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Historic renovations of Downey parks nearly complete

■ \$24 million has been invested in Downey parks; with the exception of Wilderness Park, work is nearly complete.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY — After months of work, the parks portion of Measure S should be complete in about a week.

It's been a long process of closures and upgrades to the city's parks, thanks to Measure S — a half-cent sales tax increase for the purpose of public safety and infrastructure.

Passed by voters in 2016, it laid a heavy burden of work to be done in a limited amount of time; the clock expiring at the end of this year.

According to Assistant City Manager John Oskoui, things are looking "very good."

"We call it a 'final stretch,' and usually when you say 'final stretch' it means you started the process a long time ago," said Oskoui. "But when you really think about it, the entire [Measure S] effort, the program itself... we had to do things in less than two years."

"When we got into it, we knew we had to do it because the proceeds that we got with the bond, the language was specific that in three years, 'you had to have substantial completion of your projects' construction."

Design work — which can usually take to upwards of a year — was completed in around four

to six months.

"We jammed it," said Oskoui.

Parks were closed and worked on in phased packages, in a way that Oskoui says stretched the city's dollars as much as possible and provided the least amount of discomfort to residents as possible.

"If I remember correctly, when we did the master plan, it identified over \$80 million worth of work to be done," said Oskoui. "The truth is, you assess your needs, but there is not ever enough financing available for all of your needs. So, what do you do? You carve out the most important things that you want to achieve that is going to give you the most for your buck that you spend."

"We sat down with our Parks and Recreation Department, and said, 'Look, I don't know your programs; you do. You know your user groups. You tell me what sequence do we have to follow; which parks can close at the same time, which ones we can't, and which ones are we going to start with.'"

Ultimately, there were three phases beginning with Apollo and Dennis the Menace Parks, and finalizing with Furman and Discovery Parks.

Now, the final park project — Wilderness Park — is scheduled to be completed by the second week in August, however will remain closed until November when work on the ponds is finished.

The Wilderness ponds is funded through funds from the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and is therefore separate from Measure S.



The new basketball courts at Furman Park. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

Overall, around \$24 million has been put into Downey's parks.

While Coronavirus has somewhat hindered accessibility to some park features, many of the new fields, facilities, and athletic courts are now open for public use.

Notably, Oskoui has voiced pride in the revitalization of Golden Park.

"You take a step back and you take a look at that entire park, and you think, 'Man, this is a gorgeous park,'" said Oskoui. "It looks lush, green, with lovely trees. The community center was taken care of...we put some nice

lighting so if people want to take a stroll at night, they can do that. The entire irrigation system was taken care of; everything that is underground and people can't see has been taken care of."

"The parking lot was in horrible shape; we reconstructed the entire parking lot. The basketball courts were resurfaced, the play areas were redone...when you look at it in totality, there was a lot of work that was being done."

Oskoui says that public feedback has seemed "very positive" so far.

"There are always things that folks may think that you

could have done differently," said Oskoui. "But we have not received anything but positive feedback from our folks. Look at Furman, it's a beautiful park; it's a gorgeous park now."

"Honestly, I've been doing this for a long time. I'm proud of the program we ran and we are continuing to until the finish line. I think we have done a pretty good job, and it's evident by the investment we have done; how much investment has actually gone into construction. That's a good marker. When you can see, find out from every dollar how much you stretched out to actually do the work that people are going to enjoy for many years to come."

Weekend at a Glance

Friday 80°

Saturday 81°

Sunday 81°

ON THIS DAY AUGUST 6

1787:

Sixty proofs of the U.S. constitution were delivered to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

1926:

Warner Bros.' Vitaphone system premiered with the movie "Don Juan" starring John Barrymore.

1930:

New York Supreme Court Justice Joseph Grater disappeared after stepping into a New York City taxi cab.

1945:

Hiroshima, Japan was devastated when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the city. An estimated 70,000 people died instantly and tens of thousands died in subsequent years of burns and radiation poisoning.

1960:

Cuba nationalized American and foreign-owned property in the nation.

1965:

President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law.

1986:

A low pressure system dropped a record 13 inches of rain in Sydney, Australia.

1996:

The Ramones played their farewell concert at The Palace in Los Angeles.

2012:

NASA's Curiosity rover landed on the surface of Mars.



Curiosity rover

Notable Birthdays

ESPN personality **Mike Greenberg** turns 53.

Geri Halliwell, the pop singer known as Ginger Spice, turns 48.

Sportscaster **Max Kellerman** turns 47.

"Punky Brewster" actress **Soleil Moon Frye** turns 44.

Rapper and singer **Travis McCoy** of Gym Class Heroes turns 39.



Soleil Moon Frye turns 44.

Notable Deaths

Pope Paul VI, head of the Catholic church for 15 years, died of a heart attack on Aug. 6, 1978. He was 80.

Noted architect **Edward Stone**, who designed Radio City Music Hall and the Kennedy Center, died in 1978 at age 76.

"Super Freak" singer **Rick James** died of heart failure in 2004 at age 56.

Filmmaker **John Hughes** died of a heart attack in 2009 at age 59.

Three-time NBA all-star **Dan Roundfield** died in 2012 saving his wife who became distressed while swimming off the coast of Aruba. He was 59.

Louise Suggs, a professional golfer and founder of the LPGA, died in 2015 of natural causes at age 91.



Black lives and the yellow fever epidemic of 1793

By Carol Kearns
Contributor

DOWNEY — The sustained, nationwide demonstrations in response to the horrific murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police last month briefly knocked the COVID-19 pandemic from top spot in our daily headlines. The raw malevolence of the killing, seen over and over again on video, and the exploding outrage are shaking the foundations of US society.

Millions of people worldwide have marched peacefully in protest, many wearing face masks. The massive gatherings make a statement that ending four hundred years of systemic racism in the United States (which has caused so many deaths already) is

a greater priority for the protestors than protecting their own health by avoiding large crowds.

The peaceful demonstrators are demanding that our institutions and government start conforming to our claims of being a truly just and democratic society. How can I not think of people like Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, the children who integrated the southern schools, the voting rights activists, the young people who sat in at segregated lunch counters and endured the blasts of high-pressure water from fire hoses? Sixty years later and Floyd's death shows us that the problem of racism is still profound.

Continued on page 8

Angie Rademaker joins race for school board



■ The former PTA president is endorsed by the Downey teachers' union.

DOWNEY — Downey resident Angie Rademaker, a longtime Downey volunteer and former PTA president, has announced her candidacy for the Downey Board of Education.

She is seeking the Trustee Area 2 seat currently held by Tod Corrin. Corrin will retire when his term expires later this year.

"I am passionate about working for the best interest with our students in the Downey Unified School District," Rademaker said. "If elected, I will be their eyes, ears, voice and heart. I will respond promptly to parent concerns and

phone calls.

"I will also work diligently to support our hardworking teachers, certificated and classified staff which include classroom aides, food service workers, clerical support, maintenance, operations and transportation staff; they keep our students educated, safe, fed, and in a clean environment."

Rademaker was previously employed by Downey Unified, working as a bilingual aide at Rio Hondo Elementary where she helped students learn to read. She also worked as an office manager at Griffiths Middle School, at Downey Adult School's Career Center, and in the school district's Purchasing Department.

Volunteer positions include vice president of PTA Council, president of Rio Hondo PTA, and Warren High ASB board president.

She has also volunteered with the PTA HELPS pantry and with the Downey City Library. For her efforts, she was presented the Sally McFarland Award for Outstanding Service and Honorary Service Awards.

Since retiring from DUSD, Rademaker has worked as a registered tax preparer and serves as secretary of the California Society Tax Consultants of Orange County.

Continued on page 3

Carlos Avalos making second run at Downey board of education

■ He is challenging incumbent Giggy Perez-Saab for the Area 3 school board seat.

DOWNEY — Longtime Downey resident and education advocate Carlos Avalos has decided to run for the Downey School Board Trustee Area 3.

Avalos ran back in 2018 when the seat was left vacant and came up short by 39 votes.

He is a product of Downey Unified, having attended Downey schools from kindergarten through the twelve grade.

He has volunteered to numerous organizations including the Downey Food Help

which provides meals to families. He has also coached in AYSO for his daughter's soccer team.

"It was a very rewarding experience," he said. His daughter, who started kindergarten this past year, will be moving on to first grade at Rio San Gabriel. He has maintained active participation in several school activities with his daughter.

Avalos said he has decided to run again because he feels "that our students and staff deserve more."

"They deserve 21st century education in clean and safe schools," he said. "Being a product of Downey Unified, I understand the value of public

education and the impact it has on all of us.

"I also want to represent every single student and parent in the district. I believe that being able to speak both languages, English and Spanish, I can communicate with all of our families. We must be able to respond to their needs and support the success of every single student.

"I know that our high school graduation rate is high but less than 50 percent of those graduating are college and career ready and I'm ready to change that. I would like to see that number much higher.

I know we will face challenging times with the current pandemic which has

crushed our economy and has created a new way of learning for many of our students. We need to make sure we are providing adequate support to all students and families.

"I want to make sure our schools are being maintained in good repair and that we provide parent involvement opportunities to ensure the success of their children. Being a parent of two young children, I know how valuable quality education is."

Avalos earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration from the University of LaVerne. He is currently employed as the Director of Maintenance, Operations, Transportation and Facilities for a local school district.

He has been employed in the public school district system for over 13 years. He has experience managing multi-million dollar budgets and large bond projects. He has been involved in numerous school committees including School Safety Committee, Public Relations Committee, Stakeholder Facilities Committee, sat on the



management negotiations team and facilitated the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee.

Avalos has also served as president for the Classified School Employees Association, Chapter 596, representing over 300 employees.

"I'm running for school board because I believe Downey students deserve the best public schools to prepare them for the brightest future possible," he said. "As a product of Downey USD, I have a strong history in Downey. As a homeowner,

I am fully invested in our neighborhood. As a school administrator, I have the professional knowledge and experience to lead. As a father of two exceptional daughters in Downey USD, I will fight for every student's safety and success.

"I also want to improve our school facilities utilizing our current bond and also looking at other alternatives to supplement our bond, like state grants and energy saving methods. Our students deserve to have state of the art classrooms and facilities. I've been involved in developing master facility plans, working with administration and architects to deliver the best schools for students to succeed.

"I was raised here in Downey and I'm a proud graduate of Downey public schools. This is my opportunity to give back to the very schools that made me a success. I want to inspire our next generation of leaders and see our students achieve greatness."

Avalos is married and they have two children, ages 4 and 6. He is endorsed by past mayor Sean Ashton.

Avalos can be reached at (562) 577-7328 or via email at carlosavalos4DUSD@gmail.com

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In Memory of

Barbara Ann Udoff

November 21, 1936 - July 27, 2020



Barbara Ann Udoff was born November 21, 1936 in Chicago, Illinois. She passed away at 83, at her home in Downey on July 27, 2020.

Barbara worked for the L.A. Unified School District for 18 years. Her funeral service was held Monday, August 3rd, 2020.

She was laid to rest at Home of Peace Memorial Park in Whittier. She is survived by her husband, Robert Udoff and sons, Marc and Mike Udoff.

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Angie Rademaker and her husband, Bill. (Courtesy photo)

My memory of John Lewis

John Alba, a tax consultant from Downey, met the late civil rights icon in Washington, D.C.

By John A. Alba
Contributor

DOWNEY - I wish to share a personal experience I had with the late Congressman John Lewis.

I was honored by H&R Block to fly to Washington to advocate for taxpayers. Our mission was to have legislation introduced in Congress to require minimum training, background checks and the ability to stop those unscrupulous and predatory tax preparers.

I am a 35-year tax practitioner, enrolled agent and master tax advisor. I own an H&R Block franchise in Norwalk and our family has been in business for 56 years.

I along with five other franchise owners from across the nation went to meet with senators and members of Congress. I was especially pleased when I was informed our team would be meeting with Congressman Lewis.

We arrived at his office in the Capitol and his chief of staff greeted us. She apologized and informed us the Congressman was on the floor voting and would be late or may not be able to attend the meeting. I was disappointed but we continued our advocacy meeting.

We all were in deep discussions when the door opened to the office and in walked Congressman Lewis. A gasp and chatter of "that's him" in disbelief came from us all. A mix of Republicans and Democrats. History was walking in the door!

We all stood and he humbly told us all to relax and have a seat. He thanked us for coming and then asked us to continue. He listened and agreed a minimum licensing standard and background check should exist for tax practitioners. He graciously allowed us all to

tell him our clients horror stories regarding the abuse of unlicensed and unethical tax preparers.

Once we concluded our meeting, he invited us to take a picture with him in his office. We were excited to do so. The walls of his office were lined with photographs of Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and many other iconic and historic persons.

He then made the grand gesture of inviting to take a picture on his balcony. He opened the French doors and the view was breathtaking. The Capitol dome and beautiful trees appeared that did not seem to be real. It was the perfect setting. Our company photographer took pictures of the group and individually with Congressman Lewis. I still have goosebumps writing this and this happened two years ago.

When we were finished, I



heard our photographer, who was African American, say the following to the Congressman: "Congressman Lewis, sir, I wish to thank you for your courage and strength. I would not have had the opportunities in my life if it was not for you and Dr. King." Rest In Peace. He is free at last. God bless him and his family.

Rademaker launches campaign for school board

Continued from page 1

She is still involved with Downey Unified, serving as a personnel commissioner elected by Downey Chapters 248 and 746 employee unions.

Rademaker and her husband, Bill, have three children: their two sons attended Rio Hondo Elementary, Griffiths Middle School and graduated from Warren High School. Their daughter graduated from Jordan High School.

"Many families come to live in Downey because of our well run city, police department and fire department, as well as for the education our students receive in a school district that prepares them for their future as adults in the 21st. Century," Rademaker said. "I want to continue to be a part of that effort by being on the school board."

Rademaker has been endorsed by several community leaders, including Mayor Blanca Pacheco, school board member D. Mark Morris, former superintendent Dr. Ed Sussman, retired DUSD administrator Phil Davis, and Gallatin Elementary office manager Amy Worthington.

She is also backed by the Downey Education Association, the labor union that represents Downey teachers.

Rademaker can be reached via email at arademak@vusd.net or on her cell phone, (562) 306-9069.



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Downey's Marcela Arrieta was featured on Telemundo last week for her new line of products that promote wellbeing.

Arrieta is a holistic and alternative medicine practitioner and owner of Majestic Bliss Soaps, a company that creates vegan-friendly and holistic self-care products "infused with life-force energy to help others find balance and calm in the fast-paced world in which we live."

As a stay at home mom, she founded her company in 2014 out of the corner of her Downey garage with the help of a GoFundMe account with a goal of \$1,000. Eight months later, Whole Foods picked up her product and the company now operates out of a 1,300 sq. ft. warehouse in Santa Fe Springs.

Arrieta's segment is posted online on Telemundo's website.



Warren High School student Dulce Vilchis has been accepted into The National Society of High School Scholars.

The Society recognizes top scholars who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, scholarship and community involvement.

The announcement was made by NSHSS Founder and Chairman Claes Nobel, senior member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes.

"On behalf of NSHSS, I am honored to recognize the hard work, sacrifice and commitment that Dulce has demonstrated to achieve this exceptional level of academic excellence," said Nobel. "Dulce is now a member of a unique community of scholars -- a community that represents our very best hope for the future."



Mayor Blanca Pacheco participated in a multi-city motorcade last week to promote the 2020 census.

Pacheco met up with the driving party near the Rio Hondo Golf Course, along with members of Downey Police Department, who provided traffic control.

State Sen. Bob Archuleta also stopped by, taking the opportunity to wave to cars as they passed by.

Residents who have not yet completed the census are encouraged to do so online at 2020census.gov

(Photo by Alex Dominguez)

Police plan DUI saturation patrols

DOWNEY — Additional officers from the Downey Police Department will be out on patrol during the month of August looking for drivers suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

"Safety is paramount, but especially during the COVID-19 pandemic," Police Chief Dean Milligan said. "We are all in this together and want everyone to be as safe as possible when they are out. One way to do that is by not driving impaired."

The Downey Police Department reminds the public that impaired driving is not just from alcohol. Some prescription medications or over-the-counter drugs may interfere with driving.

Always follow directions for use and read warning labels about driving or operating heavy machinery, which includes driving a car. While medicinal and recreational marijuana are legal, driving under the influence of marijuana is illegal.

If you plan on drinking or taking medications that may impact your ability to drive safely, plan on staying at home. Driving sober is your safest bet.

Drivers caught driving impaired and charged with DUI will pay a stiff price: an average of \$13,500 in fines and penalties, as well as a suspended license.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

27 Easy Fix Up Tips to Give You the Competitive Edge When Selling Your Downey Home

Downey Home Seller - Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. And once you have made that decision, you'll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here's a way to help you to be as prepared as possible.

To assist homesellers, a new industry report has just been released called "27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar." It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today's tough, aggressive marketplace.

Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress,

be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible. In this report you'll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get the straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home.

You owe it to yourself to learn how these important tips will give you the competitive edge to get your home sold fast and for the most amount of money.

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Your voice is valued but more importantly, it is needed.

THE COLLECTIVE PRESENTS:
THE DOWNEY COALITION

The AMAAD Institute, The G.R.E.E.N. Foundation, and Keeping Our Lungs Safe have all joined forces to create The Collective, a coalition of organizations and community members advocating for more comprehensive and progressive policies around secondhand smoke. Our policy campaign focuses on protecting outdoor air spaces within the jurisdiction of Downey.

To learn more about the campaign and how to get involved, please contact us at yohaun@amaad.org or jamar@amaad.org

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Carrie Rios Estrada takes reins as Soroptimist president

By Lorine Parks
Society Columnist

DOWNEY — Nothing stops the unstoppable. Soroptimist of Downey held an installation-on-the-lawn to start the new club year just where they left off — having fun doing good.

Long-time member Dorothy Pemberton opened her leafy front yard and Soroptimists practiced social distancing in an afternoon of fun and dancing on the lawn to welcome in new president Carrie Rios Estrada.

A mobile DJ, Magnight Entertainment with Michael Grimaud, got things off to a rousing start. Dorothy's neighbors are the geese and golfers on the Rio Hondo Golf Course, and none of them seemed to mind.

"You rock," member Jan Scott said. "Best installation ever," said another. Custom-made wine message bottles were favors on tables set with flowers arranged by Mia Zimmerman, on the tables set for three. Informally dressed members sang along to the DJ's songs and clapped.

Outgoing president Judy Gallardo De Cisneros was thanked and then President Carrie Rios Estrada was installed by past Soroptimist District Governor Linda Haines.

Soroptimist is an international volunteer organization of business and professional women who work to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world.

"We are dedicated to making a difference," said incoming President Carrie, "for women and girls. SI Downey raises money to award to deserving women and young people in our community to help advance their training and education."

This year's watchword is "Choose to Shine," and the afternoon was an affirmation of fellowship and purpose.

Downey Theatre reschedules two concerts



Willy Chirino

lengthy list of artists.

Grammy winning Mariachi los Camperos will perform on Mother's Day, May 9, 2021, at 4 p.m.

Founded in 1961 by the late Nati Campo, this L.A. based mariachi ensemble has an international reputation for excellence and authenticity, ensuring that traditional Mariachi continues to the next generation.

Tickets for these rescheduled shows will be valid for the newly announced dates and all ticket holders are not required to obtain replacement tickets.

Tickets purchased for April 4, 2020 will be valid for April 2, 2021. Tickets purchased for April 5, 2020, will be valid for April 3, 2021.

Payment is accepted by cash with exact change only and/or by credit or debit. Theatre tours are restricted at this time.

DOWNEY — The Downey Theatre has rescheduled two concerts that were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vocalist and bandleader Willy Chirino will perform on Friday and Saturday, April 2-3, 2021, at 8 p.m. Chirino combines traditional Cuban music with American rock and jazz.

The Downey Theatre Box Office has resumed onsite service for ticket sales only. All visitors to the Downey Theatre must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Patrons must maintain social distance of 6 feet and masks are required during ticketing transactions.

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Black lives and the yellow fever epidemic of 1793

Continued from page 1

I would like to share the story of another moment in time when there was also an intersection of a public health crisis and race relations. The heroism of ordinary people, black and white, will always be relevant, and the event, over two hundred years ago, gives us much to think about today.

The gruesome conditions of the yellow fever epidemic in 1793, when Philadelphia was our capital and George Washington was president, brought the country to the verge of a constitutional crisis. Panic predominated, government officials left town, and the city was a cesspool of filth and disease. All of the work required to restore order and livability—nursing, housing, food distribution, burials, care for orphans—was assumed by volunteers.

The critical role of the Free African Society, a mutual aid society for blacks, most of whom were former slaves, spotlights the compassion and social consciousness of its members as they helped everyone, even while facing their own daily struggles of racism in the new “democracy” built on slavery.

There is much to think about in this story, so many lessons. Let’s celebrate these people who felt guided to serve in the name of Christian compassion even though they were brought to this country against their will. And let us remember that today’s members of Black Lives Matter are part of a four-hundred-year-long heroic effort urging the United States to meet the ideals of our Declaration of Independence.

Yellow Fever & Urban Life 1793

As an elementary school teacher, I came across an award-winning book for young people

about this historic health crisis: An American Plague: The True and Terrifying Story of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1793, by Jim Murphy, Scholastic Inc. This wonderful book was optional reading for fifth graders, and it is just the thing for adults who want something condensed and super readable, as well as scholarly. Order through your bookstore or online.

Yellow fever comes from a virus transmitted by mosquitoes, which thrive and multiply in stagnant pools of water. Philadelphia’s hot, humid weather in the summer was the perfect breeding ground for these insects, but scientists wouldn’t know about their role in spreading disease until the early 1900s.

In 1793 people thought yellow fever was contagious—transmitted from person to person. The grisly symptoms cause understandable fear and panic. The skin turns yellow as red blood cells are destroyed, and patients experience spasms of diarrhea and vomit black blood. People who could afford it fled the city, while others were left to die alone, lying in their own blood and excrement. Other towns barricaded roads from Philadelphia, and travelers were sometimes attacked. It truly must have seemed a page from Revelations.

Despite the size of Philadelphia, population 51,000, there was no public sanitation, no garbage collection, no source of clean drinking water, and no plan for emergencies by any level of government. It was estimated that at the worst level of the epidemic, over twenty thousand people fled.

Philadelphia, our nation’s first capital, was rescued by volunteers, black and white, who resisted panic and brought control to the most gruesome conditions. One significant

result, six years later, was the establishment the nation’s first public system for clean drinking water.

I am amazed at the parallels in behavior (good and bad) between our present crisis and what happened centuries ago. This fearsome pestilence did not discourage the greedy who valued money above all else and took advantage of people’s misfortune. There was immediate price gouging for needed medicines and medical supplies as well as other goods and services. Some landlords were merciless in evicting tenants who lost their jobs and had no savings. Just like today.

Philadelphia 1793

Philadelphia is surrounded by water, and the muggy weather made life unpleasant under the best of circumstances. As with many other cities, refuse collected in open sewers, live animals were brought to market, mosquitoes were everywhere, and the city’s stench was overpowering.

The first deaths indicating a possible epidemic appeared in early August. Within weeks, conditions grew horrific and the death toll climbed to over twenty per day. People caring for loved ones fell ill and died themselves. Sometimes no one knew that there were several corpses in a seemingly empty house. Orphans were uncared for. Famine spread as fearful farmers refused to bring produce into the city. Delirious paupers roamed the streets and collapsed in gutters. Officials struggled to collect the bodies, but the dead remained unburied when gravediggers could not be found.

When Congress and the president left town, along with state and local officials, a Constitutional crisis loomed. Federal government offices were moved to Germantown, and Washington took Martha back to Mt. Vernon. Washington wanted to convene Congress to provide

relief for what was happening to the city, but some argued, including Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, that it wouldn’t be Constitutional unless Congress met in Philadelphia (which no one was willing to do). The fledgling government had not anticipated the need to make provisions for such an emergency.

The Heroes

Mayor Matthew Clarkson — Mayor of Philadelphia who lost his wife and youngest son to the disease, but elected to stay, even as other city officials left. His position was mostly honorary, and with no legal authority or funding for the situation, he organized a committee of volunteers to manage the crisis. The committee borrowed funds to pay for medicine, coffins, doctors, nurses, and gravediggers, and Clarkson spearheaded the seizure of an unoccupied mansion outside the city, called Bush Hill, to use as a hospital for the indigent.

Dr. Benjamin Rush — Signer of the Declaration of Independence, a leading physician, compassionate humanitarian, social reformer, and political leader in Philadelphia. Rush identified the disease correctly as yellow fever, and worked fearlessly throughout the epidemic, even after catching the disease himself. However, his recommended treatment of mercury in small quantities, which he took himself, was a huge error and opposed by most physicians. Nonetheless, his leadership throughout the ordeal was invaluable.

Israel Israel — Well-to-do merchant and tavern keeper, and an active member of Clarkson’s committee. He found shelter and care for the orphans, whose numbers eventually reached almost two hundred. He also arranged for harvesting the grain at Bush Hill and led efforts to warehouse and hand out food.

Peter Helm — Barrel maker

and one of two who volunteered to personally manage Bush Hill. As a devout member of the Moravian congregation who took to heart Christ’s teachings to aid the needy, he assumed responsibility for outside activities, setting up a system for receiving new patients and having the dead taken away for burial. Coffins were made, decent housing was provided for staff and nurses, and the barn was converted to house those recovering from the illness. Helm also repaired the pumps so that fresh water could be provided for the first time to the patients.

Stephen Girard — One of the wealthiest men in Philadelphia, he did not believe the disease was contagious, even though he contracted a mild case in late August. He assumed responsibility for activities inside Bush Hill, cleaning the building from top to bottom and putting patients in separate rooms according to the degree of their illness. As the number of patients increased, a new building, sixty by eighty feet, was erected with two fireplaces. Girard hired a French physician who had experience with the disease. His treatment was cautious, with sweet wine and quinine. Patients improved and the hospital was soon regarded as a place of healing.

The Free African Society, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen — A mutual aid society, created by blacks in 1789 (the year of our Constitution) to provide support for free blacks in need and widows and orphans. It was a remarkable source of help for the city and Bush Hill in the midst of this scourge. Most of the approximately 3,000 free blacks living in Philadelphia in 1793 were ex-slaves; the two elders, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, had each purchased their own freedom. More than fifty percent of this population were employed as live-in domestics, and there was little opportunity for professional and economic advancement.

Rush had written to the Society asking for help because he mistakenly believed that blacks had a special immunity to the disease. They did not. Those who had caught yellow fever in Africa and survived had greater resistance. Others suffered and died just as quickly as whites. Leaders Jones and Allen agreed to Rush’s request and Society members started visiting homes that no one else would enter.

Society volunteers cleaned and tended the sick, obtained food and medicine, and arranged for burial of the dead. They also provided nursing care at Bush Hill. The volunteers accepted only what money was offered, since many who needed help had no money themselves, but a problem soon developed. Rich people started bidding on their services and blacks were accused of price gouging. Black nurses were attacked verbally, and a few males were assaulted physically. Mayor Clarkson issued a statement of his complete support for the Society and published an ad in the newspapers. Eventually more blacks also succumbed to the disease.

Isolation and Misinformation

Mail delivery took longer as letters had to first dry after being dipped in vinegar as a “disinfectant” (sounds similar to an early video about how we should disinfect our grocery deliveries). Some cities voted to prevent the arrival of all persons from Philadelphia. Manhattan banned ships and travelers from the city and posted guards at all arrival points, but also donated \$5,000 to the relief effort. Armed patrols scouted the country lanes looking for refugees. One woman was pulled from her carriage and tarred and feathered.

Some newspapers did not write much about the disease, taking the position that to do so would only further denigrate its image (this denial sounds familiar). Much of what is known from this time comes from journals and private correspondence. Other written material blamed “foreigners” and blacks for the presence of the disease (this sounds familiar too).

Continued on page 11

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What we can learn from 1793's yellow fever

Continued from page 1

Printer and Publisher Mathew Carey wrote a best-selling book about the affair when it was over: A Short Account of the Malignant Fever..... He made severe accusations vilifying the Free African Society by claiming the black nurses extorted money from the sick and pilfered their houses. Jones and Allen countered with their own narrative of how the black community was invited to become involved.

The Disease Abates

When the weather cooled, and mosquitoes died, there was a marked decline in the number of people who fell ill. Streets and alleys were cleaned up to reduce noxious odors. Homeowners were responsible for cleaning their own property.

A historic improvement was made in the city water supply. In 1793 all water for drinking, cooking, and cleaning came from public and private wells or from the Delaware river, which was quite polluted. In 1799 the city hired Benjamin Latrobe to design and construct waterworks that supplied water from the Schuylkill River. Water from this system had no offensive odor and flowed with enough force to hose off city streets and docks and flush open clogged sewers. It was the first such system in the United States.

The various levels of government never admitted to any failure or cowardice by abandoning the city, but they did enact new procedures based on lessons learned. The Pennsylvania legislature voted to give the governor special authority to make laws and spend money in the event of any other natural disaster. The federal government voted to

give the president power to call Congress into session outside of the nation's capital whenever there was a grave hazard to life and health.

Lessons for Us in 2020

1.) Efforts to contain and combat the spread of COVID-19 need to be coordinated among all levels of government.

Lack of federal leadership during our current health crisis resulted in a situation where various state governments were competing for the purchase of personal protective items. Federal leadership would have resulted in a more rational distribution.

There is still contention among state and local governments about when it is safe to resume economic activity.

2.) It takes unselfish cooperation to defeat a pandemic.

We need to make personal decisions based on our social obligations as well as our preferences. We have a responsibility to not harm others. Yes, we are "free" (whatever that means), but mask-wearing is to keep us from spreading germs to others even if we are asymptomatic. It is not right that we should expect nurses and others to risk exposure by caring for us if we get sick by not taking precautions. Over six hundred nurses have died already. We are not entitled to go mask-less.

3.) We need to recognize the fundamental contribution that black Americans have made

to the foundation of American strength and wealth.

Black Americans have stepped up time and again to contribute more than their share in meeting challenges, despite sustained efforts by others to deny them the opportunity to participate equally in American life.

June is the anniversary of the shameful race massacre in Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1921, that wiped out the entire middle class black neighborhood of businessmen and professionals. This is only one of the more overt examples of deliberate barriers that include Jim Crow laws, lynchings, segregated schools and restricted housing.

Nonetheless, black Americans continue to contribute to American society, guided by a strong work ethic and the values of conscience, religious faith, and standards of good citizenship.

I am inspired by today's young people who have, once again, bravely come together to demand that it's time the United States end systemic racism and live up to the ideals inscribed in our founding documents.

These young people are following in the footsteps of thousands of Civil Rights workers, and in the footsteps of Jones, Allen, and the Free African Society 227 years ago who followed their conscience to make the world a better place.

Foreign investment in U.S. dips 5%

Foreign buyers purchased \$74 billion worth of U.S. existing homes from April 2019 through March 2020, a 5% decrease from the previous 12-month period and the second consecutive annual decline in foreign investment in U.S. residential real estate, according to a new survey from the National Association of Realtors.

Foreign buyers purchased 154,000 properties, down 16% from the prior year.

NAR surveyed members about transactions with international clients who purchased and sold U.S. residential property from April 2019 through March 2020.

Foreign buyers who resided in the U.S. as recent immigrants or who were holding visas that allowed them to live in the U.S. purchased \$41 billion worth of U.S. existing homes, an 8% decrease from the prior year and 61% of the dollar volume of purchases.

Foreign buyers who lived abroad purchased \$33 billion worth of existing homes, down 1% from the previous 12 months and accounting for 39% of the dollar volume.

International buyers accounted for 4% of the \$1.7 trillion in existing-home sales during that time period.

"Foreign buyers and recent immigrants have become less of a force in the U.S. housing market over the last couple of years," said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun.

"A lack of housing inventory - the primary factor hindering domestic buyers - is also holding back some foreign buyers. Additionally, less cross-border travel, falling international trade and fewer foreign students attending American universities are impacting foreign homebuyers."

China and Canada remained first and second in U.S. residential sales dollar volume at \$11.5 billion and \$9.5 billion, respectively, continuing a trend going back to 2013.

Mexico at \$5.8 billion, India at \$5.4 billion, and Colombia at \$1.3 billion rounded out the top five.

China was the only country among the top five to see a decline in dollar volume from the previous year (\$11.5 billion from

\$13.4 billion). Colombia replaced the United Kingdom as the fifth largest country of origin by dollar volume of foreign buyers.

The median existing-home sales price among international buyers was \$314,600, 15% more than the median price of \$274,600 for all existing-homes sold in the U.S.

The price difference reflects the location and type of properties desired by foreign buyers. At \$449,500, Chinese buyers had the highest median purchase price, with nearly half of them purchasing property in California and New York.

Nearly half of foreign buyers - 48% - purchased a home in the suburbs and 29% bought a home in an urban area, a figure that's held steady over the last five years.

Seven percent of international buyers bought property in a resort area, down from 15% in 2009. The decline in the share of foreign purchases in resort areas reflects, in part, fewer buyers from the United Kingdom and Canada, who tend to buy vacation homes.

Where the Housing Market Stands Two Months into Coronavirus



Buyers Are Tricking Back Into the Market

When the pandemic first hit in March, sales dropped 8% from the previous month. Now, buyers are slowly getting back into the game, since mortgage rates are at historic lows and nearly 70% of the workforce is still holding secure employment.

Home Prices Will Remain Steady

Low housing inventory levels before the COVID-19 crisis mean that it is unlikely home prices will drop. It's still a good time for sellers to consider making their moves.

Real Estate Transactions Are Safer Than Ever

Trying to purchase a home and get the deal done is far safer than visiting grocery stores. Real estate professionals are going above and beyond with social distancing practices and sanitary measures to keep clients and colleagues safe during transactions.

This Is a Pause, Not a Stop

The COVID-19 pandemic has paused real estate activity, not stopped it completely. People's homes have become even more valued during this time. Real estate will continue to be in high demand once the coronavirus subsides.


I'm here to help you in any way I can during these tough times. If there is anything I can do to help you and your family, please do not hesitate to reach out - 562-743-2121

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JUST LISTED!



Great Opportunity!
4 separate 3 bedroom, 1 bath homes on large lot. Great Long Beach location. Collecting great rents with more upside potential. Recently painted. 1 home was completely remodeled 6 months ago. Long term tenants. Seller may consider financing. **\$1,625,000.** Call **Jimmy** for more info today at **562-400-2148**

JIMSPATHOS@AOL.COM

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NEW UPDATES INCLUDE:

- Detailed market analysis sent to you in less than 24 min
- Innovative home search features
- Access to our office's newest listings
- Quick links to utilities and local Downey & surrounding city info
- Plus, info on your next career

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SOLD!



Downey Charming
Beautiful custom built 3 bedrooms, 1 3/4 bathrooms, family room with fireplace, amazing hardwood floors and 2 car garage on tree lined cul d'sac street in award winning Downey school district. Sold for **\$640,000** with multiple offers.

ICARE4DOW@AOL.COM

Pam Lee
REALTOR®
562-537-1134
PamLeeRealtor@gmail.com
DRE #01750256

AVAILABLE!



Long Beach Gated Community
2 BD, 2 BA. Spacious living room. Kitchen that opens to the family room. Master suite with lots of closet space. Carport parking. Community pool plus great amenities. Mobil home listing price is \$165,000. Space rent \$1,485. Call **Pam** for more info! **562-537-1134.**
PamLeeRealtor@gmail.com

SOLD! SOLD! SOLD!



SOLD-10711 RICHEON AVENUE, DOWNEY
Gorgeous Downey classic in PRESTIGIOUS ORANGE ESTATES! 3 BEDS, 2 BATHS. SPACIOUS formal living room, 1,862 sq. ft. living space.
Call **Mario** today! **562-533-7433.**

100° Mario DID IT Again!
The Market is HOT! HOT! HOT!



1° SOLD! SOLD! SOLD!
7149 NADA STREET, DOWNEY

2° SOLD! SOLD! SOLD!
9915 TECUM RD., DOWNEY

3° SOLD! SOLD! SOLD!
11849 HARO AVENUE, DOWNEY

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1,300 HOMES SOLD SINCE 1999

JUST LISTED!



North Downey Pool Home

- 3 bedrooms + office
- 2 bathrooms
- 1,706 sq ft living space
- 7,669 sq ft lot
- Guest house
- Pool with newer stucco and tile

LIST PRICE \$785,000

JUST LISTED!



North Downey Condo

- 2 bedrooms
- 2.5 bathrooms
- 1,409 sq ft living space
- End unit
- Pool and spa
- Subterranean parking

LIST PRICE \$449,950



Near Furman Park

- 4 bedrooms | 2.5 bathrooms
- 2,107 sq. ft. | 7,802 sq ft lot
- Large family room
- Master bedroom
- 2 car detached garage

LIST PRICE \$799,950



Everything You Can Ask For

- 3 bedroom | 2 bathrooms
- 1,675 sq ft living space
- Large master bedroom
- Newer roof & new plx plumbing
- Bonus room behind 2 car garage

LIST PRICE \$679,950



Classic Cape Cod Home

- 3 bedrooms
- 2.5 bathrooms
- 11,625 sq. ft.
- Guest house with bathroom
- Large master BD w/fireplace

LIST PRICE \$1,089,000

COMPTON



Great Starter Home

- 2 bedrooms
- 1 bathroom
- 893 sq. ft. living space
- 2,501 sq. ft. lot
- 2 car garage

LIST PRICE \$415,000

Text Michael at 562-818-6111 for a PROPERTY VIDEO of any of these homes to be sent directly to you!