roving patrols, and arrest warrant operations;

- Authorized the city manager to retain KFM Engineering and Henry Woo Architects, Inc. to provide as needed professional services in support of federal and state funding opportunities, especially in the preparation of (infrastructure) project funding application packages to take advantage of an anticipated Economic Stimulus Package early in 2009;

- Awarded a contract in the amount of \$123,882.50 to Environmental Assessment and Remediation Management, Inc., dba EAR Engineering Construction and Support Services, for the vapor extraction system located at 9255 Imperial Highway, and appropriated \$37,000 in additional gas tax funds for the project;

- Re the Florence Avenue traffic signal communications system project, a) approved a memorandum of understanding with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; b) approved a professional services agreement with Advantec Consulting Engineers, Inc. for the preparation of plans, specifications, engineer's estimate and bid documents not to exceed \$133,750; and c) appropriated \$155,000 in additional Prop. C local return funds needed for the project;

- Adopted a resolution establishing the administrative fine schedule for

violations of the Downey Municipal Code such as "failure to submit hazardous materials business plan," "illegal dumping," failure to "maintain vacant property," etc.;

- Introduced an ordinance adding Chapter 7 to Art. VIII of the Downey Municipal Code requiring the registration and maintenance of vacant and abandoned property, arising from a substantial increase in defaulting and foreclosed properties; and b) authorize the city manager to retain such services as required for the maintenance of vacant residential properties, for security and aesthetic reasons;

- Presented plaques of recognition to retiring Design Review Board members, including a posthumous one for Del D'Alessandro, who died earlier this year; and

- Awarded plaques and prizes to the winners of the Used Oil Recycling Calendar Artwork Contest. Grand prize winner this year was Adam Vingino of Rio San Gabriel Elementary, whose winning entry was titled "Stop pollution before we drown in it."

Amid the worsened economic climate, the Councilmembers nevertheless wished everyone a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

The next regular public meeting of the City Council will be at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 13, 2009 at City Hall, 11111 Brookshire Ave.

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A 17-year-old Bellflower boy was killed last week when the stolen motorcycle he was riding collided with a truck on Lakewood Boulevard near Downey Landing. Photo by Mary Forney

Teen killed riding stolen motorcycle

■ Bellflower boy, 17, dies after collision near Downey Landing.

By MARY FORNEY, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – The Downey Police Department continues to investigate a fatal traffic accident that occurred Dec. 4 near Downey Landing.

A 17-year-old Bellflower boy was riding a motorcycle on Lakewood Boulevard near Downey Landing when he collided with the back of a compact truck driven by a 61-year-old Downey resident.

The teen died from his injuries at the scene. The driver of the truck was not injured.

The name of the deceased is being withheld "due to potential criminal involvement on his part,"

said Special Operations Sgt. Dean Milligan in a recent e-mail to local press agencies.

The motorcycle involved had been reported stolen from the city of Lakewood three weeks prior to the collision.

Witnesses working at Downey Landing claim to have seen the motorcyclist speeding on Lakewood Boulevard numerous times.

"It looked like the motorcycle exploded when it hit the truck," said a Downey Landing security guard who asked that his name remain anonymous.

"Young people need to stop driving so fast. Life will last longer."

Anyone with information about the accident is asked to call the Downey Police Department Traffic Division at (562) 904-2339 or Sgt. Dean Milligan at (562) 904-2342.

Schools get much-needed grants

■ Thirty-five grants total \$7,000 for DUSD teachers and staff.

By HENRY VENERACION, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Thirty-five Downey Unified School District (DUSD) teachers and staff each received a check for \$200 from the Downey Federal Credit Union (DFCU) on Dec. 4 for the purpose of enriching the lives of the students under their care. The checks came with a long-stemmed rose and a trophy.

Formerly limited to teachers, the grant money program with \$7,000 for distribution was this year expanded for the first time to include non-teaching staff. The DFCU-sponsored Student Enrichment Grant Program has awarded the grants for the past seven years.

A committee from the credit union picked the 35 grant recipients out of more than 100 proposals.

Among the 35 selected entries: DNA kits for science class (Michelle Derkum, teacher at West Middle School); field trip to the Museum of Tolerance (West Elementary's Darla Webster); a plaque honoring veterans at Downey Adult School (OASIS' Harriett Paine); supplies for Character Counts! school garden



Downey Federal Credit Union's Student Enrichment Grant Program awarded \$7,000 to 35 DUSD staff members. The program is now in its seventh year. Photo courtesy DFCU

(Ward Elementary's Jackie Graves); new carpet for the TLC room, plus new games (TLC's Luz Perez); a sewing machine for her clothing design class (West Middle School's Mary Jo Enycart); props for their drama clubs (West Middle's Andrea Procter and Gallatin Elementary's Reggie Donahue); pictures of toys for non-verbal students (Alameda Elementary's Tamika King); math

software program to accommodate learning styles (Gallatin's Sandi Cox); funding for Orlando, Fla. tournament (Downey High School's Larry Shelton); and dry erase boards for learning concepts (Columbus High School's Susan Rodriguez)

Said Barbara Lamberth, DFCU president/CEO: "The credit union is honored to be the sole sponsor of the student enrichment grant pro-

gram. As a DUSD graduate, I am proud to be part of an organization that supports the school district and makes the lives of the students and educators richer."

Echoing DFCU chairman Stan Hanstad's earlier assurance of the credit union's financial soundness, Lamberth said it should remain so "for the next 51 years."

Historical society hosting open house

DOWNEY – The Downey Historical Society will host an open house Dec. 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tours of the famous Dismukes House at Apollo Park will be given, and visitors can enjoy historic Christmas exhibits. Refreshments will be served.

The Downey Historical Society is at 12540 Rives Ave. at Apollo Park.

Temple to light Hanukkah candle

DOWNEY – Temple Ner Tamid of Downey will light the first Hanukkah candle on the Chanukah at Stonewood Center on Dec. 21.

The celebration will take place in the J.C. Penney quad at 3 p.m. Rabbi Len Muroff and Cantor Ellen Jaffe-Gill will explain the significance of Hanukkah, and describe some of its rituals.

For more information, call the temple's office at (562) 861-9276.



Downey Police Officers' Association

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The Downey Police Officers' Association would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday Season. We would also like to thank all citizens who donated to our annual mail program.

Please know that your contribution is helping to make a difference in our community.

On behalf of our entire group, we hope you have a safe and prosperous year. Please find comfort knowing we are there to help you when needed.

Sincerely,
Cpl. Mike Pope
DPOA President
(562) 861-0771 ext. 353



Chamber open house today

DOWNEY – The Downey Chamber of Commerce will host their annual holiday open house today from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. For information, call (562) 923-2191.

Downey deputy gets high marks

WHITTIER – Nineteen female and 31 male Deputy Sheriffs graduated from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Training Academy in Whittier during ceremonies held Dec. 5. Deputy Skyler Bryant, a resident of Downey, was acknowledged for graduating with the highest academic score. As part of the graduation, a badge-pinning ceremony was conducted, with the new deputies receiving their badges from a family member or loved one. After receiving their graduation certificates, the graduates were officially sworn in as peace officers by Undersheriff Larry Waldie.

Quartet to entertain OASIS

DOWNEY – The Harmony Collage Quartet will perform holiday favorites at Monday's OASIS meeting at Downey Adult School. The quartet is a new addition of the Southerland Harmony Chorus, associated with the Sweet Adelines. Enrollment for the program is free and begins at 3 p.m. The program begins at 3:45 and is followed by an optional dinner. Dinner tickets are \$3.50 and must be purchased at time of enrollment. Downey Dial-a-Ride can provide transportation to those who qualify. For more information, call (562) 940-6200.

Carolers performing at library

DOWNEY – The Downey City Library will host a performance by Divine Talents, a non-profit music education group, Tuesday at 6:45 p.m. in the library lobby. Singers in grades K-8 will perform holiday carols in the library. Under the direction of John Heideman and Tim Garcia, the Divine Talents have also performed at the Holiday Lane Parade, Kids Day, and at Stonewood Center. The public is invited to bring their entire family to the free event. For more information, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 3.

Brotherhood plans excursion

DOWNEY – The Brotherhood of Temple Ner Tamid will travel to Medieval Times in Buena Park tomorrow. Cost is \$59 per person, and includes dinner, show, transportation, and gratuity. The Brotherhood will leave the Temple at 5 p.m. For more information on any of the event, call the Temple office at (562) 861-9276.

Parks hosting activities for kids

DOWNEY – Children ages 6-11 can enjoy holiday activities at local parks through the city's outdoor drop-in program, "Holiday Haven," Dec. 22 – Jan. 2. The program will operate 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with several outdoor activities per day, the first beginning at 11:30. The program is closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day. The program will be offered at Apollo, Brookshire, Dennis the Menace, Rio San Gabriel, Furman, Crawford and Golden parks. At Brookshire and Crawford parks, the program will operate from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. "Holiday Haven" is free, but registration is required. Registration can be completed at the parks starting Dec. 22 at 11 a.m. The program will not operate in inclement weather. For more information, call (562) 904-7238.



The Downey Association of Realtors has inducted Anthony Mendez as its 62nd president. Mendez has been a real estate broker for 21 years, specializing in commercial and residential real estate. He can be reached at (562) 440-2272.

Hanukkah celebration dinner Dec. 26

DOWNEY – Temple Ner Tamid will celebrate Hanukkah with a chicken dinner Dec. 26 at 6 p.m. Cost is \$12 per person and reservations are due by Dec. 18. Visitors are asked to bring their menorahs to light candles. Rabbi Len Muroff and Cantor Ellen Jaffe-Gill will conduct Shabbat services at 7:30 p.m. For reservations, call (562) 861-9276.

Santa Claus visiting the library

DOWNEY – Santa Claus will visit preschool storytime at the Downey City Library on Tuesday and bilingual storytime on Wednesday from 10:30 to 11 a.m. in the Cormack Room. Children ages 3-5 are invited to bring their Christmas wish list to share with Santa during the free holiday event. After listening to holiday stories read by the Children's librarian, kids can meet St. Nick in person. "This is a perfect photo opportunity," said Children's librarian Gina Orello. "Parents and grandparents are invited to bring their cameras for a holiday picture." For information, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 4.

POET'S CORNER

Undead Love

We are zombies to our love
It has control of us
We cannot seem to let go
Addicted to feeling alive

We share the needle of love
Pumping through our cold veins
To make them warm again
Only we are still dead

We search for our syringe
As the feeling of life dies
To get our next fix
But it has been shattered

The life behind your eyes burns out
Your lush sandy brown hair turns grey
And I'm not far behind

–Nicholas Baxter,
Downey

Fashionably late

Nothing slow will we forever undergo
And nothing fast will forever last
Something stagnant has yet to be begun
And something the speed of middling will reach the final rung.

–Jenerous,
Downey

Where Downey Poems Go

I put my thoughts in rhyme
And jot them down each day
And then from time to time
I send them on their way.

Sometimes a solemn one
Or happy as can be
However they may run
They're still a part of me.

"The Poet's Corner" is
In case you didn't know
The answer to the quiz
"Where Downey poems go"

And each forget-me-not
Each verse that I present
To "Downey Patriot"
I hope to see in print.

And so with this in mind
I always do my best
I hope it's not declined
I hope it passed the test.

It's always nice to hear
A friendly neighbor say
"The Friday paper's here
I read your poem today."

–Bill Milburn,
Downey

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downeypatriot@yahoo.com

Table worthy?

By Eric Pierce

It might seem a little early, but in today's edition you will find a copy of "2008, A Year to Remember," our now annual year-in-review magazine.

The content of the magazine is self-explanatory, but I do wish you enjoy reading the articles and reminiscing of the year past. My hope is that you will enjoy the magazine well enough to place it on your coffee table.

Because isn't that the barometer of a respectable magazine? To have it placed on the family coffee table, for all to read?

My thanks and appreciation go out to our advertisers who continue to support this newspaper, even through rocky economic times. Our advertisers make this publication possible.

To our readers, if your newspaper for some reason did not include a special edition magazine, please stop by our office for a complimentary copy.

Caring for the land that feeds us

CONTRIBUTED BY STEVEN FELIX

With all the bickering about which foods are good for you and which are bad, most of us have heard the Harvard researchers tell us to eat less meat: heart disease, stroke, yada yada yada. But heck, we're going to die someday, right? Why not enjoy ourselves while we're here?

I'm here to argue a very different reason for why we should all eat less meat—its environmental footprint. Our food choices now have global consequences that will be realized during future generations. The problem lies not in our immediate consumption of meat, but rather in the processes that get our tenderloins to our plates so cheaply—the raising, feeding, slaughtering, and transportation of each animal we eat.

The vast majority of pigs and cows in the U.S. are raised on large factory-farms where thousands of animals live short lives in small quarters eating grain, to which they are not naturally accustomed. Raising millions of animals each year on such farms accounts for 9 percent of carbon dioxide, 37 percent of methane, and 65 percent of nitrous oxide emissions, causing global greenhouse (GHG) emissions from animal agriculture to exceed emissions from transportation! For each American citizen, animal livestock in the US produces 5 tons of waste, which not only produces GHGs but also leaks into and pollutes water supplies. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, agricultural practices have caused 70% of the pollution in American streams and rivers.

So much grain is needed to fuel our huge meat industry that two-thirds of all U.S. grain is used for livestock; consequently, meat production carries not only its own direct environmental consequences, but also those of industrialized agriculture, which degrades soil, depletes our water and oil supply, and pollutes our air and water.

Agriculture is incredibly oil-intensive, as it accounts for 21 percent of US energy consumption. Now consider the inefficiency of livestock production: It requires 7kg of corn to produce 1kg of beef. Thus, it leads to a net loss of energy. This energy is lost not only in the form of edible calories which could be used to feed the 850 million hungry people in the world, but also in fossil fuels, which are rising in price and will soon be falling in supply. When you combine oil-intensive farming with grain-intensive livestock production, you find that 10 calories of fossil fuels are used to produce 1 calorie of food.

So if producing beef is so inefficient and requires so much energy, why is it so cheap? After all, in most cases an apple costs the same or even more than a McDonald's \$0.79- hamburger. Is that 1/4-lb beef patty really cheaper? Well, no.

The meat industry is highly subsidized; in fact, 74 percent of the government's budget for agriculture subsidies (\$23 billion) goes towards grain to feed meat & dairy cows, while only 0.4 percent goes towards fruit and vegetables! In other words, the government helps you buy that hamburger but not the apple. The second reason why meat is so cheap is because its price does not include "externalities." The externalities of meat production are the environmental consequences (e.g. pollution, depletion etc.) that are not accounted for in the price you pay.

So why eat less meat? Some analyses have shown that shifting one day's worth of calories per week from red-meat and dairy sources to poultry, fish, egg, and plant sources can have the same reductions in GHG emissions as eating a completely local, sustainable diet, which is considerably more challenging in the current food environment. Switching entirely away from red meat and dairy (i.e. seven days a week) would be the equivalent of driving 5,340 fewer miles per year per household.

Moreover, by decreasing your meat consumption, you can help drive down the overall demand for cheap, mass-produced meat. After all, our current environmental problems result from the volume and methods of meat production (i.e. producing LOTS of meat quickly and "efficiently"). When you do choose to eat red meat, particularly beef, choose grass-fed meat, which is produced using more sustainable and environmentally friendly methods.

The fact of the matter is that our food choices, despite what the food industry tells us, affect not only you and me individually, but the world's population and the earth itself. If we don't start realizing the actual costs of our food choices—that is, the costs not just on our wallets, but on the earth that sustains and nourishes us—then we will pay dearly in the future.

Steven Felix is a Downey resident.

Letters to the Editor:

Comments on Porto's Bakery

Dear Editor:

My wife grew up in Downey, and most of her extended family still lives there. In fact, I lived in Downey for almost two years, having moved down the 605 to Seal Beach a few months back. I also own a small ad agency, and for about a year, I also had my office in Downey.

Interestingly, I have had the unique experience of working across the street from the Porto's Bakery that opened in Burbank back in November 2005. Before opening their second bakery on the corner of Magnolia Boulevard and Hollywood Way in the Magnolia Park neighborhood of Burbank, they had been a single location, not-so-well-kept secret in Glendale.

I actually moved my company from Downey to Burbank in late 2004, setting up shop on Hollywood Way, from what was then an abandoned Thrifty's in a forgotten and stagnant Magnolia Park neighborhood. The Magnolia Park neighborhood was sort of in "no man's land," away from the major commerce hubs in Burbank.

All of that changed when Porto's Bakery opened in early 2006. Almost overnight, the corner of Magnolia and Hollywood Way turned into a bustling intersection. There were people walking around the neighboring blocks. Traffic picked up at local restaurants. I even noticed new businesses moving in.

While I eventually moved my business to Downtown L.A., every time I stop by Porto's Bakery I am amazed at the continued growth in and around the bakery.

I have no doubt that Porto's Bakery will have an equal or greater impact on Downey. With Porto's Bakery moving into the corner of Firestone Boulevard and Downey Avenue, I have no doubt that Porto's Bakery will quickly bring life to the area. Not only will Porto's Bakery bring in lunchtime crowds from neighboring cities, but also diners on the weekends and evenings.

And much like what happened in Burbank, Porto's will buoy local Downey eateries and retail businesses, acting as an economic magnet, drawing patrons from all around the mid-cities area.

Having also grown up in Burbank, it strikes me how similar Downey and Burbank are as cities. They both have small-town feels (even though they are large cities) and a strong sense of community supported by solid independent school districts, a dedicated police and fire force, and an engaged civic community. Downey and Burbank even share a similar aerospace industry heritage, at one time home to aerospace giants Rockwell and Lockheed, respectively. Both Downey and Burbank overcame the departure of their largest aforementioned employers, and have seen an economic renaissance in new industries (such as media and health-care).

It now appears that Downey and Burbank will share another similarity — a homegrown cultural landmark and economic engine that I have no doubt will bring renewed prosperity to Downey.

— Jose Villa,
Seal Beach

Dear Editor:

Just wondering if the Porto's Bakery economic incentive will end up like the other brainstorm of the City Council, Downey Studios.

— Sharon Tooley,
Downey

Dear Editor:

Kirk Cotzian, real estate broker and then-City Council member, sits out a vote on a \$500,000 or \$750,000 gift of taxpayer money to Porto's Bakery.

Smells like a huge commission and golden parachute to an outgoing City Council member.

— Randy Evans,
Downey

Nice job

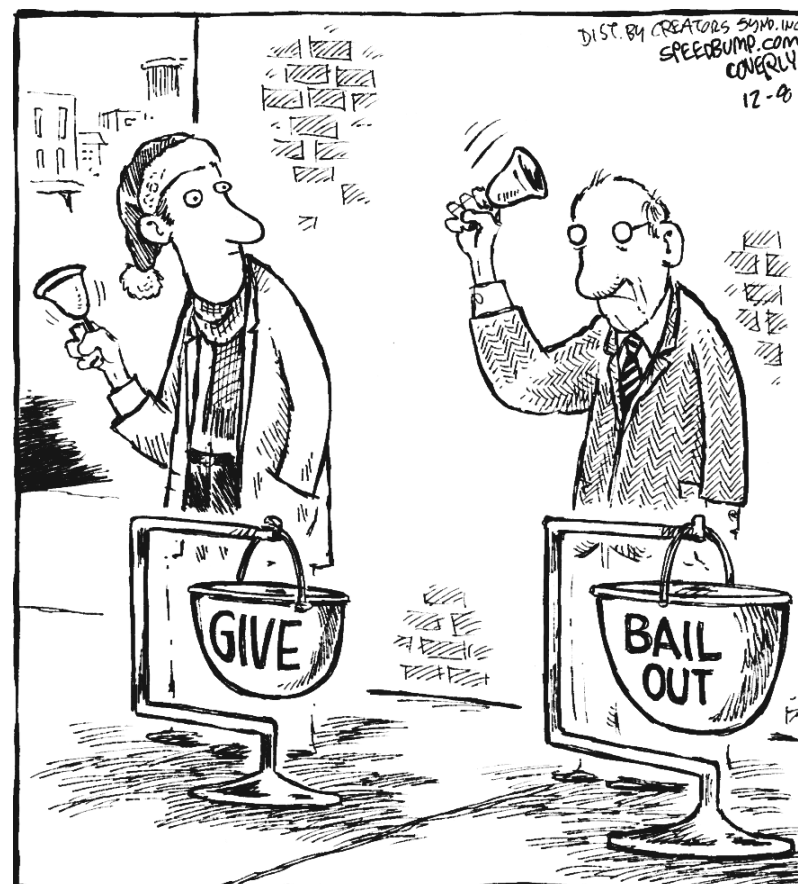
Dear Editor:

I just read that BJ's Restaurant is coming to Downey along with Porto's Bakery (*The Downey Patriot*, 12/5/08). Wow!

This is inspiring news piggy-backed on the addition of the space museum over at Downey Landing. I mean, I've been a resident since 1978 and it seemed that "change" was always a bad word.

I'm not one that likes to pat politicians on the back but the existing City Council and their colleagues are doing a very nice job of getting Downey into the 21st Century.

— Javier Moreno,
Downey



Several comments

Dear Editor:

I have several letters to comment on, so here I go.

To Mike Sandoval ("Ironic but Sad," 12/5/08): I have never understood the American passion to outsource everything. They always say, "Buy American," but how do we do that?

To Elsa Van Leuven ("Holiday What Parade," 12/5/08): I'm with you. I say "Merry Christmas," not "Merry Holiday." Why is the minority the one that wins these disagreements?

To Randy Evans, Jim Richards and Anonymous ("A Lot of Money," 12/5/08): How many positions are being paid for by the citizens of Downey and how many are duplicates? We need to let our City Council know that this country is in a recession. I am sure the recession includes Downey — it does at my house anyway.

When I saw the article recently about the refusal of pay increases, I, too, wondered about the hiring for that new position for \$315,000. My thought was how far that money could go in raises. Again, has the Council not heard we are in a recession?

To me: I am so fed up with our City Council. They do not have any interest in what the people of Downey want. They were going to redo Downtown Downey and spent a great deal of money. Nothing has been done and never will be. That's what they are good at: spend, spend and do nothing. I have given up hope of having a caring Council.

Also, hopefully, the council people read this paper and the Letters to the Editor. How often do they write an answer explaining anything?

— Doris Hannon,
Downey

Money and politics

Dear Editor:

The Downey Patriot had two hits on page 5 two weeks ago.

You are exactly right in writing that \$315,000 a year is a bit much for a city that is almost certainly heading into difficult financial times ahead ("Big Bucks," 11/28/08).

Somehow we have managed to get by with even less staff and assistant city managers in times past and now that this new position seems to be with us I suppose the next step needed will be to have an assistant manager of assistant managers. Soon we will have more chiefs than we do workers doing the needed things for the city.

Then we get to read how things are going in Sacramento in the article by Henry Veneracion ("The Politicos at Sacramento Fiddle While California Burns," 11/28/08).

Financially, our state is in deep trouble and the several levels of state government seem to think it is a low priority thing. This subject has been pushed under the rug for so long that today there are no easy answers to be had and needless pain will come to those of us living and doing business in our state.

Very soon there will be bills to be paid and failing to do so will hurt some of the most needy. Schools, health departments, hospitals and on the list could go. Our total infrastructure is in peril of breakdown and we must demand of our representatives that they address the backlog of problems immediately.

Thanks for your efforts in bringing these things to light for all in our community.

— Richard Pridham,
Downey

Importance of honesty on loan apps

CONTRIBUTED BY ARKADI KUHLMANN

The American economy is unimaginably complicated, so it's not surprising that equally informed and honest experts have drastically different opinions on what caused the current crisis.

Pundits, policy makers, and the public do seem to agree, though, on at least one contributing factor -- dishonesty on mortgage applications. Many people bought homes they couldn't afford using loans they weren't qualified for. The ensuing foreclosures didn't just wreck the lives of mortgage holders -- it brought suffering to millions of other Americans in the form of collapsing financial firms and a hamstrung economy.

The take home message for individual Americans is one that I'm confident most folks already know: Always be completely honest on credit applications.

There are countless ways to stretch the truth. The most widespread are padding one's income, overstating assets, hiding outstanding debts, and misrepresenting the source of the down payment or personal employment history.

These aren't heinous crimes. Everyone is tempted to fudge the numbers -- a little white lie might mean a home with a pool, or an upgrade to a V12 engine, or an extra thousand dollars of purchasing power on a credit card.

And brokers often have a financial incentive to encourage customers to take out loans beyond their means. The broker gets a higher commission, but doesn't bare the cost in the event of a default.

Lenders themselves have cooked up types of loan applications that all but beg the applicant to lie. Take the "stated income" loan, where the applicant doesn't have to provide official verification of their reported annual

income.

Stated income loans were originally created for the self-employed and other workers that might have a hard time getting income documentation. Until the subprime mortgage crisis made front page news, though, these loans were routinely being offered to people they weren't intended for -- often simply so they could falsify their income.

There are, of course, substantial civil and criminal penalties for lying on a credit application. In some states it's a felony, carrying lengthy jail terms and hefty fines.

And if a loan holder defaults, he doesn't just lose the collateral -- he takes a huge hit to his credit score, which means reduced access to cheap loans in the future.

Honesty on a loan application pays off in the long run. It forces us to be frank about our finances. What can we really afford? Where should we be looking to cut expenses? Are we saving enough? Can we buy that new car or bigger home and still live comfortably? Or pay for what's absolutely essential, like medical bills?

These aren't easy questions. The answers aren't always pleasant. But actually dealing with them is much healthier than lying to ourselves, our families, or our loan officer. Honesty forces us to operate within our means -- and shows exactly where we need to improve our finances if we really do want to make a big-time purchase on credit.

Arkadi Kuhlmann, the CEO of Savings, is president and CEO of ING Direct USA.

The Downey Patriot

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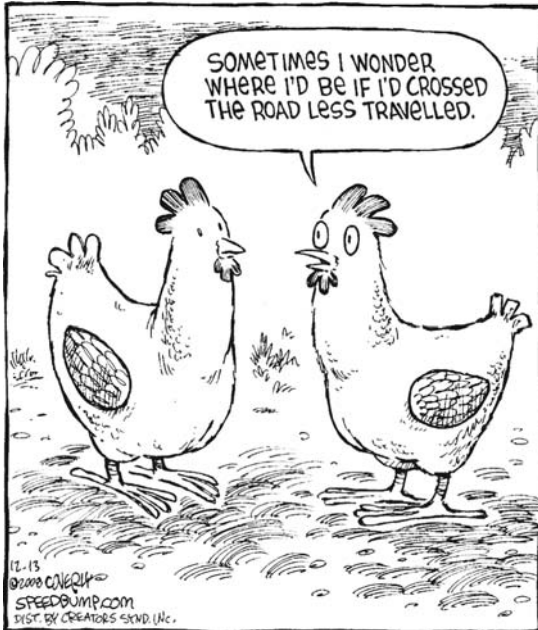
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SPEED BUMP



DAVE COVERLY



Downey Community Calendar

Events For December

- Fri. Dec. 12: **Open house**, Downey Chamber of Commerce, 11 a.m.
- Fri. Dec. 12: **Dinner and dance for teens**, Apollo Park, 6:30 p.m.
- Mon. Dec. 15: **Harmony Collage Quartet**, Downey Adult School, 3:45 p.m.
- Tues. Dec. 16: **Holiday carolers**, Downey City Library, 6:45 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.
- 2nd and 4th Weds., 7:30 a.m.: **Chamber "Rise&Shine" Networkers**, 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.
- 1st & 3rd Weds., 7:00 p.m.: **After-Care Post Cancer Therapy Group**, for information call 923-4800.
- 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, for info. call Gina 869-5213 or Valerie 420-2972.
- 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**, 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 Sambis, 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.

Saturdays

- 9 a.m.: **Farmers Market**, Second Street at New Avenue, for information call (562) 904-7246.

Sundays

- 3rd Sun. Odd # Months 1:30 p.m.: **Aerospace Legacy Foundation**, at First Baptist Church Room 120.

On This Day...

- Dec. 12, 1925: As the automotive industry begins its U.S. boom, the world's first motel, the Motel Inn, opens in San Luis Obispo. It charged \$1.25 per night.
- 1940: Five-time Grammy Award winner Dionne Warwick is born. Also born Dec. 12: "The Price is Right" host Bob Barker (85), former New York mayor Ed Koch (84), tennis hall of famer Tracy Austin (46), country singer Hank Williams III (36) and former "Blossom" star Mayim Bialik (33).
- 1963: Kenya gains its independence from Britain.
- 2003: Keiko the killer whale, of "Free Willy" fame, dies of pneumonia. He was 27.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)

INNATE ABILITY: Have you got it?

by Fred Piscop

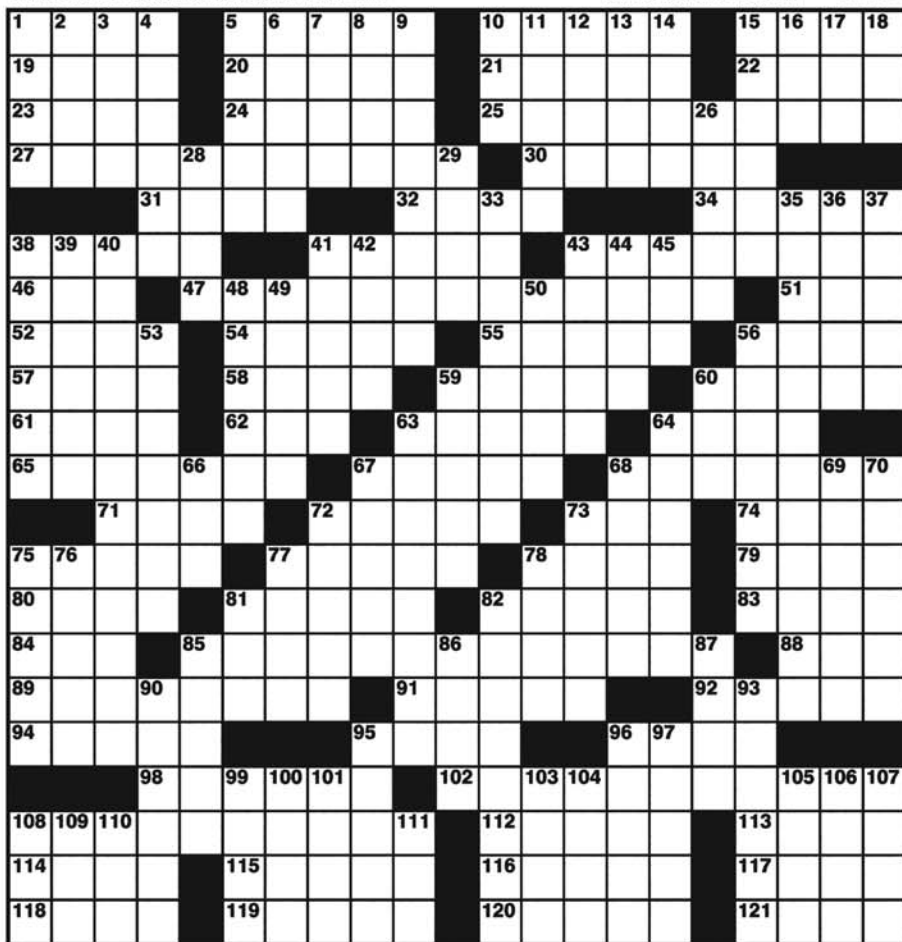
ACROSS

- 1 Habitat for frogs
- 5 Montgomery of film
- 10 Incendiary offense
- 15 Do lab work on
- 19 Inventor's spark
- 20 "Anybody home?"
- 21 Heed an RSVP
- 22 Garfield's foil
- 23 Unable to choose
- 24 It's on the Nunavut coat of arms
- 25 Garden conifer
- 27 Place of political unrest
- 30 Out of neutral
- 31 '30s heavyweight champ
- 32 Renault competitor
- 34 Hardly hefty
- 38 Harness-racing horse
- 41 "Vacancy" sign locale
- 43 Unaided sight
- 46 Wednesday
- 47 ESL teacher, possibly
- 51 Bottom line
- 52 Hotfooted it
- 54 Sleek fabric
- 55 Welcomed to one's home
- 56 City near Lake Tahoe
- 57 Top___ (best)
- 58 Malamute's burden
- 59 Ewer's partner
- 60 Actress Sarandon
- 61 Guesstimate words
- 62 Overhead lines
- 63 Potato or yam
- 64 Pack down
- 65 Shuttle-flight phase
- 67 Shimon of Israel
- 68 Domes
- 71 Word following box or car
- 72 Impressive spread
- 73 Orienteering need
- 74 Baptism, e.g.
- 75 Transplant, in a way
- 77 Rice alternative
- 78 Come up short
- 79 MBA subj.
- 80 Pull down
- 81 Roughly, datewise
- 82 Risky business
- 83 Hubbubs
- 84 College sr.'s test
- 85 "Owl and the Pussycat" utensil
- 88 Sgt., for one
- 89 One way to order
- 91 Collar attachment
- 92 Landscaper's tool
- 94 Gave false hopes to
- 95 Salty septet
- 96 Alternatively
- 98 "Quit that!"
- 102 Leave room between lines
- 108 Unconventional sort
- 112 City on the Mohawk
- 113 North African port
- 114 Pack of pennies
- 115 Serengeti grazer
- 116 Michael of Monty Python
- 117 Fax, perhaps
- 118 Tarzan's call
- 119 Pigeonholes' places
- 120 Peels off
- 121 Grub
- DOWN**
- 1 Brad of Troy
- 2 It may be pungent
- 3 Wolfe of whodunits
- 4 Vienna's river
- 5 Easter Island's owner
- 6 French modern artist
- 7 Misfortunes
- 8 Fall suddenly
- 9 More than necessary
- 10 Wall Street type
- 11 Ignited anew
- 12 Turned suddenly
- 13 Cassini of fashion
- 14 Big Board inits.
- 15 Hotter than hot
- 16 www.citadel___
- 17 [not my mistake]
- 18 ___ time (course slot)
- 26 More washed out
- 28 Animal house
- 29 Haberdashery stock
- 33 Set of characters
- 35 DNA technology
- 36 Serengeti scavenger
- 37 Grand ___ National Park
- 38 Flock leader
- 39 Aim high
- 40 Cracker topper
- 41 Tiny arachnids
- 42 Ars Amatoria poet
- 43 Rock bottom
- 44 Closely related
- 45 Quiz whiz Jennings
- 48 State confidently
- 49 Running total
- 50 Lets up
- 53 Speak soporifically
- 56 Unconfirmed
- 59 Anatomical sac
- 60 Gullible one
- 63 4:00 service holder
- 64 Elvis' Mississippi birthplace
- 66 Tit for ___
- 67 Joe of My Cousin Vinny
- 68 Timex rival
- 69 "Now!"
- 70 Electric eye, for one
- 72 Marx Brothers genre
- 73 Transform
- 75 Fit for a king
- 76 Country singer Steve
- 77 Ale serving
- 78 Discounted by
- 81 Mut
- 82 Dense fogs
- 85 Delivers a tirade
- 86 Detective's aid
- 87 Noun suffix
- 90 Voight's role in Ali
- 93 Boot from office
- 95 Perform poorly
- 96 Spanish hero
- 97 Isn't straight
- 99 Page for a pundit's piece
- 100 Carpet feature
- 101 Nest eggs
- 103 Four Corners state
- 104 Ill humor
- 105 Plane measure
- 106 "___ you take a hint?"
- 107 Peters out
- 108 Swelter
- 109 Fish to be
- 110 Building add-on
- 111 NFL scores

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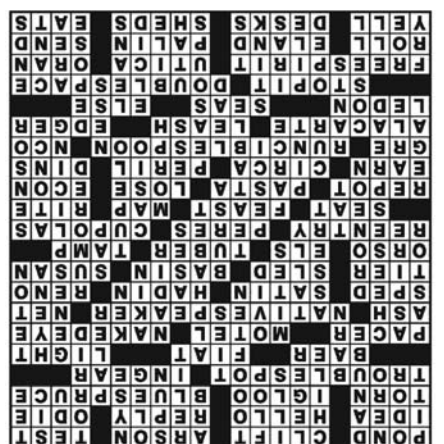
WWW.STANXWORDS.COM

12/7/08



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.

The coat of arms of Nunavut (24 Across), Canada's newest and largest territory, features an IGLOO topped by a royal crown. The RUNCIBLE SPOON (85 Across) seen in the earliest illustrations of Edward Lear's "Owl and the Pussycat" doesn't have the forklike tines associated with it today. A pair of murals by Fernand LEGER (6 Down) are on display in the General Assembly Hall of the UN.



Online meds akin to Russian roulette

Contributed by Sally C. Pipes

Millions of Americans will look to weight-loss drugs to help them keep their New Year's resolution to slim down. And if they can't get a prescription from a doctor, many will go online to purchase the pills.

But beware: Most of these websites are glossed-up fakes selling dangerous counterfeits.

The World Health Organization estimates that around 10 percent of the global drug supply is counterfeit. MarkMonitor, a company dealing in identifying counterfeit drugs, recently found that of the 3,160 online pharmacies it examined, just four were accredited by the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites,

the industry standard for quality control.

So if you illegally purchase prescription meds online, you're playing Russian roulette with your health.

Last year, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reported on a scam where customers made online purchases of what they thought was Xenical, a popular anti-obesity drug. What they actually received, however, were pills made of talc and starch.

Considering the risks of online meds, those consumers actually lucked out. In December 2006, a Canadian woman died from taking

counterfeit anti-anxiety drugs and sedatives containing extremely high levels of arsenic, aluminum, lead, and other heavy metals. The bogus online pharmacy she bought them from claimed to be headquartered in Canada, but was actually based in Eastern Europe and supplied by manufacturers in Southeast Asia.

Online scam artists employ sophisticated tactics to dupe consumers and evade law enforcement. Some change their website and company name every few weeks. Most use packaging that's indistinguishable from the real thing.

Despite the threat posed by

counterfeits, some lawmakers want to legalize prescription drug importation. Indeed, while campaigning for the White House, Barack Obama promised that he'd allow distributors in Canada, Britain, and other industrialized countries to sell prescription meds to America.

Of course, proponents of importation promise that the FDA will ensure the safety of foreign drugs. But that's, well, just that – a promise. And it ignores the hard reality that the FDA simply isn't equipped to protect consumers from every web-based snake-oil salesman.

The FDA can't even handle its current caseload. A 2004 study found that the FDA inspects less than 3 percent of the suspected illicit drug packages that pass through the JFK International Airport mail facility. What's more, identifying and prosecuting perpetrators in the developing world, where many of these phony pharmacies operate, is next to impossible.

Even if the letter of the law requires suppliers to be from trustworthy countries, fraudulent websites are incredibly adept at fooling people about where they're based. A 2005 FDA investigation at airports in New York, Miami, and

Los Angeles found that over 40 percent of the drugs imported from four selected countries to American buyers falsely claimed to be from "Canadian pharmacies."

So here's the reality we'll be stuck with if prescription drug importation is legalized: Frauds that can't be traced. Scam artists that can't be caught. Websites that can't be trusted. And customers that can't discern what's genuine from what's dangerous.

Sally C. Pipes is president and CEO of the Pacific Research Institute and author of "The Top 10 Myths of American Health Care."

Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer



getting them?

Staphylococcus aureus (staph) are bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. It is estimated that as many as 30% of us are colonized (bacteria are present but not causing infection). When staph does cause an infection, it usually results in minor pimples or boils on the skin. Sometimes, however, these pimples or boils can become major abscesses. Staph can also cause serious infections of the bloodstream, infections of surgical wounds, or pneumonia in susceptible people.

MRSA (pronounced "mersa") stands for methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus. It was discovered in 1961 in the United Kingdom and is now found worldwide. According to the CDC (Center for Disease Control), annual MRSA deaths in the U.S. grew from 11,000 in 1999 to 18,650 in 2007, a number greater than U.S. annual

deaths from AIDS!

Of the 30% of people who are colonized with staph (as determined by swabbing the nostrils), 1% are colonized with MRSA. While staphylococcus aureus is a common and treatable bacterium, MRSA is resistant to antibiotics in the beta-lactam and penicillin families, which include methicillin, oxacillin, cephalosporins, and penicillin. This resistance makes treating MRSA infections very difficult. Healthy people may carry MRSA without symptoms for weeks or for many years. People with compromised immune systems (including the elderly, and those suffering from AIDS, diabetes, and various cancers), are at a significantly greater risk of developing symptoms from the MRSA they have been carrying. Other people at risk include athletes in contact sports, children, and prisoners.

Staph/MRSA infections occur

most frequently (about 88% of the time) in hospitals, nursing homes, dialysis centers, and other healthcare facilities where people have weakened immune systems. The initial presentation of MRSA is small red bumps that resemble pimples, insect bites, or boils and may be accompanied by fever. Within a few days the bumps become larger, painful and eventually develop into deep, pus-filled boils or abscesses. Occasionally, it is necessary for a doctor to open up a MRSA abscess with a scalpel to let it drain properly.

When infection occurs outside of hospitals and healthcare facilities, it is known as community-acquired MRSA. Community-acquired MRSA typically occurs in an otherwise healthy person. The ultimate infection tends to be much milder. Factors that are associated with the spread of MRSA skin infections include close skin-to-skin

contact, openings in the skin such as cuts or abrasions, contaminated items and surfaces, crowded living conditions, and poor hygiene.

Treatment for MRSA infections involves the use of costly non-resistant antibiotics. While the gold-standard treatment has been the antibiotic vancomycin, new resistant strains of MRSA are no longer responding to it. These new strains are termed vancomycin intermediate-resistant staphylococcus aureus (VISA), and as you can imagine, are even more difficult to treat.

Unfortunately, a MRSA infection can return; staph may continue to colonize the body even after the initial infection is cured. When there is a new skin break, the bacteria may create a new infection. To remove staph from the body and prevent recurrent infections, patients use an antiseptic soap and apply an antibacterial ointment to

the nostrils.

The key to controlling staph infections is prevention:

- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with bandages until healed
- Avoid contact with other people's wounds and bandages
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels or razors
- Speak with your doctor if you develop a skin infection that does not heal.

Good health to you all!

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



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Residents can tour four beautifully decorated Downey homes when the San Antonio Guild of Childrens Hospital Los Angeles conducts their holiday home tour this Sunday. Conducting the tours will be the Rodriguez Family (above left) and Peomberton family (above right), with chairperson Stacy Brabant (third from left). Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at Saywell Florist on Downey Avenue. For more information, call (562) 927-8511.

Families enjoy a Winter Wonderland

By MARY FORNEY, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – What started out as Santa's breakfast with the children of Downey and a simple holiday boutique transformed into a "Winter Wonderland" this year at the Barbara J. Riley Community and Senior Center.

This is the first year that the two annual senior center events were combined.

The Dec. 6 breakfast sold out as 197 children and their family members showed up to eat pancakes and talk to Santa Claus.

Seniors from the center gave Santa Claus a helping hand by serving the breakfast meal catered by Hackers. Age was no barrier to the volunteers, with 92-year-old Dorothy Wilson pitching in to assist.

"I do this every year because I enjoy seeing how happy the children get," Wilson said.

While the boys and girls anxiously waited for their turn to sit on Santa's lap, Elfis Parsley the Magician Elf kept them distracted with his tricks.

Activity continued for the children in the senior center's parking lot where a table was set up just for creating Christmas decorations and cards.

Also outside, visitors strolled through the senior center's holiday boutique which grew this year due to its popularity. Many of the 58 vendors were Downey senior citizens wanting to showcase and sell



Nearly 200 children and their families enjoyed breakfast with Santa Claus last week at the Barbara J. Riley Community and Senior Center. Photo by Mary Forney

their homemade craft items.

Donna Bridges, 78, was among the senior craft makers this year. A resident of Downey since 1949, the annual holiday boutique gives Bridges something to look forward to.

"I have been in a wheelchair for four years so I get to get out and see people," Bridges said as she sat surrounded by her crocheted hats, booties, towels, blankets, and holiday decorations.

The youngest vendor was Elizabeth Sarpey, 12, who has been making paper mache African animals from recycled materials since she was 8 years old.

"I have been raising money to buy mosquito nets for families in Mozambique so they won't get malaria," Sarpey said. "It's the number one killer in Africa."

Local groups provided live entertainment for the holiday browsers, including the Hip Hop

and Senior Follies dancers, Warren High School Vocal Ensemble and Concert Choir, YMCA Ballet Troupe, Wee Three and Tot Time pre-school singers.

"It's just a fun family event where parents and children can come enjoy the festivities," said Collette Fowler, who is the center's assistant recreation supervisor.

"We have food, activities, Santa, and a boutique – it's just great."

Holiday dance tonight at Apollo

DOWNEY – Middle school-age children are invited to a Holiday Dinner and Dance at the Apollo Park gym tonight from 6:30 to 10 p.m.

Admission is \$10 and includes an Italian dinner, dessert and music from DJ Rudy. Children should dress in semi-formal attire.

The event is sponsored by the city of Downey Community Services Department. For more information about the dance or dress code, call (562) 904-7238.

College holiday concert free

NORWALK – The Cerritos College jazz ensemble, band and orchestra will present an evening of holiday music Dec. 19 at the school's Burnight Center Theatre.

The concert is free and begins at 7 p.m.

One-day parking passes are \$1. For more information on the concert, call (562) 860-2451, ext. 2629.

Choirs singing holiday tunes

LONG BEACH – A concert of favorite holiday tunes will be presented Sunday at California Heights United Methodist Church in Long Beach.

The church choir will be joined by the Cerritos College Community Choir for the 4 p.m. concert.

The church is at 3759 Orange Ave. in Long Beach. For ticket information, call (562) 595-1996.

Rose Parade tickets still available

DOWNEY – Grandstand tickets to the 120th Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena are still available through the community center.

Tickets are \$67 and include transportation and seats. Guests must be at least 8 years old.

Tickets are available at the community center, 7810 Quill Dr.

Warren performing live comedy

DOWNEY – The Warren High School Drama Department will present the smash comedy "Arsenic and Old Lace" tomorrow at the school's Emerson Theatre.

The production previewed for local middle school students this week.

Tomorrow's performance begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$8 and can be purchased online at www.emersontheatre.net or at the door.

The show features performances by Warren students Alexandra Garcia, Stephanie Garibay, Christopher Rodriguez, Madlyne Suarez, Christopher Hoodye, Elena Alonso, Stephanie Cortez, Lizeth Felix, Jeremy Ferguson, Luis Grajeda, Wendy Guerieri, Ryan Somohano, Calvin Park and Cecilia Yanez.

Library accepting food for fines

DOWNEY – Through the month of December, patrons of the Downey City Library can clear their overdue fines while helping needy families. The library is accepting new canned and packaged foods as payment for overdue fines on returned materials. Food collected will be donated to local families.

"Even if you don't owe library fines, we invite you to bring in food items to help local families," said Josephine de la Dingco, supervisor of the library's circulation desk. "Volunteers from the Downey Council PTA HELPS distribute the food collected during December. We are so pleased by the generosity of those who donate each year."

Donations will be accepted until Dec. 31. The donated value of each item will be 50 cents.

For more information, call (562) 904-7360, ext. 5.

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* THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL PG-13 (11:15, 12:05, 2:00, 2:40, 4:35, 5:15), 7:15, 8:00, 9:50, 10:35;
FRI to SUN (11:00, 1:55, 4:50, 7:45, 10:40);
MON to THU (11:15, 12:05, 2:00, 2:40, 4:35, 5:15), 7:15, 8:00, 9:50

DELGO PG (11:45, 2:10, 4:30), 7:00, 9:20
NOTHING LIKE THE HOLIDAYS PG-13 (11:20, 1:45, 4:15), 7:35, 10:05
PUNISHER: WAR ZONE PG (11:10, 1:50, 4:35), 7:10, 10:10
FOUR CHRISTMASSES PG-13 (12:10, 2:35, 5:05), 7:25, 9:45
TRANSPORTER 3 PG-13 7:05, 9:30
* BOLT IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (DIGITAL 3DX) PG (12:00, 2:30, 5:00), 7:30, 10:00
TWILIGHT PG-13 (11:00, 1:55, 4:50), 7:45, 10:40;
FRI to SUN (11:00, 1:55, 4:50), 7:45, 10:40;
MON to THU (11:00, 1:55, 4:50), 7:45

QUANTUM OF SOLACE PG-13 (11:05, 1:40, 4:25), 7:20, 10:05
MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA PG (11:30, 2:05, 4:40)

Times for Friday-Thursday, December 12-18, 2008
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GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

The Downey Civic Light Opera offers gift certificates for the holidays. The certificates are for both productions in 2009.

"Dames at Sea" will be presented Feb. 19 - Mar. 8 and "42nd Street" will open May 28 - Jun 14 at the Downey Theatre.

With a gift certificate the recipient may select the performance dates preferred to attend.

For Information Call (562) 923-1714

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<p>Glazed Ham (Bone-In 10-12lbs)</p> <p>Fruit Sauce - Candied Yams Freshly Baked Bread Yummy Pumpkin Pie</p> <p>Serves 6-8 guests \$89.95</p>	<p>Prime Rib</p> <p>Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Green Beans - Freshly Baked Bread Yummy Pumpkin Pie</p> <p>\$11.95 per person (minimum 6)</p> <p>9306 Firestone Blvd. At Woodruff, Downey (562) 940-4494</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Orders Accepted Until Dec. 24</p>

Cafe n' Stuff Restaurant

Rose Betty Ray services Sunday

DOWNEY – Rose Betty Ray, a retired teacher and Downey resident since 1983, died Dec. 6.

She was born Rose Elizabeth Biddle on June 22, 1917, in Greene County, Ind. Her family moved to Shamrock, Tex. when she was 8, then to Russellville, Ark. when she was in high school. She finished high school and attended college there.

She married William Arlos Ray on Christmas Day, 1936. They lived in Arkansas for five years before moving to Missouri, where they farmed until 1975.

Since 1983, she lived in Downey with her daughter (and, later, her great-grandson).

She was predeceased by her husband, William Arlos Ray, in 1975, and a daughter, Sherrille Lee Slifer, in 2002.

She is survived by her daughter, Patricia Gene Ray; son-in-law, Donald Wayne Slifer; grandchildren, Robert Arlos Ludwig, Kermit Ray Ludwig, Patricia Elizabeth Schuetz, Susan Carol Swanson, Michelle Lee Staley, and Donald Wayne Slifer, Jr.; nine great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Sunday at First Presbyterian Church of Downey at 1 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requested contributions to First Presbyterian Church of Downey, 10544 Downey Ave., Downey, CA, 90241.



Counsel's Corner: Be careful when modifying your loan

CONTRIBUTED BY STEVE LOPEZ, THE LAW OFFICES OF STEVE LOPEZ

Since my last article on "How to Avoid Foreclosure", there has been an explosion of Loan Modification Service Providers. Many businesses that once only provided mortgage loans service have revamped their business model and jumped into the Loan Modification market.

However, like with any service be very careful when choosing which company to go with. Choose a company that has a good reputation. If you choose to use a loan modification company that takes a fee up front to negotiate your loan modification for you know that most cannot guarantee a successful modification and this upfront fee structure can end up costing you another month's mortgage. There are good companies out there, do your research well. The best of them can help you to modify your loan and restructure your payments to something you can afford. If done correctly, you'll receive a loan at a competitive rate that is fixed and secure for usually 30 years. However, the worst of them can end up costing you more money you don't already have.

Usually someone shopping for a loan modification service is one who has an adjustable rate mortgage that has exploded leading to a monstrous mortgage monthly payment that has gone delinquent.

If you find yourself in danger of missing a mortgage payment, the first step in the loan modification process is to contact your mortgage company. The process can be very intimidating as the person on the other end of the line may ask numerous questions both financial and legal with which you may not have the answers. Nevertheless, I encourage you to call if only to know that the information they required needs to be handled by a professional, whether it be a loan modification officer or an attorney.

When calling for the first time, follow these steps and it will make your first attempt less painful and much more meaningful. Have all your mortgage information available. All this can be found on your monthly statement. When calling, identify yourself to the representative and ask to speak with the loss mitigation department. Do not spend too much time with the customer service representative - they cannot help you - save your breath and ask to be transferred to the loss mitigation department. Before you are transferred ask for the direct dial number to the department. This



will save you a step in your (many) subsequent follow up phone calls.

When you get to the loss mitigation department ask who you are speaking to. Get their full name if possible and their position or title. Explain to the person that you have an adjustable rate mortgage and are unable to make the higher monthly payments. You are (or may become) delinquent on your loan and need to modify it or there is a serious chance that you'll fall further behind and/or go in to foreclosure.

You don't want to say for certain you're headed to foreclosure because lenders don't like wasting time with lost causes. They will ask you some basic questions. You MUST be honest, but you want to be frank in your assessment of your financial situation. If you're the eternal optimist now is not the time to be upbeat about your financial wherewithal. Within the bounds of honesty you must show that you are in a bad financial place.

If they assess that your situation qualifies for a loan modification they will send you an information packet along with a worksheet to calculate your monthly expenses. Think of this process as similar to when you qualified for the loan but in reverse. You must unqualify yourself to prove that you are financially incapable of making the increased mortgage payment. You also must prove that a modification is going to improve your situation to a point where you will be an acceptable risk for them.

If approved you will be asked to put together and mail to them, what I refer to as, an income and expense declaration. This packet will be composed of monthly bills, bank statements, paycheck stubs and a hardship letter.

If you are denied, you should consult an attorney immediately, preferably one with experience in Mortgage and Deed of Trust practice. An attorney will conduct a forensic audit of your original loan documents and uncover any violation of the law which then in turn may be used as leverage against the lender to force them to enter in to a loan modification.

This is an ugly reality but picking up the phone to discuss the potential of losing your home may be the first step to saving it. Good luck and be patient.

The purpose of this column is to provide general information on the law, which is subject to change. It is not legal advice. Consult a lawyer if you have a specific legal problem.

Training for future stage technicians

NORWALK – Cerritos College's Theatre Arts and Music Departments have announced the launch of a new Portable Event Staging Program beginning in the spring 2009 semester.

Cerritos College is the first college to offer such a program in California.

The Portable Event Staging Program is geared to train students to attain entry-level stage technician positions in the entertainment industry. Students will learn how to set up, operate, and strike audio, lighting and staging equipment for concerts and other entertainment events.

Featuring more hands-on learning than classroom instruction, the program will culminate with the production of multiple outdoor live concerts as a summer 2009 project which will put student technical skills to use in a real work context.

Outdoor event staging technicians are in demand within the Southern California area and a training program specifically for this career did not exist at any regional academic institution. Starting pay for entry-level technicians at local theme parks averages over \$15 per hour.

The Portable Event Staging Program begins Jan. 12. For more information on this and other Theatre Department programs, visit www.cerritos.edu/entertainment-technology.

Chorus auditioning female singers

NORWALK – The Southland Harmony Chorus is searching for female singers in the Norwalk and surrounding areas (including Downey) to join its group.

Women of all ages who enjoy singing are invited to attend the chorus' weekly rehearsals on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at the Norwalk Masonic Center, 12345 E. Rosecrans Ave.

Musical knowledge is not necessary to join. Any woman of average singing ability, with or without vocal training, will find a part that fits her voice range.

The Southland Harmony Chorus performs regularly throughout the community, offering its talent for entertainment at civic events and charitable functions.

The digital TV transition is coming

By REP. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD (D-34)

Are you prepared for the digital television transition?

If you are among the estimated 19.6 million households that rely on free, over-the-air broadcasts made available through a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears," your television set may go dark on February 17, 2009, when broadcasters begin airing exclusively digital signals.

By taking a few simple steps, however, you and your family can continue using your television sets and watching your favorite shows uninterrupted. To do this, you will need to purchase a new "digital-to-analog" converter box to plug into your set. Without this device, analog television sets not connected to cable, satellite or a telephone company television service will stop working.

Newer television sets larger than 27 inches – and typically purchased in the last five years – will most likely have built-in digital tuners and will not need a converter box to continue to operate after the change.

For those who choose to purchase a converter box, I recommend taking advantage of \$40 coupons made available by Congress to defray the estimated \$50- to- \$60 purchase price of a "digital-to-analog" converter. The federal coupon program – operated by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration – makes available two \$40 coupons per household, each of which can be used towards the purchase of a certified converter



box. National retailers participating in the program include Best Buy, Circuit City, RadioShack and Wal-Mart.

To request your coupons and to learn more about the transition, please call 1-888-DTV-2009 or visit www.dtv2009.gov. The online process to request the coupons is especially easy. From the homepage, click "apply for a coupon," type in your address, the number of coupons you are requesting (one or two), type in the letters for the electronic signature and then click "submit."

After requesting your coupons either by phone or online, please allow up to 12 weeks for delivery. The coupons expire 90 days after their mail date.

The digital television transition will bring noticeable benefits to television viewers. Digital television will provide additional, free, broadcast television channels along with clearer images and enhanced sound quality. Some of the channels currently used by analog television stations will be freed up for advanced wireless service. Other channels have been set aside for public safety communications, which is a key recommendation of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks, also known as the 9-11 Commission.

As informed consumers, we can take steps to ensure that February 17, 2009 marks an important milestone in broadcasting history and not a day of confusion or disappointment for television viewers. I urge all TV owners to prepare now, stay tuned and help spread the word about this exciting upgrade in television broadcast quality.

Winter Worship Directory

Advent & Christmas at Christ Lutheran
Wednesday Advent Services: December 10—7:00 PM
December 17—7:00 PM

Christmas Campout for Kids
 December 13—5:00 to 11:00 PM
 (Call Campout Hotline 323 610-5682 for information.)

3rd Sunday Coffee House Festival of Carols
December 21—6:00 PM

Christmas Eve 7:00 PM
Christmas Day 10:00 AM

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10711 Paramount Blvd. Downey (562) 923-1215

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Candle Light Christmas Eve Service
Thursday, December 24 at 5:30pm

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Downey Seventh-day Adventist Church

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Saturday, Dec. 20 at 11:00AM

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www.downeychurch.org


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For details, please call the office at
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Christmas Sunday
Dec. 24, 7:00 pm
Christmas Eve Festival of Carols and Lights

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Christmas Musical 3:00 p.m. Saturday the 13th
 7:00 p.m. Sunday the 14th
 Christmas Eve 5:30 p.m. Wednesday the 24th
Children's Service
 Christmas Eve 11:00 p.m. Wednesday the 24th
Candlelight service
 10544 Downey Avenue at Seventh Street



Downey High School's varsity cheer squad placed first and the junior varsity squad second at the USA Regional's Cheer Competition, held Sunday. Both squads advanced to the USA Nationals Competition in March. Photos by Paul Heidecker

Schools off to hot start in preseason hoops

BY SCOTT COBOS, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Downey and Warren are both off to hot starts to begin their 2008-2009 basketball campaigns, with both teams performing very well in the tournaments they have entered.

So far, Warren head coach Brent Willis has his team 5-1 after Wednesday night's action. While these wins may be good signs for his team, only a year ago the Bears started off with the same record before finishing 1-9 in league play.

With Willis in his second year as Warren's coach, the Bears remain hopeful that Willis will have his system completely in place. There's no doubt that if a comfort level is instilled it will transfer into more wins for the team who had a mortal lock on a playoff spot last year but then watched it disappear due to league play struggles.

The Vikings are off to another good start as well, bettering their start from just a year ago. Vikings coach Larry Shelton has his team off to a 3-1 start after Wednesday and continues to play games to gear up for their trip out to Orlando, Fla. for the KSA Holiday Tournament.

This will be the first time a sports team will have traveled out of the state to play in a tournament. Last year, the Vikings struggled at stretches during the season but was able to finish strong and sneak into the CIF playoffs as the No. 3 seed out of the San Gabriel Valley League.

Last call for Little League sign-ups

DOWNEY – Northwest Downey Little League will host its final two sign-ups for the 2009 baseball season on Jan. 3 from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Jan. 7 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Sign-ups will be at Furman Park. Children ages 5 to 18 that live in Downey, north of Firestone Boulevard, are eligible to play.

For more information, call Mel Quan at (213) 923-0684 or James Veloff at (562) 861-2696. Information is also online at www.nwdll.org.

Lacrosse league hosting sign-ups

DOWNEY – Sign-ups for a youth lacrosse league will be held at Downey High School – near the football field – tomorrow from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The 14-and-under team will be Downey's first middle school level lacrosse team.

Sign-ups will also be held Dec. 20 and 27, and Jan. 3. For more information, call Gabe Carrillo at (562) 922-2377.

Early signups for little league

DOWNEY – West Downey Little League will be holding early bird signups for their upcoming season Monday from 6 to 8 p.m. at West Middle School's cafeteria.

Cost for the season will be \$65 for t-ball and \$85 for rookie through major divisions. Those participating in the challenger division can do so free of charge by signing up.

Players must provide a certified birth certificate and proof of residency. A parent's driver's license and two other proofs of identification such as a DMV identification card, utility bill, mortgage bill, or credit card are also required.

More information can be obtained by visiting the league's website at <http://eteamz.active.com/westdowneylitttleague>.

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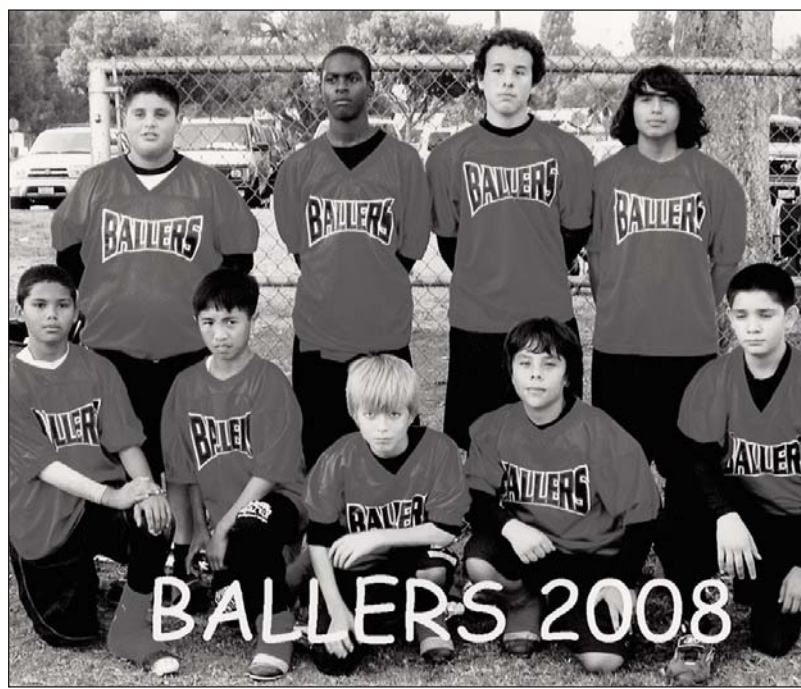
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The Ballers finished their DJAA flag football season undefeated to be crowned Frosh Division champions. Front row, from left: Lorel Johnson, Ron Bautista, Kai Vincent, Nick Robles and Brian Cardenas. Back row: William Gomez, Luis Medaris, Jordan Mann and Chris Marrero. Coaches include Lovel Johnson Sr., Ron Bautista Sr., Juan Robles and Daniel Gomez.



The Downey FC Club 16U Silver team were awarded first place medals in the L.A. Futbol Circuit on Nov. 22 at Whittier Narrows Park. The team finished its season undefeated and scored 50 goals in 11 games. Three players also received Golden Boot awards for most goals scored by a player while the goalie received a Golden Glove award. Top row, left to right: Coach Robert Correa, Stephanie Gonzalez, Alexis Santana, Brandi Neilan, Vicky Correa, Stephanie Juanillo, Vickie Garcia, and Coach Octavio Calvillo. Bottom row: Marysol Flores, Karen Castillo, Vannessa Calvillo, Amanda Hernandez, Robin Serpas and Jazmin Medrano.

Couple to share stories from Balkans Tuesday

DOWNEY – The Ezra Center for Mature Adults will meet Tuesday at Temple Ner Tamid. The meeting's topic will be "Visiting the Balkans – While in Downey."

Jerry and Eva Silverman will share their recent experiences in the Balkans with pictures and personal stories. Jerry Silverman is president of the Ezra Center in Anaheim.

The program runs from 10 a.m. to noon and will be followed by a kosher lunch. Cost of the lunch is \$6 for Ezra members, \$7 for non-members.

For more information, call Miriam Brookfield at (562) 943-3170.

You can call her the Stair Master

BY MARY FORNEY, STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Char Bundy could have ridden in any of the 104 elevators in the Sears Tower to get to where she wanted to go, but she climbed 2,109 steps instead.

Participating in the Go Vertical Chicago 2008 stair climb on Nov. 11, Bundy joined 2,250 registrants in the charity ascent. Surpassing 103 floors, Bundy climbed 1,353 vertical feet from the lobby of the tower to its Skydeck observatory.

Together, the stair climbers raised nearly \$400,000 for the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation.

A Downey resident for 29 years, Bundy, 51, works as an exercise counselor and arthritis instructor at the YMCA and Talbert Medical Center.

Cancer touched Bundy's life in 2006 when both her mother and father were diagnosed with the disease. Her mother is now a breast cancer survivor, but her father died of lung cancer eight months after his diagnosis.

Bundy thought the climb would be an appropriate way to honor her father's memory because he was a former iron worker from Chicago who helped build the Sears Tower.

Practicing three times a week by climbing the stairwell of the Downey YMCA building, Bundy trained with Greg Welch from Specific.

"I'm on a first-name basis with all the doctors now from passing them on the stairs," Bundy said.

"They gave me a lot of encouragement."

Last year, Bundy did a trial run by climbing 1,500 steps at the US Bank Tower stair climb in Los Angeles.

This year she was ready for the big climb so her sister Edi McDonald gave her a donation of \$1,000 for the foundation and bought Bundy a plane ticket to Chicago.

McDonald also pledged \$1,000 to their nephew Jason Buscemi, 34, who traveled from Indiana to accompany Bundy on the Go Vertical stair climb.

Bundy said she found herself motivating others – even her nephew – on the stairs as they climbed to their destination.

She reached the Skydeck observatory in 36 minutes. The record was set this year at 13 minutes.

The Sears Tower is the tallest building in North America. It has a total of 110 floors.

"I was determined," Bundy said. "I am going to keep training. Where's the next building I can climb?"



Participating in the Go Vertical Chicago 2008 stair climb, Jason Buscemi and Char Bundy climbed 1,353 vertical feet in the Sears Tower to help raise money for cancer research.

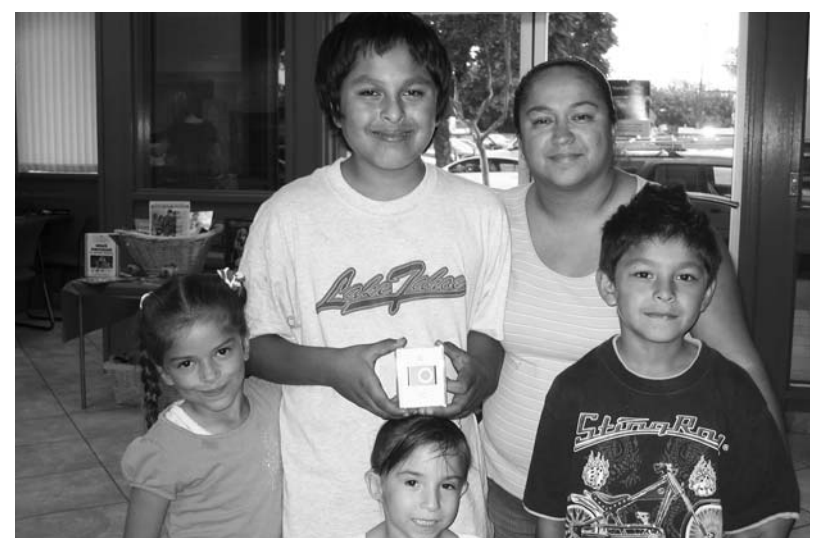
Student wins free iPod Shuffle

DOWNEY – Enrique Calvillo, a student at Sussman Middle School, was the winner of a new iPod Shuffle courtesy Downey Federal Credit Union.

Enrique won the prize after attending a school workshop led by Kari Johnson, business development representative for the credit union. Johnson regularly travels to Downey schools, preaching the importance of saving money.

Motivated by the workshop, Enrique asked his mother to take him to the credit union to open a savings account. By opening a new account, Enrique was entered into a raffle drawing where he beat out other entrants.

"I am happy to learn how to save money at the credit union," said Enrique, who picked up his prize with his mother, Letricia, and three siblings.



The Calvillo family (front row, left to right): Skyy and Austin. Back row: Jasmine, Enrique and Letricia. Enrique won an iPod Shuffle from Downey Federal Credit Union.

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