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Downey declines Pride donation

■ The city council offered its support for a third annual Pride festival by waiving fees and lending support, but declined a \$25,000 donation request.

By Eric Pierce
Editor

DOWNEY — The Downey City Council this week agreed to waive fees and provide logistical support for a Downey LGBTQ Pride festival but declined to give a requested \$25,000 donation.

Now in its third year, the Downey Pride Festival is tentatively scheduled for Aug. 26 in Downtown Downey.

To reduce costs, the festival has been reduced from a two-day event to a single day.

LA CADA, a non-profit that produces Downey Pride, had requested \$25,000 from the City of Downey, along with the waiving of permit fees, the use of a city stage, police security, and assistance from city workers to close Downey Avenue.

Festival organizers said Supervisor Janice Hahn committed \$25,000 to the event, contingent on Downey giving \$25,000.

Council members expressed support for Downey Pride but conceded they have already given funds to non-profit organizations this year, including the Downey Rose Float Association and Downey Symphony.

"We have many non-profit organizations and as we continue to look at all of the events and the interests of our community, we want to make sure that we are fair, equal and inclusive," said Mayor Claudia M. Frometa.

Council members voted to support Downey Pride by waiving fees and loaning its portable stage.

City officials were unable to provide an estimate on the cost to provide four police officers to staff the event, so that request will be considered at a future meeting.

Downey explores archway sign

DOWNEY — A plan to install a giant gateway sign welcoming visitors to Downtown Downey moved forward Tuesday with the city council agreeing to put the project out to bid.

The sign would span Downey Avenue at Firestone Boulevard and be similar to entry signs in Santa Monica and San Diego's Little Italy.

A preliminary estimate showed the archway sign could cost about \$350,000.

"I do support signage for our Downtown Downey; I think it's time," said Mayor Claudia M. Frometa, adding that installation of the sign would coincide with the 150th anniversary of Downey's founding.

San Diego-based Graphic Solutions provided a rendering of what the archway sign could look like but additional designs would cost \$31,000, city officials said, prompting the city council to solicit bids from other companies.

Eric Pierce, editor

County struggles to staff juvenile halls

■ As Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey prepares to reopen, L.A. County is struggling to find the manpower to staff its detention facilities.

By City News Service

DOWNEY — One day after state regulators declared the county's two juvenile halls unsuitable to house youth -- with short-staffing among the issues leading to the declaration -- Los Angeles County's interim probation chief Wednesday ordered all 3,000 sworn peace officers in the department to serve at least one shift a month at juvenile halls.

The directive, taking effect June 1, will increase staffing "by ten-fold, flooding them with the personnel needed to reverse the chronic staffing shortages that have been at the heart of our problems there," Interim Probation Chief Guillermo Viera Rosa said in a statement.

On Tuesday, the Board of State and Community Corrections formally declared the Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall in Sylmar and Central Juvenile Hall in Lincoln Heights unsuitable for housing pre-disposition youth, and ordered all detainees to be relocated within 60 days.

The board cited a laundry list of ongoing violations of state standards at the facilities, including sanitary conditions of the housing units, detainees' access to school and other programs and staffing shortfalls.

Following the vote Tuesday, the board was set to formally notify the county of the decision Wednesday, beginning the 60-day clock ticking for all youth to move out of the halls.

Representatives for the county unsuccessfully asked the board Tuesday for a 150-day delay, saying plans were already under way to relocate pre-disposition youth detainees to the previously closed Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall in Downey, but doing so in 60 days could create "chaos" and safety concerns. In its statement released Wednesday, the county Probation Department insisted the move will be completed within 60 days.

Roughly 275 pre-disposition youth -- those who have not yet

had their criminal cases resolved in court -- are currently housed in the Nidorf and Central halls, a county representative told the board Tuesday. The BSCC order does not impact post-disposition youth housed in a Secure Youth Treatment Facility within Nidorf hall.

Viera Rosa last week ordered all of the Probation Department's executive staff to serve one monthly shift at juvenile halls as well. Department officials said Viera Rosa served a shift at Nidorf from 10 p.m. Saturday to 10 a.m. Sunday.

"I believe having everyone serve one shift a month in the juvenile halls is an excellent way for all of us to show support for, provide aid to and ensure the safety of our besieged and exhausted fellow officers as we turn the page to Los Padrinos," Viera Rosa said.

County construction crews are working to renovate Los Padrinos hall to resume housing pre-disposition youth. The Probation Department noted that crews are working from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. daily to meet the 60-day timeline imposed for the move.

In a statement after the board's Tuesday vote, Hans Liang, president of the L.A. County Deputy Probation Officers Union, laid blame on the county and the Board of Supervisors for failing to provide adequate staffing at the halls.

"Officers assigned to the juvenile division are faced with daily youth-on-youth and youth-on-staff assaults and 40% of staff in the juvenile division are now out on injury leave," Liang said. "To make up for the staffing shortfalls, staff are being compelled to work 18- to 24-hour shifts and have reached a breaking point, simply doing the best they can with limited resources and exhaustion."

The BSCC also found the two juvenile halls unsuitable to house youths in 2021, but the facilities managed to remain open. Renewed inspection failures led the board to again initiate the process of declaring the halls unsuitable.

The county Board of Supervisors has been struggling to overhaul the troubled juvenile justice system even as it assumes responsibility for youth being



L.A. County's probation officers have been asked to work one shift per month at a juvenile detention facility.

transferred to counties from the state's closing Juvenile Justice facilities.

The board recently voted to advance a "Global Plan" for the placement and care of juvenile detainees, with a goal of reducing the number of juveniles in custody and development of Secure Youth Treatment Facilities to provide a more supportive environment for detained youth.

On May 2, the board approved a series of more immediate steps, including the relocation of all pre-disposition youth to Los Padrinos. Central Juvenile Hall will be used solely as an intake unit and medical and diagnostic/assessment hub, and only Secure Youth Treatment Facility youth will be housed at Nidorf.

The plan also included the readjustment of millions of dollars for capital improvements at the juvenile halls, with overall costs anticipated to reach nearly \$50 million.

That plan also called on the sheriff's department to deploy volunteer reserve deputies to help fill holes in staffing at the juvenile halls.

The county's juvenile detention system and the Probation Department that oversees it have been routinely under fire from state regulators over conditions at the facilities, which have been plagued by oversight and staffing issues for years.

In March of last year, about 140 juvenile detainees were

hastily transferred from Central Juvenile Hall to Barry J. Nidorf hall -- a move that the county inspector general later concluded was orchestrated to avert a state inspection that appeared likely to fail.

Late last year, nearly 300 former detainees filed a lawsuit alleging they were sexually assaulted, harassed and abused by county probation and detention officers while being held at juvenile facilities dating back to the 1970s. County CEO Fesia Davenport noted while releasing her recent budget proposal for the coming year that the county could potentially face liabilities reaching \$3 billion from such abuse claims.

In March, the Board of Supervisors fired Probation Department Chief Adolfo Gonzales, with board Chair Janice Hahn noting that the juvenile halls "are in crisis."

On May 9, a teenage detainee at Nidorf hall died of a drug overdose.

On that same day, a Los Angeles Superior Court judge ruled that the county juvenile halls still fail to meet the terms of a 2021 court judgment requiring improvements in conditions including staffing and ensuring youth are taken to schools and medical appointments in a timely manner. Another hearing in that case is scheduled for June 20.

Weekend at a Glance

Friday	70°	
Saturday	69°	
Sunday	68°	

ON THIS DAY

1787: The Constitutional Convention opened in Philadelphia, where 55 state delegates, initially charged with amending the Articles of Confederation, later drafted the Constitution of the United States.

1895: The trial of acclaimed Irish writer Oscar Wilde ended with him being found guilty of "committing acts of gross indecency with certain male persons"; he was sentenced to two years of hard labor.

1935: Track-and-field standout Jesse Owens set three world records and equaled one other at a meet in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

1935: Babe Ruth hit the 714th and last home run of his career; he retired later that year.

1961: In a speech before Congress, President John F. Kennedy committed the United States to land a man on the Moon by the end of the decade; the goal was achieved with Apollo 11 in 1969.

1969: "Midnight Cowboy" was released in theatres, and the drama, which starred Jon Voight and Dustin Hoffman, went on to become the only X-rated film to win the Academy Award for best picture.

1977: The Chinese government removed a decade-old ban on William Shakespeare's work.

1977: George Lucas's space opera film "Star Wars" (later known as Star Wars: Episode IV—New Hope) was released, launching one of the most successful and influential franchises in motion picture history.



2011: The last episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show" aired; the long-running TV program had helped make Winfrey one of the richest and most influential women in the United States.

2020: George Floyd, an unarmed African American man, was killed during an arrest in Minneapolis, Minnesota, setting off massive protests around the country and generating greater support for the Black Lives Matter movement; police officer Derek Chauvin was later convicted of his murder.

Birthdays

"Austin Powers" actor **Mike Myers** (60), actress **Octavia Spencer** (53), wrestler **Roman Reigns** (38), and Olympic gymnast **Aly Raisman** (29).

LEADERS OF TOMORROW



Jazmine Thies is an emerging face in Downey's volunteer sector. Read about her desire to give back to her hometown in our new series, "Leaders of Tomorrow," on page 7.

(Photo by Alex Dominguez)

At Downey High, student athletes celebrate next step: college

■ Football, cheer, gymnastics, water polo, softball and girls and boys soccer were the sports represented as coaches talked about the athletes.

By John M. Sherrard
Contributor

DOWNEY — This is a big time of year for senior student-athletes headed to the next step in their various sports in college or universities.

Many high schools held ceremonies honoring those athletes in the final weeks of school.

Downey High, which has the second largest attendance in the CIF-Southern Section, held a ceremony last week honoring 15 students in seven sports, which is three percent of the nearly 1,000 seniors.

Downey Athletic Director Mark Rand spoke and introduced the coaches who introduced their athletes.

“We are proud of these student-athletes for achieving on the athletic field, as well as in the classroom,” Rand said. “Their success and determination to reach their goals embodies what we teach and encourage with all students at Downey High School. “Once a Viking, Always a Viking.”

The following athletes and their sports: Girls Soccer – Paris Berrospe (Mount Mary University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin); Boys Soccer – Fabrizio Jaramillo (Daemen University, Amherst, New York); Itzcoatl Sandoval (Wisconsin Lutheran, Milwaukee, WI); Eddie Gallardo (Cal Poly Pomona University); Christopher Ferruffino (Hope International University, Fullerton); Football – Aiden Chiles (Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR); Bryant Jose Carey (Weber State University, Ogden, Utah); Cheer – Andrea Gonzales (Westcliff University, Irvine);

Scott Hensen (Navarro College, Corsicana, Texas); Competitive Cheer – Jaedyn Parker (Jessup University, Rocklin, CA); Cheer – Stunt – Jossie Barnette (Hope International University, Fullerton); Gymnastics – Emily Hernandez (University of Bridgeport, Connecticut); Girls Water Polo – Alexa Gimenez (UCLA); Softball – Alessandra Colenzo (University of La Verne); Reyna Perez (Cal Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks).

Here are a few bios and coaches’ comments on the athletes.

Downey Girls Soccer

“The Downey Girls Soccer team had another successful season in both the classroom and the field,” Downey Soccer coach Javier Aguiniga Campos said. “The varsity team ended with a record of 9-9-2 and qualified for the CIF-Southern Section Division 2 playoffs as a No. 2 Seed of the Suburban League, trailing La Mirada and ahead of Warren, Mayfair and Paramount. Along with the field success, the Downey Girls Soccer program will be receiving their sixth consecutive National United Soccer Coaches Team Academic Award, an award given to teams whose average GPA falls above a 3.25 nationally.”

Paris Berrospe

“One of the leaders this year for the program was Paris Berrospe,” Aguiniga Campos said. “Paris was a forward and four-year letterman. She led the team with her offensive attack, power and strength in the attacking third of the team. She will go on to compete at the NCAA Division 3 level at Mount Mary University in Wisconsin.”

Paris Berrospe - “As being a first-generation student who will attend a University, I’m beyond blessed and lucky to be able to have had this opportunity come my way. Continuing my athletic and academic career at Mount Mary is

super exciting and I can’t wait to start this new journey.”

Downey Boys Soccer

“Downey Boys Soccer finished this season with a season record of 12-9-3 and qualified for the CIF-SS D 2 playoffs as a No. 3 Seed of the Suburban League, behind Warren and Lynwood,” Aguiniga Campos said. “The Boys Soccer team also showed success in the classroom and will be receiving their first National United Soccer Coaches Team Academic Award. The Downey Boys Soccer Team has four boys signed and committed to play college soccer at various levels next year.”

Christopher Ferruffino

“Christopher is a first-time varsity letterman but improved dramatically in a year span from being a JV player to being an unchallenged starter and captain of the varsity team,” Aguiniga Campos said. “His size and speed allowed him to help defend and lead the team to nine shutouts in 24 games. Chris will go on to play at Hope International University at the NAIA collegiate level.”

Itzcoatl Sandoval

“Another standout on the defense was Itzcoatl Sandoval,” Aguiniga Campos said. “He was part of the strong defense with Ferruffino. Sandoval was a two-year varsity letterman, and his speed, agility and strength in the defense caught the eye of several colleges. But it was Wisconsin Lutheran College who would grab Itzcoatl for his defensive services in the upcoming college season at the NCAA D 3 Level.”

Itzcoatl Sandoval – “I improved a lot as a player and we grew together as a team while on varsity for those three years. My previous coach (Marrin Mires).....was big on academics and so was my current



After successful high school careers, Downey High student-athletes now head to college. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

coach, (Javier Aguiniga Campos) also academic-minded.

Funny thing about my visit to college, I showed up in shorts in November. It was 39 degrees with the windchill.

Going to college (in Wisconsin) it’s an opportunity to become independent.”

Eddie Gallardo

“Another team captain, Eddie Gallardo, caught the eyes of NCAA D 2 Cal Poly Pomona, and rendered his attributes as a leader and center midfielder for the upcoming college season.” added Aguiniga. “Eddie is also a two-year varsity letterman, and led the team to 12 victories, and his presence was missed in the playoffs as he was missed at the end of the season due to personal reasons.

Fabrizio Jaramillo

“He was one of the leading

goal scorers and will be at Daemen University out in Buffalo, New York for the upcoming season,” Aguiniga said “Fabrizio is a two-year letterman, who scored in some of the most important games in the last two years.”

Fabrizio Jaramillo – “It (college in New York) something different and I get to try something new. I get to play. Coach Javier was a very physically demanding coach.

“As for Downey, I liked being part of the team for the name (Downey).”

“I’m excited and getting prepared to go (to college).”

Downey Girls Water Polo

Alexsa Gimenez

Alexsa by the numbers: 4-year starter; 3-time All-CIF; Led team twice to the quarterfinals, once to the semifinals; Over 300 career goals; Club team – Jr. Olympics, 3rd in the nation in top division;

2-time captain; Swam the 100 butterfly and 200 freestyle for the swim team.

“(Alexsa) has had a strong career,” Girls Water Polo coach Uriel Villa said. “She is a great leader and great student in the classroom. She came in as a freshman and made a big impact on the team.

“She took on the role of offense and developed in high school. We needed her to be more of an offensive player.

“In her junior year, she became the leader of the team and was always at practice and was the first one in the water. She led by example and led a really young team with three freshmen starters to the quarterfinals.

“In her senior year, she had an offensive explosion with over 100 goals.”

Continued on page 3



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Athletes celebrate high school careers

Continued from page 2

Alexsa Gimenez – “I’m excited and it’s going to be a lot of hard work. I kind of have a family around me.

I felt happy to be there (ceremony). It was a special moment for all of us. It was like a reality check that the next step was coming up.

Being a leader, it kind of just happened. I had an environment that some of the players weren’t like in club. It gave me an environment for me to grow. My team always believed in me and my experience at Downey was with four different classes of girls. I definitely had great teams around me to build on.

Throughout our season, we always had to adjust to our competition. It gave us more drive.

I want to say thank you to my coaches at Downey. A big step for me was coming to Downey and why I was able to grow. We (Uriel and I) were both able to grow from each other. We were both better throughout the years.”

Downey Cheer

“I am so proud of the accomplishments of our senior cheerleaders and cannot wait to see what they continue to achieve at the college level,” Cheer Director Ashley Rauls said. “These athletes have worked so hard over the course of their high school cheerleading career and it is the ultimate joy to see it pay off for them. The growth that Andrea, Jaedyn, Jossie, and Scott have shown over the years is inspirational.”

Andrea Gonzales:

Andrea is a four-year Varsity cheerleader. She has won four D1 CIF titles and three USA Nationals titles. She has signed with Westcliff University and will be on the competitive cheer team – Coach Rauls.

Jaedyn Parker:

Jaedyn is a four-year cheerleader. She has won three D1 CIF titles and two USA Nationals



Scott Henson won three Division 1 CIF titles and a pair of USA Nationals titles while with Downey High’s cheer team. He is heading to Navarro College this fall. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

titles. She has signed with Jessup University and will be on the competitive cheer team – Coach Rauls.

Jossie Barnette:

Jossie is a four-year cheerleader. She has won three D1 CIF titles and two USA Nationals titles. Jossie excels in stunting and pauses her skills. She has signed with Hope International University and will be on the STUNT team – Coach Rauls.

Scott Henson:

He has won three D1 CIF titles and two USA Nationals titles. Scott was named a member of the 2023 D1 All-CIF SS Traditional

Competitive Cheer Team. He has signed with Navarro College and will be on the competitive cheer team – Coach Rauls.

Downey Football

“Both BJ Carey and Aiden Chiles are two young men that exemplifies what a Downey Viking is,” Football coach Jack Williams said. “We at Downey High School, the football program, and Alumni, are very proud of these two young men. They both have bright futures.”

BJ Carey:

“BJ Carey is a three-year starter for us,” Williams said. “A Jack of All Trades-type of guy that played almost every position on the field. One of our four captains. BJ signed with Weber State and currently the coaches are fighting over what position he is going to play there. Weber definitely got a gem with BJ. Not only a really good football player, but a great young man.”

Aiden Chiles:

“Aiden Chiles is a two-year starter,” Williams said. “Aidan had a coming-out year his senior year, where he went from 3-to-4-star recruit overnight. He was D 4 MVP and League Co-MVP. Aidan entered college in January and participated in spring ball with Oregon State where he has continued to open eyes of everyone watching him play. Not only with his skill but his love of the game.”

Downey softball

“This year the record doesn’t show it, but the vibe was good,” softball coach Ed Garcia said. “To have a season that was that bad, it was actually pretty fun.”

Alessandra Colenzo and Reyna Perez:

“Allie (Colenzo) was like a second coach,” Garcia said. “She was a silent leader. You couldn’t tell when she had a bad game. Whenever (Reyna) had a bad game, she was always picking up her teammates. The girls rallied behind her.

“As seniors, their leadership was good to see.”

Alessandra Colenzo – “I have grown up playing softball, so playing at the collegiate level has always been the ultimate goal. My love for the game has pushed me to work hard day in and day out to be able to play at the most competitive level.

I am so grateful to have this opportunity to see my hard work pay off in college. To be among the handful of a very talented class and to have a college commitment is quite the honor to say the least. We have so many competitive teams with very skilled and hardworking athletes at DHS. I am very proud to say that I am a part of this class, and I am proud of my peers as I know the dedication that is required and that they have put in to be able to continue their careers.

The coaching staff and facilities were what attracted me to the school. Once I had gotten more familiar with the area, I fell in love with it and knew that it would be ULV.”

Reyna Perez – “I worked really hard for it (College) and I’m proud of myself. It’s a relief that I knew that I did it in the end. I really liked the team and super close and a good group to work with. It made it fun.

I had so much fun this year – our energy was great, and I made a lot of friends.

On my visit to Cal Lutheran, I really liked the campus. It’s a small school. I stayed overnight in the dorms. I’ll really enjoy playing against my teammates in college. (Colenzo at La Verne).”

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Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer

Allow me to start with my conclusion: Eat more fiber. You've heard this before. Why?

Dietary fiber, also known as roughage or bulk, is found (mainly) in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, seeds, nuts and legumes. It is famous for preventing constipation, but foods containing fiber can also provide so many other health benefits, like helping to maintain a healthy weight, and lowering the risk of diabetes, heart disease and even some cancers.



Other food components (like fats, proteins, and carbohydrates) are broken down, absorbed and digested. Fiber, however, is not digested. It passes, relatively intact, through the stomach, small intestines and colon, and out of the body.

It is either soluble, which dissolves in water, or insoluble, which doesn't. Soluble fiber can help lower blood cholesterol and glucose levels. It is found in oats, peas, beans, apples, citrus fruits, carrots, barley and psyllium. Insoluble fiber promotes the movement of material through the digestive system and increases stool bulk, so it helps with constipation. Whole wheat flour, wheat bran, nuts, beans and vegetables such as cauliflower, green beans and potatoes are good sources of insoluble fiber.

What else does eating a wide variety of high-fiber foods help to do for us?

-Normalize bowel movements. Dietary fiber increases the weight and size of the stool and softens it, making it easier to pass. If the stool is watery or soft, eating fiber helps to solidify it.

-Maintain bowel health. A high fiber diet may help to lower the risk of developing hemorrhoids,

diverticular disease, and colorectal cancer. In addition, the "good" bacteria that make up our gut's microbiome feed on the fiber that has fermented in the GI tract. Fatty acids are produced that can lower systemic inflammation, which is linked to nearly every major chronic health problem.

-Lower cholesterol levels. Soluble fiber lowers blood cholesterol levels by reducing cholesterol absorption and lowering low-density lipoproteins (LDL).

-Control blood sugar levels. Soluble fiber can slow sugar absorption, which improves blood sugar levels. A diet high in fiber is associated with a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes, and a diet which mixes soluble and insoluble fiber shows the most benefit.

-Achieve and maintain a healthy weight. High fiber foods tend to be more filling than low fiber foods, so we eat less and stay satisfied longer. High fiber foods take longer to eat and are less calorie dense.

-Reduce heart disease. Studies show a high correlation between high fiber intake (especially soluble fiber) and a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

-Reduce cancer risks. A number of studies point to a high fiber diet lowering the risk of colorectal and breast cancer. The studies looked at the soluble fiber found in fruit, but note that soluble fiber is also plentiful in other foods mentioned here.

-Increase longevity. People who eat more fiber, including soluble and insoluble, had a lower chance of dying from anything, including cardiovascular disease and cancer. This means even if you suffer from one of these diseases, consuming fiber may help protect you from dying from it.

-Detox the bowels. Without using special bowel cleansers, fiber naturally helps to eliminate toxins from the GI tract. Soluble fiber soaks up potentially harmful compounds, including excess estrogen and unhealthy fats. Fiber moves food through the bowels and gives the gut less time to absorb chemicals like BPA, mercury and pesticides.

-Maintain strong bones. Some types of soluble fiber act as prebiotics, which promote beneficial gut bacteria, which in turn increases the absorption and effect of minerals like calcium. Prebiotics are found in fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains.

-Prevent dementia. This is recent and very exciting news, coming out of studies from Japan. Soluble fiber consumption appears to be associated with a lower risk of developing dementia. This appears to apply to almost all types of dementia. Further studies are in progress.

I recommend that you take time to increase fiber consumption gradually, over a period of weeks. This allows the body's natural bacteria to adjust, and will help to avoid intestinal gas, abdominal bloating and cramping. Drink more water when eating more fiber. What are some easy ways to include more fiber in your diet?

- Start the day with a high fiber breakfast cereal.
- Look for "whole grain" on labels, and choose products that list whole wheat or whole grain as the first ingredient. Use whole grain flour when baking.
- Add a few tablespoons of unprocessed wheat bran to your favorite recipes.
- Eat more legumes, like beans, peas, and lentils.
- Select snacks like fresh fruit, raw vegetables, low fat popcorn, whole grain crackers, nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.

Those who suffer from irritable bowel syndrome, chronic constipation, diverticulosis, and diarrhea can benefit from supplements like Metamucil, Citrucel, and FiberCon. For others, however, it is far better to get fiber from natural food sources. Supplements do add fiber to the diet, but lack the variety of fiber and the vitamins, minerals and other benefits that are found in real food and in a balanced diet.

Dr. Alan Frischer is former chief of staff and former chief of medicine at Downey Regional Medical Center. Write to him in care of this newspaper at 10927 Downey Ave., Suite C, Downey, CA 90241.

Crime Report

On 5/1/2023 at 1:35 am, officers responded to the area of 8200 Brookpark Rd. regarding gunshots being fired. Officers responded and discovered no victims were hit by gunfire.

On 5/5/2023 at 6 pm, officers responded to the area of Imperial Hwy and Barlin Ave regarding a robbery. The victim

stated he was involved in a fight and had property taken during the fight. Detectives are investigating.

On 5/6/2023 at 7:50 pm, officers observed two subjects wanted for robbery standing in the area of 11700 Patton Rd. Officers contacted the subjects and placed them under arrest.

On 5/7/2023 at 3:55 am, officers responded to a convenience store in the area of 7300 Florence Ave regarding a robbery. Officers determined the suspect had punched a clerk and stolen merchandise. Officers began searching the area and located the suspect nearby. The suspect was arrested for robbery.

On 5/8/2023 at 5 pm, officers responded to the Downey Promenade regarding a robbery from a store. During the robbery, the suspect threatened the victim with a knife and fled on foot. Officers located the suspect and he was arrested for armed robbery.

On 5/9/2023 at 2:35 am, officers responded to the area of 9500 Firestone Blvd regarding a robbery. Officers determined the suspect had demanded the victim's bicycle, hit him with a brick, and fled with the victim's bicycle. The victim sustained minor injuries. The suspect was located in the area and arrested for robbery. The victim's property was returned.

On 5/11/2023 at 4 am, officers responded to the area of 12500 Rose Ave regarding an assault with a knife. The suspect, who is known by the victim, stabbed the victim causing minor injuries and fled the scene. Detectives are investigating.

On 5/12/2023 at 7:50 pm, officers were on patrol in the Downtown Downey area when they encountered an occupied vehicle. During a search of the vehicle, two firearms were located and the occupants of the vehicle were arrested.


On 5/16/2023 at 9 pm, officers were notified of a fraud report. The victim stated he had received a message on his computer in 2021 indicating he needed to call a phone number. Over the next two years the victim sent approximately \$1.2 million to an unknown suspect. Detectives are investigating.

On 5/17/2023 at 2:30 am, officers observed a stolen vehicle being driven in the area of Firestone Blvd and Old River School Rd. Officers stopped the vehicle and arrested the driver. Approximately two hours later, officers observed another stolen vehicle being driven in the same area. A traffic stop was conducted and the driver was arrested.

On 5/18/2023 at 7:15 pm, officers observed a vehicle wanted for evading police in the area of Woodruff Ave and Imperial Hwy. Officers stopped the vehicle and located a firearm inside of the vehicle. The driver was arrested.

On 5/21/2023 at 12:55 am, officers were on patrol in the area of Lakewood Blvd and Bellflower Blvd when they observed a vehicle stopped in the roadway. Upon contacting the driver, they discovered the driver was under the influence of alcohol and was placed under arrest.

In Memory of
Elizabeth Ann Zander



Elizabeth Ann Zander, a Downey resident since 1966 passed on May 17th at the age of 83. She had a short battle with lung cancer and was with family as she passed. Elizabeth "Betty" lived her life for her kids. Her husband left the family when her kids were only 16, 6, 5 and 2 and left her with no money, no car and no job. With four kids to take care of, she got a job cleaning the apartment complex the family lived in. She was able to keep the apartment and keep a roof over her children's heads. She did all she could for her children, she even got a bike to take her daughter to preschool. From there she got a job in the trucking industry and moved her way up to office manager in a large trucking company. She was able to happily retire with quite a few years to enjoy all she worked for. She always managed to make birthdays, Christmas and all holidays special for her kids who never knew there were financial issues. Her oldest son John said, "I have no idea how she was able to do it. She was a true Super Woman" Elizabeth Ann Zander 1939 - 2023. She was survived by three children, John, James and Jackie and a brother Rick who she also raised. She was loved by so many. A ceremony will be planned in a couple weeks. Contact John Zander if interested. johnzander@mac.com

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We need a safety-first approach for kids on social media

By Vivek Murthy

Vivek H. Murthy is the surgeon general of the United States.

“It’s a different kind of love, the love you have for your children,” my father would often say when I was growing up. When I became a parent and found myself hovering over my children’s cribs late at night to make sure they were okay, I understood. Nothing is more important than keeping our kids safe and giving them every chance to grow and thrive. As they reach adolescence, this means paying attention to how social media can affect their health and well-being.

When I travel around the country talking with parents, the No. 1 question they ask me has to do with social media: “Is it safe for my kids?” Nearly 70 percent of parents say their job is harder now than it was for parents 20 years ago, mainly because of technology and social media.

Nearly all teenagers in the United States (95 percent) use social media platforms — two-thirds use them daily and more than one-third “almost constantly.” Parents tell me they watch their children retreat to their bedrooms and spend hours alone with their screens, exposed to an endless feed of flawless bodies and unrealistic ideals that make them feel ashamed and damage their self-esteem. Their kids, still too young to watch R-rated movies, are too often encountering inappropriate sexual and violent content on social media.

I am issuing a surgeon general’s advisory on social media and youth mental health to summarize what is known and not known about the benefits and harms of social media. The bottom line is we do not have enough evidence to conclude that social media is sufficiently safe for our kids. In fact, there is increasing evidence that social media use during adolescence — a critical stage of brain development — is associated with harm to mental health and well-being. In light of the ongoing youth mental health crisis, it is no longer possible to ignore social media’s potential contribution to the pain that millions of children and families are experiencing.

The advisory lays out steps that policymakers, technology companies, researchers, parents and children themselves can take to make social media safer for kids.

To be sure, some children might benefit from social media use. It allows them to connect easily with friends and family, express themselves freely, and find support when they are struggling. This can be especially true for marginalized youth, including those in the LGBTQ+ community. Though the data shows these children are also more likely to experience cyberbullying.

But while some children experience benefits from using social media, increasing evidence suggests that social media use is associated with a risk of harm to youth mental health. They are commonly exposed to extreme, inappropriate and harmful content, and those who spend more than three hours a day on the platforms face double the risk of experiencing poor mental health outcomes, including depression and anxiety. This is especially troubling when you consider that the average teenager spends 3½ hours a day on social media.

Many children are also exposed to relentless bullying online. Nearly 6 in 10 adolescent girls say they’ve been contacted by strangers in ways that make them feel uncomfortable. And nearly half of adolescents say social media makes them feel worse about their bodies.

Studies have also linked youth social media use with reduced sleep, poor sleep quality and depression. In fact, about 1 in 3 adolescents report using screen media, typically social media, until midnight or later on weekdays. Inadequate sleep during adolescence is linked to depression, altered brain development and other problems.

This is particularly concerning because adolescence is such a crucial time for brain development, a time when children are most susceptible to social pressures, peer opinions and peer comparisons — all of which are dramatically magnified on social media.

For too long, parents have borne the entire responsibility of managing social media use. Certainly, there are steps parents and their children can take to set boundaries. But they shouldn’t have to do this alone. Most social media platforms are designed to maximize user time and engagement, so that ultimately teenagers and their parents are pitted against some of the world’s most talented engineers and product developers. This is not a fair fight.

What’s more, because platforms have not given researchers access to the data they need to better evaluate the effects of social media on kids, parents don’t know the full extent of the dangers or how to protect their children.

In contrast, manufacturers of physical products — from medications to car seats, toys to cars — are required to meet safety standards. Consumers are not expected to evaluate the safety of these products on their own. The same should be true of social media.

What’s needed is a safety first approach that requires companies to share the responsibility for protecting children.

Policymakers can establish age-appropriate health and safety standards that protect against exposure to harmful content and limit features designed to manipulate our children into excessive and unhealthy use of social media. They can require technology companies to disclose data on health effects and strengthen and enforce age minimums. Many platforms now require users to be at least 13 years old but do little to enforce it. And, given the totality of the evidence, I have come to believe that 13 is too young for our kids to be on social media.

For their part, technology companies can design health and safety protections into their products, and they should be transparent with the public, including with independent researchers and parents, about what the data tells us about how social media is affecting our kids.

Social media has fundamentally changed the way children communicate, build relationships, and see themselves and the world. Just last week, our daughter asked my wife and me about posting a picture on social media. She is just 5 years old. Given everything we know, my wife and I do not plan to allow our children to use social media in middle school. (We know this is easier said than done.) We’ll reassess in high school based on the maturity and development of our children and whether effective safety standards have been put in place to protect adolescents.

For too long, parents and kids have done their best to manage the potential harms of social media with limited information and support. They shouldn’t have to do it alone. It is time for us to take action to protect the health and well-being of our children.

Students today need to learn computer hacking

By Scott J. Shapiro

Scott J. Shapiro is a professor of law and philosophy at Yale Law School and the director of the Yale Cybersecurity Lab. He is the author of the forthcoming book “Fancy Bear Goes Phishing: The Dark History of the Information Age, in Five Extraordinary Hacks.”

In the movies, you can tell the best hackers by how they type. The faster they punch the keys, the more dangerous they are. Hacking is portrayed as a highly technical feat, a quintessentially technological phenomenon.

This impression of high-tech wizardry pervades not just our popular culture but also our real-world attempts to combat cybercrime. If cybercrime is a sophisticated high-tech feat, we assume, the solution must be too. Cybersecurity companies hype proprietary tools like “next generation” firewalls, anti-malware software and intrusion-detection systems. Policy experts like John Ratcliffe, a former director of national intelligence, urge us to invest public resources in a hugely expensive “cyber Manhattan Project” that will supercharge our digital capabilities.

But this whole concept is misguided. The principles of computer science dictate that there are hard, inherent limits to how much technology can help. Yes, it can make hacking harder, but it cannot possibly, even in theory, stop it. What’s more, the history of hacking shows that the vulnerabilities hackers exploit are as often human as technical — not only the cognitive quirks discovered by behavioral economists but also old-fashioned vices like greed and sloth.

To be sure, you should enable two-factor authentication and install those software updates that you’ve been putting off. But many of the threats we face are rooted in the nature of human and group behavior. The solutions will need to be social too — job creation programs, software liability reform, cryptocurrency regulation and the like.

For the past four years, I have taught a cybersecurity class at Yale Law School in which I show my students how to break into computers. Having grown up with a user-friendly web, my students generally have no real idea how the internet or computers work. They are surprised to find how easily they learn to hack and how

much they enjoy it. (I do, too, and I didn’t hack a computer until I was 52.) By the end of the semester, they are cracking passwords, cloning websites and crashing servers.

Why do I teach idealistic young people how to lead a life of cybercrime? Many of my students will pursue careers in government or with law firms whose clients include major technology companies. I want these budding lawyers to understand their clients’ issues. But my larger aim is to put technical expertise in its place: I want my students to realize that technology alone is not enough to solve the problems we face.

I start my class by explaining the fundamental principle of modern computing: the distinction between code and data. Code is a set of instructions: “add,” “print my résumé,” “shut the door.” Data is information. Data is usually represented by numbers (the temperature is 80 degrees), code by words (“add”). But in 1936, the British mathematician Alan Turing figured out that code could be represented by numbers as well. Indeed, Turing was able to show how to represent both code and data using only ones and zeros — so-called binary strings.

This groundbreaking insight makes modern computers possible. We don’t need to rebuild our computers for every new program. We can feed our devices whatever code we like as binary strings and run that program. That zeros and ones can represent both code and data is, however, a blessing and a curse, because it enables hackers to trick computers that are expecting data into accepting and running malicious code instead.

Consider a simple hack I teach my students. An attacker sends an email that has a file attached. Because the file has a “.txt” extension, we assume it is a plain text file — that is, data — perhaps a grocery list or grades on a final exam. But when we open the file, the operating system will not only send the data to the screen, it will also execute the malicious code that the hacker has secretly embedded, allowing him to seize control of your computer.

You can install security software to lessen this risk. But to eliminate the risk, you would have to prevent computers from treating binary numbers as both code and data — which would mean stopping them from being modern computers.

The good news is that there are promising ways to tackle the human dimensions of the problem — that is, the social, economic and psychological aspects. The bad news is that we have largely failed to pursue them.

Consider legal liability. The law offers few incentives for software developers to write better, more secure code. It rarely imposes substantial penalties for data breaches, which means that tech companies lack a financial motivation to take security seriously. The median American company budgets 10 percent for I.T., and 24 percent of that on security. That’s roughly 2 percent earmarked for protecting activities that companies understand, rightly, to be critical to their operations.

We can change that business calculus. We should, for example,

hold software companies financially responsible for negligently building insecure software, a proposal recently endorsed by President Biden’s National Cybersecurity Strategy. Instead of shelling out money for private companies to fix bad technology, legislators should get them to produce good technology in the first place.

We can also help hackers themselves. Hackers are often thought of as brilliant disaffected young men who live in their parents’ basements and wreak havoc for the sheer fun of it. The truth is more familiar. Cybercriminals are, by and large, out to make a living — often in the absence of legitimate ways to use their skills.

Diversion programs in Britain and the Netherlands run hacking competitions where teams of coders compete to hack a target network; these programs also seek to match up coders with older security personnel to act as mentors and direct their charges into the legitimate cybersecurity industry. At the moment, with an estimated 3.5 million jobs unfilled worldwide, one fewer attacker is one more desperately needed defender.

Toward the end of the semester, my class covers cryptocurrency, the “money” favored by cybercriminals. Opening a cryptocurrency account should be like opening a bank account: Customers should have to provide their Social Security number, government-issued identification and other personal identifying data. While U.S. law requires most cryptocurrency companies to follow such disclosure rules, it exempts certain brokers from collecting this information — and cybercriminals like using those brokers to escape detection.

Figuring out how hacking works is the easy part. Figuring out how humans work, and what to do about it, is the hard part. And even when we get it right, we must remember that neither technology nor regulation is a panacea. In the 21st century, cybercrime is increasingly just crime — and there is no way to end that most human of glitches.

Dodgers strike out by backtracking

Dear Editor:

The Dodgers have been part of my life for years. I haven’t met any of them personally, but like many in Southern California I’m a fan and have felt like part of the family. Maybe you feel this way too.

However, I feel very betrayed as I see that they have re-invited a hate group called The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence to Pride Night at Dodger Stadium. Why? I suppose because it’s trendy to do this.

I am not upset that there will be gay people at Dodger Stadium. I’m not upset that gay people are anywhere. They have as much of a right to be in public as anyone. I am just not happy that a group who publicly attacks and mocks Catholics are being honored. They not only mock and make fun of Catholics but of women who give their lives in service for others.

I’m not saying that all “Sisters” have been perfect, but to generally slander all sisters in this way is grossly inappropriate. Imagine if they were inviting anti-Jewish or anti-Muslims to honor at Dodger Stadium. It’s grossly inappropriate.

I don’t expect I’ll change the Dodgers decision. But we should all be aware that prejudice and hate still exist, and is still popular with some people. It’s time for this kind of disgusting mockery came to an end.

Fr. John Higgins
Downey

Fireworks show

Dear Editor:

I feel that even though having a safe 4th of July show is great, having a church sponsor is not.

Is Calvary Chapel Downey sponsoring it to recruit members? Maybe. Is there going to be a separation of church and state, maybe not.

I do not feel well about a church sponsoring an expensive event. Who is it really for, us or the church?

Eduardo Gonzalez
Downey

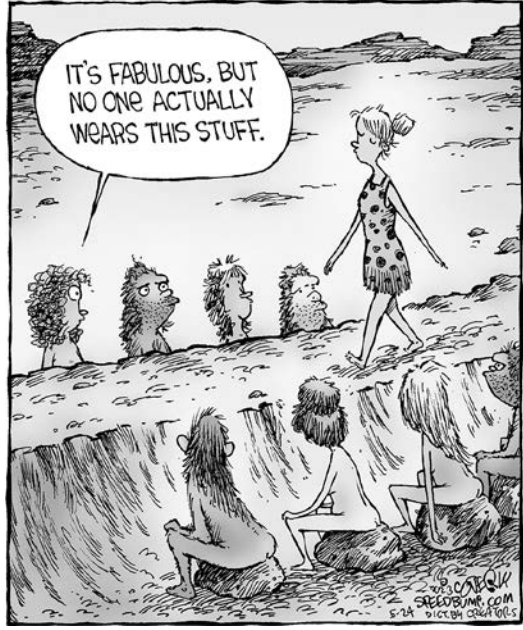
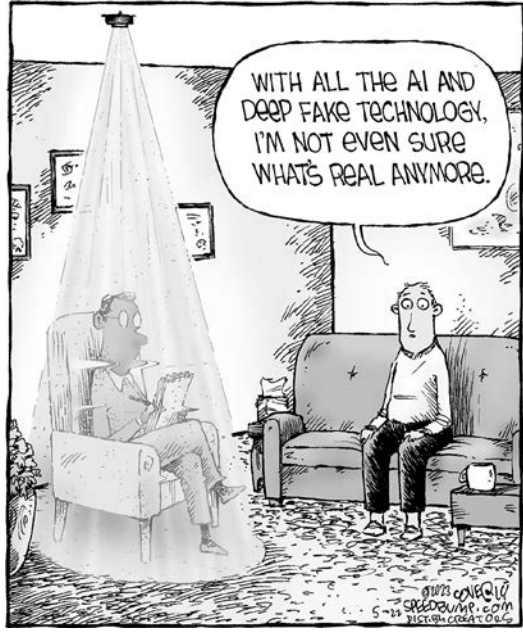
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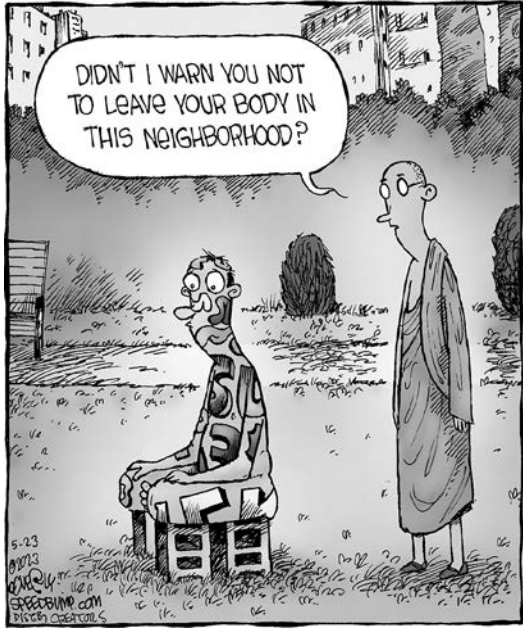
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The Downey Patriot is published weekly by The Downey Patriot, Inc.
Controlled Distribution, 25,000 copies are printed.
Distributed by CIPS Marketing Group, Inc., Los Angeles, CA.

SPEED BUMP



DAVE COVERLY



Downey Community Calendar

CITY MEETINGS

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

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

MONDAYS

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

TUESDAYS

9 am: Quilters group, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, call 803-4459. 9:30 am: Downey Seniors Club, at Apollo Park, call Irene Vallini at 328-7039. 10 am: Downey Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call John Fiorenza at 652-4399. 12 pm: Rotary Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Mel Sanchez 562-665-4125. 6 pm: Toastmasters Club 587, at First Baptist Church, contact Salvador Cervantes: tmsalpuede@gmail.com. 7 pm: Downey Knights of Columbus Bingo, at 11231 Rives Ave., call 923-1932. 7 pm: Boy Scout Troop 351, at Furman Park, contact 562-500-5093 for more information. 7 pm: Boy Scout Troop 441, at Apollo Park, email scoutmaster@downeyboyscouts.com. 7:30 pm: Downey Master Chorale, at Cornerstone Church, contact info@downeymasterchorale.org. 1st Tues., 7:30 am: Gangs Out of Downey, at City Hall training room. 2nd Tues., 6 pm: Downey Fly Fishers, at Apollo Park, call 425-7936. 3rd Tues., 12 pm: Downey Newcomers Club, call Marilyn 928-2623. 3rd Tues., 6:30 pm: Community Emergency Response Team meeting, Fire station 1, 12222 Paramount. 3rd Tues., 6 pm: American Legion #270, at Sizzler Restaurant, call 544-0372. Tues., Thurs. & Sat., 10 am: Downey Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call John Fiorenza 652-4399

WEDNESDAYS

7 am: Kiwanis Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Steve Roberson at 927-2626. 10:30 am: Ballroom dance class, at Downey Community Center, call 776 7270. 1 pm: Women's Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call Marie Puch at 869-4366. 7 pm: Royal Rangers Outpost 132, at Desert Reign Church, call 562-861-6011. 1st Wed., 11 am: Woman's Club of Downey, call Cheryl Olson 833-8954. 1st Wed., 11:30 am: Downey Coordinating Council, Community Center, call Bobbi Bruce 440-5416. 1st Wed., 7:30 pm: Downey Stamp Club, at Maude Price School cafeteria, call 928-3028. 2nd Wed., 11:30 am: Christian Women's Club, call Marilyn 928-2623. 2nd Wed., 3:30 pm: Keep Downey Beautiful, at City Hall, call 904-7102. 2nd Wed., 7 pm: Downey Model A Club, at Gallatin School Cafeteria, call 484-8415. 3rd Wed.: Downey Dog Obedience Club, for information please call Gina 869-5213 or Valerie 420-2972. 3rd Wed., 10 am: Los Angeles County Quilters Guild, at Women's Club, call 860-8821 or 927-3635. 3rd Wed., 6:00 pm: Sister Cities of Downey, at Barabara Riley Senior Center, call Gloria Nezahualcoyotl (562) 776-6136. 4th Wed., 7:30 pm: US Coast Guard Aux. Flotilla 5-10, First Presbyterian Church, call Brian 419-5420. Wed. & Fri., 10:15 am: Senior Bingo, at Apollo Park, call 904-7223

THURSDAYS

7:30 am: Connections Networking, at Bob's Big Boy, for info., call Nick Smith, 861-5222. 7:30 am.: Soroptimist Int'l of Downey, for information, call Mia Vasquez, 806-3217. 9:30 am: Take off Pounds Sensibly, at Barabara Riley Senior Center, call (800) 932-8677. 12 pm: Bingo, at Woman's Club of Downey - Proceeds benefit Rancho. 12 pm: Optimist Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center. 6:30 pm: Downey United Masonic Lodge # 220, 8244 3rd St., call 862-4176. 7:30 pm: Downey Elks Lodge #2020, call 803-3557. 1st Thurs., 6 pm, All other Thurs. 12 pm: Kiwanis Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Roy Jimenez 283-2335. 1st Thurs., 7:30 pm: Downey Amateur Radio Club, EOC room Downey Fire Station #1, 12222 Paramount Blvd. 2nd Thurs., 12 pm: Creative Purposes, call Bill Wallace 923-2311. 2nd Thurs., 7:30 pm: Beaming Rebel Foxes Collectors Club, call Carl D. Jones at 923-2400. 2nd & 4th Thurs., 6:30 pm: Downey Lions Club, at Mimi's, call Lenora (310) 283-9825. 3rd Thurs., 4 pm: Public Works Committee, at City Hall Training Room. 4th Thurs., 10 am: Assistance League, at Casa De Parley Johnson, call 869-0232. 4th Thurs., 7:30 pm: Downey Historical Society programs, at Community Center, call 862-2777.

FRIDAYS

7:30 am: Pro Networkers, at Mimi's Cafe, call Barbara Briley Beard at 869-7618. 3rd Fri., 8:30 am: Women's "In His Glory" Ministry at Los Amigos C. C. 622-3785.

SATURDAYS

9 am: Farmers Market, Downey Avenue at 3rd Street, call 904-7246.

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

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LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Jazmine Thies goes where she is needed

■ After returning to live in her hometown, Jazmine Thies is taking on greater responsibilities with the Assistance League of Downey.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY — As the saying goes, “It’s nice to feel needed.” For Jazmine Thies, attending to areas of need is her forte.

Thies, 32, grew up in the city and is a self-proclaimed “Downey girl.” She attended Downey schools, graduating from Downey High in 2008.

She had a brief stint away from the city after leaving for college at UC Santa Barbara, where she met her future husband, Paul. The couple would marry in 2018 (on their 10-year anniversary), and live in Venice Beach while Paul attended law school at Pepperdine. They would welcome their daughter, Jade, in 2019.

Shortly thereafter, Thies’s grandmother passed away, and her mother inherited her house in Downey. Her mother gifted the home to Thies and her family, and they began renovations before moving in — and back into Downey — in 2020 shortly before the pandemic lockdown.

Opting to be a housewife and stay-at-home mom, Thies found herself in an unfamiliar, difficult position.

“I just really like to feel like I’m filling a need; I like to work,” said Thies. “Moving to Downey and not working other than being a mother, it just felt isolating, especially during the lockdown.”

Thies said she wanted to join a service organization “just to feel like I was helping, involved, and with grown-ups.”

She spoke to Eric Pierce — the Downey Patriot editor who was running for city council at the time — about some of the “laundry list” of organizations in Downey.

“I looked into several of them, but I learned the Assistance League had the [Second Tyme Around] thrift shop on Downey Avenue,” said Thies. “As much as I love talking to people, I didn’t really want to have to do fundraisers where I asked my friends to buy things from me. I really liked that there was a constant source of income with the thrift shop.”

“When I came to my first meeting here, the [Casa De Parley Johnson] house was beautiful, the ladies were just so poised, and friendly, and nice, and well dressed, and I was like ‘Wow, these women are amazing.’”

In under a year, Thies was elected second vice president of Assistance League. She also created and began managing an Instagram page for Second Tyme Around.

“There just wasn’t much visibility,” said Thies. “Thrifting is popular and great, and it just seemed like we should have a presence, even if not for the actual Assistance League — because the actual Assistance League organization doesn’t have an Instagram page — but, I thought if I start one for the thrift shop, it’ll just get the visibility out; more money spent at the thrift shop means more money to do our philanthropic programs, and it’s just a way for people to know we exist.”

With her term recently up, she recently accepted a new role as Assisteens Coordinator.

“It was a position that was held for the last four or five years by a group of four women who have done an



amazing job, but each of them have massive commitments apart from Assistance League, and they just couldn’t continue to do it,” said Thies. “Like I mentioned, what I really like is just to fill needs.”

“Honestly, Second Vice President was an amazing role that taught me so much about the organization, but in that position I’m really just overseeing the individual chairmen that run the different programs...I wasn’t really running them, and so I felt there was a greater need to run the Assisteens, so it was an easy choice to switch over. I really enjoyed volunteering when I was in high school, so I feel like I can relate to these kids who do have a desire to volunteer at this young age.”

According to Thies, there is an unwritten understanding in the Assistance League to take on a new role for at least a few years. She predicts she’ll continue as Assisteens Coordinator until at least her

daughter starts elementary school.

“With this group, I see myself doing it for at least four years because I think it will be really special to see the kids that came in as freshmen graduate.”

Then, who knows? One thing is for sure: she’ll go — of course — where she is needed.

“I don’t see myself leaving the Assistance League of Downey, even if I step down and don’t hold a board position, or am not Assisteens Coordinator. This group won me over immediately, so even if I’m just a voting member, I’m not going to leave.”

“I didn’t see myself as doing this role as Assisteens Coordinator, it’s just there was a need. I didn’t see myself as becoming the Vice President, it’s just there was a need. I really just like to feel needed, so we’ll see where there’s a need in four years or more.”



Photos by Alex Dominguez

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Memorial Day 2023: Remember Our Heroes

■ Observed on the last Monday of May, Memorial Day honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.

By **Mario A. Guerra**
Contributor

Memorial Day is a day of national recognition to honor the military men and women who gave their lives in defense of our nation and its values.

First observed after the Civil War, Memorial Day was initially called "Decoration Day" because families gathered to remember their loved ones by decorating gravesites with flowers or flags.

It is a tradition that continues across America today. Every Memorial Day, the soldiers from the Third U.S. Infantry Regiment - the Old Guard - place small American flags at every grave marker in Arlington National Cemetery and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

In proclaiming that first Decoration Day in 1868, General John Logan, National 2 Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, wrote that we should not only remember those "who died in defense of their country," but also, "renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us...the widows and orphans."

Today, we continue to honor those left behind who paid a personal price for us and our nation, our Gold Star families. We express our appreciation to them on this day especially. We are humbled by their sacrifice, inspired by their resilience and grateful for their continued service to your communities.

This year, I'd like to remember some people who are very special to the Army - without them, the Army would not be what it is today. In the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress directed a Naming Commission to recommend new names for Department of Defense properties that commemorated the confederacy or anyone who voluntarily served in the Confederate States of America in the Civil War.

Nine Army installations were identified. Over the next year, they will be renamed for individuals that reflect not only our Army values, but the future of the Army.

I just came back from spending a week at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. General Leonard Wood was a special leader that put his soldiers and our country first. As Army Chief of Staff he developed training theories and techniques that effectively transformed American civilians into soldiers and helped build our forces ahead of World War I. It is an Army Center of Excellence that helps keep our country safe.

I'd like to share a little



Hal Moore was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for valor during the fight at Landing Zone Xray November, 1965.

about some of our newly named installations in the United States Army. They are all deserving but also inspirational.

Fort Moore, in Georgia, commemorates an Army husband and wife team. Lieutenant General Hal Moore commanded U.S. forces in the first large-scale battle of the Vietnam War. His book, "We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young," was made into the 2002 movie, "We Were Soldiers."

His wife, Julia Moore, was instrumental in fighting for support for military families and improving their quality of life. A lot of the services we take for granted in the Army were initiated by her. Childcare, compassionate communication of bad news and caring for the widows of fallen soldiers began with a woman who knew the Army could do better and ensured that we did.

Fort Eisenhower, in Georgia, commemorates Dwight D. Eisenhower, who began his 50 years of service as a second lieutenant and rose to Commander in Chief. He led combined ground, air and sea forces on D-Day in the greatest amphibious landing in history. Elected president in 1952 and 1956, he faithfully served and led our country.

Fort Walker, in Virginia, commemorates Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, who served as a surgeon during the Civil War, initially as a volunteer, since women were not then allowed to join the Army. Although a civilian, she was awarded the Medal of Honor. She was proud of her service and thought others should be, too, once saying, "Let the generations know that women in uniform also guaranteed their freedom."

Fort Cavazos, in Texas, commemorates General Richard E. Cavazos, who served in the Korean War and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for leading three charges on an entrenched enemy position and returning to the field five times to evacuate his men.

He was awarded a second Distinguished Service Cross for rallying his men through

an ambush organizing a counterattack and leading several maneuvers to destroy extensive enemy defenses in Vietnam. His personal courage, commitment to his Soldiers and dedication to his mission are an example to all of us.

Fort Gregg-Adams, in Virginia, commemorates Lieutenant General Arthur J. Gregg and Lieutenant Colonel Charity Adams. Gregg enlisted in 1945, an African American who helped change the culture and desegregate the Army from the ground up. He ran a supply depot in Japan, commanded a supply and support battalion in Vietnam and served in Germany throughout the Cold War.

He was logistics director for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics for the Army. Adams joined the Women's Army Corps during World War II and became the first African American woman to be an officer in the auxiliary. Later, she became the first Black commander of a Black female battalion to go to Europe. Under her command, the famous Six Triple Eight Central Postal Directory Battalion worked three shifts around the clock seven days a week to clear a mail backlog, processing approximately sixty-five-thousand pieces of mail a shift. The Army thought it would take six months to clear the backlog; the Six Triple Eight did it in three.

Fort Barfoot, in Virginia, commemorates Colonel Van T. Barfoot, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in Italy in May 1944. Under fire, he moved out alone and was able to turn the tide of the enemy attack, ultimately taking seventeen prisoners. Later in the afternoon, the Germans counterattacked. At considerable risk to himself, Barfoot disabled the lead tank, destroyed field artillery and helped evacuate two grievously injured American Soldiers.

Fort Johnson, in Louisiana, commemorates Sergeant William Henry Johnson, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during World War One. In the middle of the night, Johnson and one other Black American were on sentry duty when they were attacked. With his partner incapacitated, Johnson sounded the alarm and single-handedly attacked approximately two dozen German soldiers, throwing grenades until his supply was exhausted and firing his rifle until he spent his ammunition. He used his rifle as a club and fought hand-to-hand combat, ultimately saving his comrade, sounding the alarm and securing his unit's safety and position. He was the first hero of the Great War and received the French Croix de Guerre.

Fort Novosel in Alabama

commemorates Chief Warrant Officer Michael J. Novosel Sr., who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions in Vietnam, where he flew a medivac helicopter. In his two tours in Vietnam, he flew 2543 extraction missions, rescuing more than 5500 seriously wounded Soldiers. In October 1969, he evacuated a group of wounded and surrounded South Vietnamese soldiers, starting at five in the morning and ending finally eighteen hours later. It took six trips, all through enemy fire, with no place to land. His skillful flying saved 29 men.

The Army is proud to honor the courage, sacrifice and diversity of these distinguished Soldiers and civilians. There are many more examples of men and women across the ages who exhibited the core Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

These values continue to serve as a guide for the Force and provide a sense of common unity.

In closing and calling to action this Memorial Day, I hope that we can remember the common bond we have with the soldiers who have gone before us, who selflessly served our country and paid the ultimate price. We honor them by participating in the National Moment of Remembrance, a call to pause at 3 pm local time on Monday, Memorial Day, to reflect on and remember those Americans who died in service to our nation. We can fly our flags at half-staff from sunrise until noon, then raise them briskly to the top of the staff until sunset, in honor of the nation's battle heroes.

Do you know a Gold Star or surviving family? Take this day to let them know that you remember their soldier and are grateful for their selfless service.

Memorial Day is a time to honor our commitment to never forget those who served and sacrificed for America. It is a day we should participate in a meaningful act of remembrance and ensure that these Soldiers and their selfless service will continue to resonate with Americans for years to come.

Mario A. Guerra is a two-time former Downey mayor and currently serves as the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army. He can be reached at www.marioaguerra.com

POET'S CORNER

A narrow Fellow in the Grass
Occasionally rides -
You may have met him? Did you not
His notice instant is -

The Grass divides as with a Comb,
A spotted Shaft is seen,
And then it closes at your Feet
And opens further on -

He likes a Boggy Acre -
A Floor too cool for Corn -
But when a Boy and Barefoot
I more than once at Noon

Have passed I thought a Whip Lash
Unbraiding in the Sun
When stooping to secure it
It wrinkled And was gone -

Several of Nature's People
I know, and they know me
I feel for them a transport
Of Cordiality

But never met this Fellow
Attended or alone
Without a tighter Breathing
And Zero at the Bone.

Emily Dickinson

Our friends in Joshua Tree tell us the desert rattlesnakes are coming out now, to bask in the spring sun. Dickinson's snake is an exciting experience: just why, remains open to interpretation. She sees it as a comb, a shaft, a whip, and it leaves her breathless, and in the final stanza, helpless. Poetry Matters is curated by Lorine Parks.

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Dear Downey Patriot Valued Reader,

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

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

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

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

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

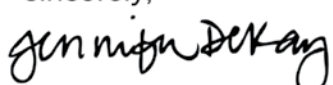
Additionally, the Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism aims to address the challenge of access to local news in underserved areas. We will explore innovative approaches, such as expanding our digital presence, partnering with community organizations, and launching initiatives to bridge the information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

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

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

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

Sincerely,



Jennifer DeKay
Chief Executive Officer
Downey Foundation for Independent Journalism

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