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## Greek Festival brings back the sun

■ Greek food, music and culture were celebrated at the Downey Greek Festival, and the weather cooperated.

By Lorine Parks  
Society Editor

**DOWNEY** — Sunshine and white tent peaks announced the Greek Food Festival at St. George's Greek Orthodox Church was back. Apollo saw to it that on Saturday the sun was shining after weeks of gloomy weather.

You enter through a little agora, a lane of vendor's booths that carry everything from t-shirts and Holy Honey (delicious), to olive wood carvings, charms to ward off the evil eye, and fine gold earrings.

Racks of lamb turning in spits, twenty of them at a time, and the smell of fat sizzling, greeted you as you enter the *platia*, or town square. There is one man who cleaves the lamb into serving portions. These whole lambs are not carved, they're split with an ax, and this is as close as we will ever get to the feasting that Homer wrote about.

The lambs roast while workers bring more white hot coals, and shovel new charcoal on the starter brazier. The spits are turned electrically, but the fire is good old Hephaestus at work.

This is a Food Festival, and so much more. Blue and white Greek flags and star-spangled American ones waved in the breeze, and, at the heart of it all was the music and the dance, under a big open white pavilion roof. Live musicians played the oud and the bouzouki, lute-type stringed instruments, and pan pipes carried the melody, while drums kept up the beat. Impromptu dancers were engaged in Greek circle dancing, kids and oldsters, families, young girls, joining in whenever they felt like it.

Signs said, "Stop Worrying and Be Happy," with a picture of Greek worry beads; another showed a donkey with the words, "Greek 4 Wheel Drive," "Be Greek For a Day," and "Dine With the Gods."

There's a children's play area, and in the adjoining building there were authentic Greek costumes, cooking demonstrations, wine tastings, and exhibits of historic sites, all celebrating the Greek Orthodox Community's Hellenic culture and traditions.

In the open area, half the space seemed taken up by the food stalls, the lamb pit, a beer garden, and refreshment booths with Loux, a fizzy cold fruit drink.

I learned that Panagiotis Marlafekas founded Loux as a family business in the 1950's in Patras, Greece. The naturally carbonated water comes from Kefalovrissos, an area of lush greenery. Loux comes in a variety of flavors, including sour cherry and lemon. The soft drink has a tangy taste, and a distinctively sweet flavor.

Continued on page 9

## Downey teen travels internationally to play softball

■ Giana Castillo-Flores, 13, qualified to play for Mexico's national softball team.

By Alex Dominguez  
Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** — Watch her play, and you may notice that Giana Castillo-Flores has one of the more eye-catching gloves out on the softball field, adorned in green and red with the Mexico flag embellished across the top. But more than just a tool for play, her glove serves as a symbol; a representation of the journey to play for the Mexican 13U national team.

Castillo-Flores, 13, has been playing softball since she was 6 years-old. Always athletically inclined, she began learning what became her main sport playing Ponytail at Independence Park.

"I started off playing multiple sports. I did horseback riding, soccer, all those things," said Castillo-Flores. "My mom asked me if I wanted to do softball, and that's what just stuck for me."

While Castillo-Flores has remained occupied playing travel ball and for Doty Middle School, her talents recently earned her a spot on the U-15 Mexican team, playing in the Pan American games.

Castillo-Flores — along with her teammates — were expected to train on their own before traveling to Mexico for just a few short days of team practice. Then, it was off to Peru for the tournament.

Mexico performed well-enough to make it to the championship round, however ran into a buzz-saw in the form of a tough USA team for two back-to-back games.

"The first game, all of us were just super excited because we get to represent our country," said Castillo-Flores. "The following games we kept getting more and more excited."

"I wanted to play the USA personally; some of the other



Giana Castillo-Flores pitches but also plays infield. She has played softball since age 6. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

girls were like, 'Oh no, USA!' Some of the [USA] girls are from California, so I know them, so I wanted to play them."

Despite the frustrating ending to the tournament, the teams' efforts still earned them a silver medal, and an invite to the inaugural WBSC U-15 Women's Softball World Cup.

Soon, Castillo-Flores and her teammates will travel to Japan on two separate occasions, once for another tournament, and then again for the World showcase for which they qualified.

Ask her what her favorite part of playing softball is, and Castillo-Flores will humbly reply that it's the comradery and sisterhood with her teammates.

Her play on the field tells a different, much more competitive story.

"I'd say I'm a pretty good pitcher," said Castillo-Flores.

But that's not all.

Along with her role inside the pitcher's circle, Castillo-Flores also has experience in the middle infield, playing either shortstop or second base. For those who may not be aware, that means that when the game doesn't rest on her shoulders, she's one of the commanders of the infield.

And she likes it that way; she's reluctant to give either position up.

"Throughout the week, I'm super busy," said Castillo-Flores. "Monday, I have pitching. Tuesday, I have hitting. Wednesday, I have fielding because I still want to keep that middle-infield position, so I work Wednesdays. Thursdays, I have hitting and weight training..."

"I think it's because I know that pitchers, they always have this title that, 'Oh, they're only pitchers' or they can pitch, and if

they have a good bat they can hit. But I love [shortstop], and I want to work for it until they tell me I can't."

Down the line, Castillo-Flores hopes to one day trade in her red, white, and green Mexico Jersey for that of Washington Husky purple and gold.

"I really liked the shortstop when she was there. She already left, but her name is Sis Bates," said Castillo-Flores.

Castillo-Flores says that she will never forget her first pitch representing Mexico. With more high-stakes play just around the corner, she remains working hard, dedicated, and — considering the Pan American games outcome — fully motivated with team USA still firmly locked in her cross hairs.

"They'll be there," she said.

## City exploring ways to make parking structure safer

**DOWNEY** — Is Downtown Downey's parking garage safe? Not even the city council thinks so.

After receiving a report on a recent parking assessment of Downey's downtown area (conducted by Dixon Resources), the multi-story, 400-stall structure dominated the discussion, especially surrounding its underutilization and potential safety concerns.

"One of the main reasons we hear from our residents that they are not utilizing that great parking structure, 395 spots, is fear; concerns for their safety," said Mayor Claudia M. Frometa. "Any other city in LA County would give so much to have that parking structure, and I think we need to do better."

Councilman Hector Sosa echoed the sentiment, admitting that he did not use the structure for similar reasons.

"If you compare and contrast the two parking structures, I mean, well, where Portos is highly visible; there's a lot of movement, a lot of people walking around," said Sosa. "The other one, I don't park there myself. I wouldn't take my family in there."

The city council voted to explore different options to increase safety within the structure, including cameras, cleaning and repainting the structure, assessing the lighting and reviewing the security contract for the downtown area which will soon be due for discussion.

According to the data collected by Dixon Resources, off-street parking options have seen lower usage across the board in Downtown Downey.

Alex Dominguez, staff writer

Warren High School photography students painted rocks last week and left them at the Hope Tree outside the Downey City Library.



### Weekend at a Glance

Friday 72°

Saturday 67°

Sunday 68°

### ON THIS DAY

**1504:** Believed to have been installed this day in the cathedral of Florence was Michelangelo's statue of David, commissioned in 1501 and considered the prime statement of the Renaissance ideal of perfect humanity.

**1949:** British author George Orwell published his dystopian classic "Nineteen Eighty-Four," a warning against totalitarianism that introduced such concepts as Big Brother and the Thought Police.

**1953:** The Supreme Court ruled that restaurants in Washington, D.C., cannot refuse to serve black patrons.

**1955:** Computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee, who was generally credited as the inventor of the World Wide Web, was born.

**1966:** The National Football League and the American Football League announced a merger, which became effective in 1970.

**1968:** James Earl Ray, the man who assassinated Martin Luther King Jr., was arrested at London Heathrow Airport.

**1974:** Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You" reached No. 1 on the country chart; nearly two decades later, Whitney Houston's rendition topped the Hot 100 and became one of the best-selling singles of all time.

**2002:** Serena Williams defeated her sister Venus Williams to win her first French Open tennis title.



**2009:** The United Nations hosted its first World Oceans Day, which sought to celebrate oceans while also raising awareness of the threats that they and their marine ecosystems faced.

**2018:** Chef and television personality Anthony Bourdain, who helped popularize "foodie" culture in the early 21st century through his books and television programs, died by suicide at the age of 61.



### Birthdays

Singer **Nancy Sinatra** (83), "Dilbert" creator **Scott Adams** (66), retired tennis champ **Lindsay Davenport** (47), rapper and fashion designer **Kanye West** (46), TV host **Maria Menounos** (45), retired tennis champ **Kim Clijsters** (40), and former WWE champion **Liv Morgan** (29).

# Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer

Feel free to insert a Popeye joke here; I eat a lot of spinach. I add a large handful of baby spinach to my morning smoothie, and include it when I throw together sandwiches, scrambled eggs, salads, or soups.

When we buy fresh, bunched spinach at the grocery store, it is often savoy spinach, which has wrinkled and curly leaves. Flat spinach, available as baby spinach when harvested earlier, is extremely popular and is often found bagged, canned, or frozen. Baby spinach is the best choice for eating raw.

Spinach is not only low in calories, but has no fat. Look at just a few of the things it does for us:

- Spinach is rich in potassium, which helps to lower blood pressure and reduce the effects of sodium.
- Spinach is a great source of iron, which helps the body

make hemoglobin (needed to transport oxygen in the blood), maintain a healthy pregnancy, support the immune system, and aid digestion.

- Spinach is rich in magnesium, which maintains our muscles and nerves, heart rhythm, immune system, and blood pressure.
  - Spinach is rich in lutein, an antioxidant shown to help preserve cognitive abilities, and to protect against age-related eye diseases like macular degeneration and cataracts.
  - Spinach is high in vitamin K, which is essential to bone health and growth. It contains calcium, but note that calcium from dairy sources is more easily utilized.
  - Spinach is high in vitamin A, which is used to grow tissue (which includes our largest organ...the skin). Vitamin A supports the skin's immune system, and also helps with hydration, reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.
  - Spinach is rich in fiber, which is important for healthy bowels, processing sugar and controlling diabetes, and more.
- What are the potential downsides?
- Because spinach is rich in fiber, when consumed in

large quantities it may cause gas, cramping and abdominal pain.

- Those who have had calcium oxalate kidney stones will want to avoid spinach (as well as nuts, peanuts, rhubarb, and wheat bran).



- Those who take one of the older blood thinners, coumadin (warfarin), must be aware that spinach (and other deep green leafy vegetables) can counteract the drug's effectiveness.

If you wish to start your day with a great smoothie, I'll offer my own recipe again: Toss into a blender four ice cubes, a handful of fresh or frozen blueberries, a half banana, a heaping teaspoon of plain Greek yogurt, a heaping teaspoon of peanut butter, a third of a medium size avocado, a splash of any milk (or milk substitute), and my "secret" ingredient: a few chocolate chips. Bon Appétit!

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

# Small but mighty Soroptimist put focus on heart health

Four Soroptimist clubs hosted a Heart Health Awareness day at Downey Adult School.

By Lorine Parks Society Editor

**DOWNEY** — It was easy to find the Heart Health Awareness Event at Downey Adult School, because red heart-shaped balloons marked the way. A low-key approach to keeping fit, Heart Health Awareness seeks to educate the public on the benefits to your heart of improving your life habits.

For the first time, four Soroptimist International clubs collaborated, and this event was Awaken Your Wellness. SI members from Downey, Lakewood/Long Beach, Pico Rivera, and the new City of

Commerce club met for their first quad-community project. Attire was gym apparel or comfy clothes.

"We started out right away," said Rebecca Reyes, a member of SI Downey, "at nine o'clock, in the courtyard, doing yoga stretches taken from Tae Bo Fitness." Tae Bo is an aerobic exercise routine, prized for its breathing habits.

"Then we did exercises using water bottles for weights," said Rebecca, "learning how to push off when standing up. The idea is to work gently and slowly from a bench."

"We moved into the auditorium," said Rebecca, "and did more stretching. These are exercises all ages can do, but they do ask us to move out of our comfort zone."

By the time I arrived, there was a festive air in the

busy courtyard. The patio was filled with samples of healthy products. A table held baskets of free apples and tangerines, and free water bottles. There were vendors of essential oils for the skin, with gentle soaps, and candles. A juice bar stood at one corner, and fresh baked goods filled another.

Free tee shirts were being given away too. Many were wearing the soft grey tees with the SI logo in red. They said, "Waken Your Wellness," with an EKG pattern dancing across a red heart.

Via Care, a non-profit health care center in East Los Angeles, had representatives to explain how they help secure quality and equitable health care. They deliver medical, dental and behavioral services for all, regardless of ability to pay, and have clinics in Downey, Bellflower, Whittier and South

Gate.

Tickets were being sold for big cellophane-wrapped baskets of healthy goodies. The Soroptimists never miss a chance to raise a few dollars while presenting an event, and all the lucky winners went home happy.

SI Downey President Linda Haines welcomed everyone, and then I had a chance to talk with members from the newest club. President Christine of the fledgling City of Commerce said that when SI asked the existing groups to expand, she and about 20 "seasoned" members of the Montebello Club decided to branch out and form one in the City of Commerce.

Christine said SI Commerce has joined the Chamber of Commerce for new members, and reached out to the Casino, and also the Citadel, that outlet shopping mall on the 5 Freeway



Participants engage in a yoga class at Downey Adult School. (Photo by Lorine Parks)

behind the wall of an Assyrian palace, to let them know of the Soroptimist presence in the community.

"We've only been in existence for two years," said Roberta, Christine's cohort, "and already we've raised enough money to give four women the chance to Live Their Dream." That SI award is for single women who are head of household with children, who have turned their lives around and gone back to school to get coping skills. It's Soroptimist's signature endeavor, and the biggest event of the year.

At this Heart Health event I was able to meet again with Dominique Young, this year's

winner of SI Downey's Live Your Dream award. Dominique has three active young children, and a website where she sells candles and copies of her book that tells of her early life bouncing between abusive foster homes, and how she has overcome. The SI award can be used for any expenses involved in getting new skills. Tuition and books are not all that it takes. Car repairs, for example.

"This journey together was a first," said Martha Schefres, president of SI Pico Rivera. "We'd love to do it again." The president of the joint clubs of Lakewood and Long Beach echoed Martha.

This first project encouraged and motivated a better quality of living, by raising heart health awareness. What next? Soroptimist clubs are known for being small but mighty, and when they get together, great results can be expected.

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# Bill allowing Amsterdam-style cannabis cafés passes

■ Legislation would allow on-site cannabis consumption at authorized sites.

**SACRAMENTO** — A State Assembly bill that would allow Amsterdam-style cannabis cafés where customers would be permitted to consume the tranquilizing herb onsite, received broad partisan support on Wednesday, passing the assembly 64-9.

While onsite cannabis consumption is allowed in certain circumstances, AB 374 would permit the sales of non-cannabis-infused products and allow for a more inviting and coffee shop-style experience. Current law bans the sale of non-cannabis related products.

"Lots of people want to enjoy legal cannabis in the company of others, and many people want to do that while sipping coffee, eating a scone, or listening to music," said State Assemblymember Matt Haney (D-San Francisco), the bill's author. "There's absolutely no good reason from an economic, health, or safety standpoint that the state should make that illegal. If an authorized cannabis retail store wants to also sell a cup of coffee and a sandwich, we should allow cities to make that possible and stop holding back these small businesses."

Haney sees the bill as one that will build on California's deep roots in cannabis culture and set the state on a path to better compete with Amsterdam — a city of 1.4 million people located in the Netherlands that is also known for its cannabis

culture. Amsterdam currently has over 700 cafés that permit onsite cannabis use, which rake in an estimated \$1 billion annually.

Haney hopes the bill will help move the cannabis industry out of a "pharmacy-like business" where customers simply pick up their supplies at a dispensary and leave, into one that is more sociable. He also hopes the bill will allow the currently struggling cannabis industry a greater opportunity to diversify its businesses and to promote tourism in downtown areas and other struggling business districts across the state.

"California's small cannabis businesses are struggling," Haney said. "Issues like over-saturation, high taxes, and the thriving black market are hurting cannabis

businesses who follow the rules and pay taxes."

Nightlife industry groups are excited about the bill's potential.

"Allowing cannabis lounges the commonsense option to sell food and beverage that isn't 'prepackaged' and giving them flexibility to provide entertainment will give a much-needed lifeline to legal cannabis retailers who are struggling mightily to survive in the industry," the California Nightlife Association said in a statement of support to legislators. "Additionally, this bill will give our communities new, exciting opportunities to offer arts and entertainment in spaces where it was previously impossible to do so economically."

Democrat Blanca Pacheco, who represents Downey in the Assembly,

voted in favor of the bill.

The bill, however, is currently facing opposition from major health-related industry groups such as the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association.

"This bill could essentially turn a cannabis establishment into a restaurant and potentially force workers to accept exposure to toxic

chemicals in order to keep their jobs," the three groups said in a letter of opposition to lawmakers. "Workers should not have to choose between their health and a good job. California has fought hard to protect workers and ensure a safe, healthy, smoke-free work environment. AB 374 will undo that by re-creating the harmful work environments of the past."

The bill now moves to the State Senate for approval.

# Downey High alumnus to start emergency medicine residency

■ Luis Sanchez is set to begin his emergency medicine residency in Las Vegas.

By Alex Dominguez  
Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** — Downey High School alumnus Luis Sanchez will soon begin his Emergency Medicine residency at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Sanchez graduated from Downey High School in 2013. He credits many of the teachers and supporters back home for getting him where he is today.

"A lot of the teachers and members of the community that I had back in Downey were really supportive, and they really encouraged me on my pursuit of medicine," said Sanchez. "They kind of built the steps and building blocks that got me to the point that I am now."

Sanchez's decision to enter the medical field stems from an overall desire to help others.

"Ever since I was a young boy, I always liked playing doctor, and my natural instinct was always to help others," said Sanchez. "I didn't always know it was a possibility for me, considering how expensive school was, and the challenges and hurdles I had to overcome getting through high school, college, and higher education."

He earned his undergraduate degree from UC Santa Barbara in 2017. But even then, he was not sure medicine was what laid ahead, especially knowing how competitive medical school is.

It would take around two years — and a new job — for him to commit.

"I took two gap years after graduating from Santa Barbara. During those two years, I got to work for a company called Kite Pharma; we worked on therapies for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma," said Sanchez. "While I was there as a quality control technician, I kind of got to see the science side of medicine. That's when I really knew that I wanted to take it a step further and go and pursue medicine."

Sanchez was accepted into Touro University Nevada, where he graduated from earlier this month.



Luis Sanchez

His aforementioned residency is soon to follow, beginning in July.

Sanchez has opted to use his skills in emergency medicine, his field of battle likely to be inside of an emergency room dealing with the most sudden, dire moments of medical need.

And truthfully, he likes it that way.

"Personally, I like seeing new things, and I like the high-pace environment of the emergency room," said Sanchez. "Whenever I see people in distress, or people who need help, my natural instinct is to run that direction and help out."

"Things don't really phase me, but when I'm scared or worried, I know I always have my team of other physicians and nurses there to kind of back me up, and that's something I've kind of been gravitating towards all these years."

Sanchez's goal is to be the best emergency physician that he can be — especially for communities who may be underserved — whether that be in Vegas, back in Southern California, or even returning to Downey.

"Las Vegas has a really high population of Latinos and people who really need medical care," said

Sanchez. "The way I see it, I want to go towards where I can do the greatest good, where I can help out the most people."

"At this time, this is the place where I can do the most for the people that I care about, which is the community where I come from."

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# Recovery from addiction is a journey. There's no one-and-done solution.

■ A Santa Fe Springs treatment facility is helping people regain control of their lives.

By Bernard J. Wolfson

**SANTA FE SPRINGS** — The atmosphere inside the Allen House is easygoing as residents circulate freely through the hallways, meet in group sessions, or gather on a large outdoor patio that features a dirt volleyball court with an oversize net.

The 60-bed safety-net residential treatment center in Santa Fe Springs, run by Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, has a dedicated detox room, on-site physicians and nurses, substance abuse counselors, licensed therapists, and other practitioners. It offers group counseling as well as individual and family therapy, and it endorses the use of medications for addiction treatment, such as buprenorphine and naltrexone, which are increasingly considered the gold standard.

Willard Sexton, a staff member and former Allen House patient, says the most important part of his job is speaking with each resident daily. Most of them, like him, came to treatment straight from jail or prison, and he knows as well as anybody how stressful it is to stop using.

"It's similar to grief and loss," says Sexton, 35. "The drug was their best friend for a long time."

Interacting with them, he says,

helps him in his own ongoing recovery.

At a time when drug use is among the nation's gravest public health crises, a visit to the Allen House offers key lessons: Addiction is a chronic illness requiring constant vigilance, there's no one-and-done solution, and relapses are part of the journey to recovery. Peer mentoring is an invaluable element of drug counseling, since people who have plodded the difficult path from dependence to sobriety understand the mindset of patients on a visceral level.

And most importantly for those who feel despair in the grip of addiction, there is hope. "Recovery happens," says Michelle Doty Cabrera, executive director of the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California. "Every single day people come into treatment and succeed in addressing their substance use disorders."

Drug-related overdoses kill almost as many Californians as lung cancer, more than diabetes, and two to three times as many as car accidents, according to a report by California Health Policy Strategies, a Sacramento consulting group. The report showed there were about 11 times as many fentanyl-related deaths in 2021 as in 2017, accounting for more than half of overdose fatalities. And addiction can ruin lives even if it doesn't end them.

But proper care for substance use disorders can still be hard



Willard Sexton has been through court-mandated residential addiction rehab twice and is now a staff member at Allen House, a safety-net drug treatment center. He says he understands how stressful it is to stop using.

(Photo by Bernard J. Wolfson)

to find. Experts in the field say residential treatment beds are in short supply. A pandemic-driven shortage of health care workers has hit the drug treatment world. Unscrupulous operators, with an eye on their bottom lines, may take advantage of people desperate for an answer. Commercial insurers often deny treatment requests or propose cheaper alternatives.

Some treatment programs shun anti-addiction medications that have proven effective. Physicians, nurse practitioners, and other providers with the requisite training can prescribe these drugs in California, but too few seem willing or able to do so — though that could change now that federal law no longer requires them to get a special waiver.

A page on the website of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)) allows you to find practitioners in your area who treat patients with buprenorphine.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution for addiction. Treatment can differ depending on the substance — opioids, alcohol, or methamphetamine, for example. And people with substance use problems come from all walks of life: Some are straight off

the streets or out of jail or may have serious mental or medical conditions that require additional care. Others may be otherwise healthy with good jobs and insurance. If a clinic tries to sell you on a standardized treatment program, cross the place off your list.

And if someone tells you that after one stint in their program you or a loved one will be drug-free for life, run the other way. For many people, addiction is a chronic condition that ebbs and flows over many years. Too often, patients in the throes of an overdose are revived and then discharged with no follow-up.

"If we talked about treating other chronic illnesses like diabetes or asthma in the same way we often approach treating substance use, people would think we were crazy or would sue the doctor for malpractice," says Bradley Stein, a psychiatrist and senior physician policy researcher at the Rand Corp.

Finding the treatment that is right for you or a loved one will take legwork.

Whether it should be a residential or outpatient program depends on multiple factors. People who need to be shielded from exposure to a dealer or a toxic

domestic situation, require detox, or have mental health or medical conditions on top of their drug use generally are better off in a residential setting, says Randolph Holmes, medical director of the Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Outpatient settings are more suitable for people with stable lives and better health or those transitioning from residential treatment, he says.

The cost of treatment can vary widely depending on duration and the patient's circumstances. In some cases, it can reach tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Various websites allow you to search for nearby addiction treatment. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has a treatment locator at [www.findtreatment.gov](http://www.findtreatment.gov), or you can call its help line at 800-662-HELP (4347). Shatterproof ([www.shatterproof.org](http://www.shatterproof.org)) is another source for finding treatment. In California, the Department of Health Care Services publishes a list of substance use help lines by county.

If you're on Medi-Cal, California's version of the federal Medicaid program for low-income residents, your county is a good place to start. It can point you to several options, at least in more populous areas. Almost all patients with the Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse, for example, are Medi-Cal enrollees.

If you have commercial insurance, call your health plan first. Parity laws require insurers to cover substance use treatment,

though they often find reasons not to provide the treatment your provider recommends. If your plan denies you treatment you think you need, you can file an appeal. The Department of Managed Health Care ([www.dmhca.ca.gov](http://www.dmhca.ca.gov)), the state's primary health plan regulator, has a help line (888-466-2219) that can assist in appealing your case. Or you can do it online. If the department does not regulate your plan, it can steer you in the right direction.

And remember that recovery is a long-term commitment.

When Sexton first started using in his early 20s, his drug of choice was meth. He later started smoking it with heroin and fentanyl mixed in, he says.

Several years ago, Sexton spent 45 days in residential rehab and got clean. Then he started seeing a woman who was addicted to heroin. He thought he'd help her get sober but ended up doing drugs with her instead. He landed in jail for two months, and a judge ordered him back into residential drug treatment.

Sexton says he continues to actively pursue his recovery even as he helps others do the same. "There are bumps in the road, but I feel like I'm in a Range Rover," he says. "I'm not going to spill my coffee."

This article was produced by KFF Health News, which publishes California Healthline, an editorially independent service of the California Health Care Foundation.

**In Memory of**

**Jeffrey Patterson**



Longtime Downey resident Jeffrey Patterson, 63, unexpectedly passed on December 21, 2022.

Jeff attended Rio Hondo Elementary, Griffiths Junior High and graduated from Warren High in 1977. He spent much of his time entertaining the people of Downey. He started as a child actor hamming it up at the Downey Theater, moved on to rocking out at the Stardust, Downtown Downey restaurants, local friends' parties and the Warren High annual reunions. He took much pride in frightening/amazing his neighbors with his impressive light displays at Halloween and Christmas that would give Clark Griswold a run for his money.

He was a husband, father, brother, heat treater, and musician, but most of all, he was a dreamer. A man who made every holiday feel special, supported every aspiration, and loved being on either side of a prank. Jeff was equally entertaining while shredding guitar on stage, as he was walking his dog while wearing his beloved kilt around Orange Estates.

Jeff was preceded in death by his parents James and Roberta, and brother Steven. He is survived by his wife Debbie, sons Leroy, Tyler, and Joshua, sister Margaret, and an endless amount of people he touched through his kindness, talents, and actions.

Rest ye gentle Jeff.

A celebration of life is upcoming. Please contact Leroy at [jeffpmemorial@gmail.com](mailto:jeffpmemorial@gmail.com) if you would like to attend.

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## A new tool for emergency responders: AI

By Andrew Lara

Andrew Lara is a critical care nurse and mayor pro tem in Pico Rivera.

The majestic mountains and vast sun-kissed coastlines have long made California one of the most attractive destinations for outdoorsmen, tourists, and families looking for a new place to start their lives. However, the California climate has been under attack by a series of intense wildfires, burning thousands of acres of land and costing hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars. Not only do wildfires wreck communities and cause devastating climate and economic damage, but they also lead to public health emergencies.

By far the most wildfire-prone state in the nation, accounting for one-third of all burned acres in the country, California is struggling to meet this dynamic challenge and wildfires are only expected to continue increasing in frequency. Wildfires also put millions of citizens at risk of serious health complications, leading to lung damage, stroke, and heart attack.

Wildfires aren't going away any time soon and the resulting damage could be catastrophic and nearly impossible to control. Thankfully, crucial resources to help emergency responders and our public health system mitigate these risks are being developed.

The environmental and economic damage wildfires cause is obvious, as clips of planes and helicopters frantically dropping gallons of water and flame retardant in an attempt to contain the combusting wilderness are common. What's less obvious are the fires' effects which cause lung damage, induce asthma, contribute to chronic pain inflammation, and exacerbate cancer risks. These factors put immense pressure on first responders, who are tasked with containing the fires and providing critical medical relief to families in danger.

The danger also extends to first responders, who are subject to the same risks from fires as those they save. As a former mobile intensive care nurse who has worked alongside LA County Emergency Medicine and hand-in-hand with first responders, I know all too well the risks these men and women face.

This is why they should both receive earlier lung cancer screenings – which currently doesn't begin until age 50 – and have access to

technology that allows them to quickly and efficiently do their job.

Oregon Health and Science University and Philips have teamed up to prepare emergency responders with a partnership through Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA). The technology they are developing equips firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians with artificial intelligence that quickly provides ultrasound images and correctly interprets them within seconds. This is artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled software being developed for a handheld device that emergency responders can transport and utilize as efficiently as a watch or cell phone.

The benefits for emergency responders and our public health apparatus will be transformative, providing EMS the capacity to accurately diagnose lung damage and internal injuries on site, informing the level of care and urgency needed prior to entering a hospital or working with a physician expert. In high pressure emergencies where quickly and accurately diagnosing injury could be the difference between life or death, this technology makes our emergency responders as prepared as possible to administer life-saving medical care.

However, like all dynamic new initiatives, congressional support will be pivotal to ensuring future innovations realize their full potential for society. This is why I am grateful our state is represented by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo.

Congresswoman Eshoo has had a distinguished career standing up for public health and our state. As former chair and now ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, Congresswoman Eshoo has expanded Medicaid, ended surprise medical billing, and shepherded the Affordable Care Act into law. Congresswoman Eshoo has always prioritized public health, and I am confident that she will work with her colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee to support critical programs like BARDA.

Many think California is the most beautiful state in the country because of its terrain, but it's the people who truly make it incomparable. More wildfires are coming, and we need to be prepared when they do. My friends and neighbors are at great risk if we don't.

## Time to go, Mr. Chief Justice

By Keith Raffel

Keith Raffel has served as the senior counsel to the Senate Intelligence Committee, started an award-winning internet software company and written five novels, which you can check out at [keithraffel.com](http://keithraffel.com). He currently spends the academic year as a resident scholar at Harvard.

Chief Justice John Roberts has long proclaimed his commitment to the Supreme Court's institutional legitimacy and to interpreting the Constitution based on precedent and nonpartisanship. He's failed. It's time for him to go.

Of course, there's no chance the chief justice is about to be fired. That would require a majority of the House of Representatives to impeach and two-thirds of the Senate to convict on the basis of "high crimes and misdemeanors." And Roberts is no criminal. A couple of friends we have in common tell me he's a good guy. He's just a failure in leading the court.

I started a company in Silicon Valley. When presenting to investors and the board, I told them what my goals and deliverables were. If I fell way short of what was promised, I'd expect to be fired or to quit. Since Roberts can't be fired, he should resign.

When it comes to institutional legitimacy, faith in the Supreme Court has plummeted to its lowest point since Roberts became chief justice in 2005. In an April NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll, 62% of respondents said they have not very much or no confidence in the court. That number is up from 38% five years ago.

The scent of corruption seems to be wafting through the Supreme Court chambers as well. Justice Clarence Thomas has accepted luxury vacations, lavish gifts, tuition money for his great nephew and free rent for his mother from billionaire Harlan Crow. This was despite the fact that Crow's interests as a real estate developer and investor have had business before the court. On top of that, Thomas failed to disclose the earnings of his wife who vigorously supported the false claim that Donald Trump had won the 2020 presidential election. Has Roberts addressed these wounds to the court's reputation? No, not specifically. Has he supported a code of ethics for Supreme Court justices? No, not specifically. He did say earlier this week, "I want to assure people that I'm committed to making certain that we as a court adhere to the highest standards of conduct." But the time has passed for such vague words. Justice Thomas has made him look foolish and inept.

In fact, questions about spousal moneymaking have tainted the chief justice himself. Roberts's wife reportedly generated \$10.3

million in commissions from law firms over an eight-year period for placing new hires. A Supreme Court spokeswoman said that a judge "need not recuse merely because" their spouse recruited for law firms who had issues before the court. Maybe that's the letter of the law, but it sure looks corrupt and further undermines the court's legitimacy.

At his confirmation hearing, Roberts made a metaphorical promise to "call balls and strikes, and not to pitch or bat." He was promising to be like a baseball umpire who ensures rules are followed but is not a participant in the political game.

In 2013's decision in Shelby County v. Holder, Roberts wrote an opinion that threw out a key section of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Here he did not merely call balls and strikes, he struck out the batter. With four colleagues, he usurped Congress' role by taking on a legislative function. In the five years after the ruling, nearly a thousand polling places were closed, many in predominantly African American precincts. In 2019, two professors wrote in an American Economic Association paper: "Although only a few years have elapsed since the Shelby County decision, we are already starting to observe erosions in black Americans' socioeconomic status. ... Our findings suggest that perhaps Chief Justice Roberts should be slightly less optimistic about the state of democratic equality in the South."

The court's judgment in the 2010 Citizens United case allowed unlimited independent campaign spending by corporations and thereby inflated the influence of big money in politics. Over a hundred years ago, Theodore Roosevelt argued, "All contributions by corporations to any political committee or for any political purpose should be forbidden by law." It didn't matter what Roosevelt thought or Congress legislated — Roberts' Supreme Court decided the issue.

In the case of Dobbs v. Jackson, he sided with the majority to overturn the half-century old precedent set down in Roe v. Wade that gave women the right to control their own bodies in the early months of pregnancy.

At his confirmation hearing, Roberts promised, "I will be vigilant to protect the independence and integrity of the Supreme Court, and I will work to ensure that it upholds the rule of law and safeguards those liberties that make this land one of endless possibilities for all Americans."

No, Mr. Chief Justice. You have lost the faith of the American people in the court you lead. You have failed to maintain the court's integrity. You have failed to safeguard American liberties. Three strikes and you're out! Get off the bench.

## Raise the debt ceiling

Dear Editor:

As an accredited investor I have experienced vicissitudes in my portfolio for the past year due to the effects of inflation, the Federal Reserve Bank raises on interest rates to tame it and the economic turbulence created by the negotiations of Congress and the President on raising the debt ceiling to avoid default in the government financial obligations.

I have acted with alacrity in the management of my portfolio but it has been very challenging. It is not easy to keep your head when all you hear are doom days news about the future of the country.

I am grateful that both the members of Congress and of the White House put aside their political hue motivated positions and did what was required to avoid a financial crisis by rising the debt ceiling. This act seems to have brought some relief to the turbulence of the stock market.

Now, why can't they do that in a regular basis? Politics is the art of compromise but our current political leaders seem to have forgotten such a simple principle. The raising of the debt ceiling proves that they can do it when they act for the best interests of the country. Let's hope that they learned their lesson and continue doing the job for which they were elected.

Jorge Montero  
Downey

## Dodgers lost some fans

Dear Editor:

Myself and family have been lifelong Dodgers fans. Their recent decision to include the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence changed that. Previously we proudly flew our LA Dodgers flags and wore team jerseys, team logos and stickers on our vehicles; even a tattoo on one family member.

I wonder how Vin Scully would feel about this decision if he were still with us? It is shameful.

As a team it is obvious to anyone watching there are many Catholic members as is evident when they make the sign of the cross while on the field, and also raising hands giving praise to God for scoring a run. Not just Catholics, there are also other Christian denominations on the Dodgers team. I wonder how the team members feel about this choice? I realize team members are under commitment of a contract, but forcing a person to go against their religious beliefs should be a dealbreaker.

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence (a group of men in drag) is blatantly disrespectful to all Christians and Christ followers. Have you seen one of their performances? Maybe not. They perform explicit sexual pole dances on a crucifix, and grind sexually on an actor portraying Jesus Christ. It's mockery, it's blasphemous and totally disrespectful.

I'm really not sure what entertainment and statement this type of performance makes? I mean other than the obvious mockery of the Christian faith.

Having this performance at a family attended baseball game, even on Pride night, serves what purpose? It seems to me this is simply done for "shock-value" and disrespect and mocking of the Christian faith.

Regardless of any of the good things that this group of performers may have done in the past to educate about sexual diseases, or helping those in need, awareness, etc. for decades, certainly the same goals could have been achieved without any of this blasphemous portrayal that they have included in their performances.

The Dodgers organization needs to make better choices.

Patty Waters  
Downey

Dear Editor:

I'm canceling my Spectrum Account and Dodgers channel. I bought it in 2020 during the COVID pandemic, since I couldn't continue buying game tickets and some season tickets, as I did for decades. When I moved to LA in 1981 and told myself to either become an Angels fan or a Dodgers fan. 1981 was an exciting year! When I met my wife she was already a Dodgers fan so we instantly had comradery. As our kids were born and grew up, we taught them to be Dodger's fans, took them to countless games and now they're teaching their kids, but all this will come to an end soon. Over the years, I've spent thousands of dollars on Dodgers tickets, food, accessories at the stadium and in many local stores. But I can no longer support the Dodgers organization because of the current management way of openly mocking our faith in Jesus Christ.

I was proud of Vin Scully and the wholesome family environment at the stadium, under the old organization management. One time when I saw people selling drugs in the stands, I told the host attendant, who told the police, who came to investigate and ushered the drug dealers out of the park. My family was impressed at how fast they acted to keep us safe. When my mother of 80+ years wanted to attend a game, a Dodgers staff member picked her up in a golf cart from my car and ushered her into her stadium seat. After the game, they brought back the golf cart to usher her back to my car – that is how to add value with Customer Service! Now, I'm afraid to take my family and grandchildren to Dodger Stadium because of who might mock us, or ridicule us or even assault us!

Dodgers used to have Christian / Catholic nights where families were safe and love flourished, but over the last few years Dodgers advertising is trading Family Values for gay nights and transexual nights. Inviting the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and hosting Pride Night games must bring in money, but they also bring in hatred, crime and violence, which are all more than I care to be a part of. I might feel different if these organizations did anything good for their communities, but from what I can see their selfish agenda is for their selfish pleasures. Men dressing as women only to mock and make fun of good people has no value to me and not in our society, yet our Constitution allows all of us our freedom of speech. These people who participate openly indulge in their own fantasies to mock and criticize good people – and what constructive value are they adding to our society?

I've decided to donate the money I used to spend on Dodgers to my local church, who is serving people in the community and feeding 250 families each week through a food bank.

I'm thankful for all of those people who have already spoken up, including many of the Dodgers players and other teams players! I hope the Christian night is a tremendous success on July 30, but I will not be attending.

Dodgers management is backpedaling into a Christian Night, which is too little, too late for me to respect the organization as it is today. It is no longer the organization that I loved the last four decades. I may listen to Rick Monday and Tim Lincecum on the radio, but I will not spend another dime supporting the Dodgers organization and I hope that millions and millions of people do the same! I hope the Dodgers organization feels a loss of revenue from the effects of their poor choices like Anheuser-Busch, Target and other businesses who openly mock and degrade middle-class families of faith and our values.

Jim Wilkinson  
Downey

## Favorite teachers

Dear Editor:

I very much enjoyed Alex Dominguez's article about the influence of Maude Price teacher Steve Toay on his life.

A good teacher can make all the difference in the world. When I was in the third grade at Old River School (back when it was located on Quill Drive), I got an F in spelling. My mother knew I was a bit slow, so she asked me if the teacher went too fast for me. I told her that while I was thinking about how the word was spelled, she would be on to the next word, and the next. Soon I was two or three words behind and wound up handing in a scribbled up mess of a paper.

The next year in the fourth grade I got Mrs. Comstock who was the best teacher imaginable. I've heard others say she was their favorite teacher.

And oh yes, I got an A in spelling.

Jack Russell  
Downey

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## SPEED BUMP



## DAVE COVERLY



# Downey Community Calendar

### CITY MEETINGS

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

### Regularly Scheduled Meetings

#### MONDAYS

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

#### TUESDAYS

9 am: Quilters group, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, call 803-4459.  
 9:30 am: Downey Seniors Club, at Apollo Park, call Irene Vallini at 328-7039.  
 10 am: Downey Bocce Club, at 7850 Quill Drive, call John Fiorenza at 652-4399.  
 12 pm: Rotary Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Mel Sanchez 562-665-4125.  
 6 pm: Toastmasters Club 587, at First Baptist Church, contact Salvador Cervantes: tmsalcpuede@gmail.com.  
 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 Barbara 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.

#### 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**

### THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)  
**PREDICAMENTS: Which you'll have no trouble with**  
 by Mark McClain

ACROSS	78 In ___ (as found)	4 Agree-to-disagree phrase
1 Collar insert	79 Disposal for cash	5 Contemporary of Olds
5 Sorority letter	80 Take out or away	6 Santa's laugh
8 Colony critters	81 Unusual trinket	7 Golfer's selection
12 ___ with faint praise	84 Hoopsters group	8 Quiet likely (to)
17 See 35 Across	87 Sporty Ford	9 Wordsmith Webster
18 Joyful circle dance	89 Handle the banquet meals	10 Dog in Oz
20 Milne character	90 "You ___ serious?"	11 Oil-yielding rock
21 Come up	91 California wine name	12 Make moist
22 Chimps and baboons	93 Bass ___ (stringed instrument)	13 More or less
23 Half of RI	95 Frying medium	14 St. Paul locale
25 Informal farewell	96 Young dude	15 Tiny bit of a min.
26 Impressionism pioneer	97 Connect securely	16 Meyers of late night TV
27 Drill command for a rifle squad	100 Barnyard enclosure	19 Port of Yemen
30 Stationary gadget	101 Decorated with blossoms	24 Chopin piano piece
32 Deceitful practices	104 Fella	28 34 Across guy
33 Granola morsel	105 Nuclear energy source	29 First course on menus
34 Genesis setting	107 Descriptor for dental work	31 Revise, or revision
35 With 17 Across, whopper of a story	109 Veggie in Japanese soups	36 Challenge for a would-be atty.
37 Intimidate	111 Played hockey	38 "How awful!"
41 Admit, as to a Hall of Fame	115 Random inspection	39 Justice Gorsuch
45 Ring result	120 Speedy baseball	40 Sharp flavor
48 Military culinary supervisor	123 Holy scroll	42 Language of Pakistan substitute
52 Old college cry	124 Flier to Tel Aviv	43 What makes up a train
53 Hard knocks	126 Hong Kong neighbor	44 Fare___well
55 Have high status	127 Pulled apart	45 Defeat soundly
56 "America the Beautiful" pronoun	128 Type of quartz	46 Hawaiian island
57 Army chaplain	129 Medical remedy	47 Of vision
59 Convex navel	130 Nickname for Eleanor	49 Court reporter
61 "If I Were a Rich Man" singer	131 "That's right!"	50 Break off
63 Some TVs	132 Muted, with "down"	51 Sparrow's shelters
64 Take too much advantage of	133 Contained	54 Becomes clear
65 By and large	134 Costa ___ Sol	57 3+ light years
67 Get closer to	135 Gets it	58 Dreadful
68 Conservative in Parliament	DOWN	60 Actor Page
70 Long-handled silverware	1 Workforce	62 Talk a lot
72 Impromptu jazz gig	2 Long-shouted mammal	66 Up to now
	3 Amazon's assistant	69 Opposite of "neath"
		71 Mushrooms and kin
		72 Snarky remark
		73 Teeming (with)

CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2023 STANLEY NEWMAN WWW.STANXWORDS.COM 6/4/23

74 Be worthy of	92 UK's Inc.	113 Strange and scary
75 Small amounts	94 "Time to go!"	114 Pants suit alternative
76 Out in the open	97 Uninspiring	115 OR directive
77 Not at all hip	98 Fade gradually	116 ___ stick (jumping toy)
79 Rose from a sofa	99 Video-streaming device	117 Algerian port
81 Barn baby	102 Spin	118 Assistance for a sleuth
82 Major Russian river	103 Formed a curve	119 Auto pioneer Benz
83 Second try	106 "Praying" insect	121 Included in an email
85 Vault venue	108 Hanger-on	122 ___ and hearty
86 Multinational grocery chain	110 ___ upswing (rising)	125 Headed up
88 Qatar's capital	112 Govt. security	

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You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at his e-mail address: StanXwords@aol.com. Or write him at P.O. Box 69, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you'd like a reply.





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### SERVICES



# The tastes and smells of the Downey Greek Festival

Continued from page 1

Lamb dinners were available, or one could buy souvlaki, chunks of marinated beef or lamb grilled on a skewer; and also gyro, meat cooked on a vertical rotisserie, then sliced and served wrapped or stuffed in pita bread, with tomato, onion, fried potatoes, and homemade tzatsiki sauce: yogurt, cucumber and spices.

I could get a la carte dishes like moussaka, spanakopites, gigande: dishes with eggplant or spinach or custard or thick baked beans in tomato sauce. I remembered the moussaka, an eggplant casserole with potatoes, in a rich, tomatoey beef sauce, that I had for lunch in Heraklion, Crete, where I fell in love with the Prince of the Lilies in the murals on the walls of the Mycenaean Palace at Knossos. This time I got a lamb dinner to take home and eat later, with rice and Greek salad and dark briny Kalamata olives. Hard choices. Food can conjure up so many memories.

White tables with blue tops and white chairs and sun umbrellas covered the central area, where one could nibble at delicacies or watch the dancing. I closed my eyes and imagined a sunny afternoon in a village. You hear someone get up spontaneously and call out for some friends, and a circle would begin to form, to the music.

At 3 pm it was a village square. At night, because the Festival runs till 10:30 pm, the lights come on, an older crowd arrives, children go off to bed or quiet down, and the scene is a livelier taverna.

A special enclosure sold Greek sweets, like pasta flora and baklava, that honey and walnut treat in phyllo pastry.

Another line formed for the poached loukoumades, traditional Greek doughnuts, deep-fried honey balls that are golden on the outside, and light and fluffy on the inside, drizzled with honey and sprinkled with cinnamon. Families strolled, kids darted back to the children's play area, and everywhere the music permeated the air.

St. George's Church is proud that its festival is not commercially produced. It's definitely Downey-centric. All the lambs are roasted by Downey meat masters who are church members, and the women of the St. George Philoptochos Society have baked the Greek sweets. Money raised from this festival provides things the church needs beyond the everyday running of the church. A few years ago, it was a new roof. Everyone is a volunteer here, and all those grape leaves are extremely nutritious.

On the way out from my visit to the Festival, I always like to

stop in the church itself, an architectural gem in the classic shape of a Greek cross, white as a sugar cube on the outside with its magnificent copper dome. The church is the motivating spirit behind all that these parishioners do.

It has been 22 years since 2001, when I watched the church be built, and saw how it took a giant construction crane to hoist up the steel skeleton of the huge dome with its 30 windows, and place it on its square foundation. To see that superstructure of the dome swing it into place was spectacular.

The church had been built while the Greek community in Downey was worshipping in one of the rooms now displaying the cultural exhibits. When they had enough money to build their own church, they built it. And they didn't open the door till the Metropolitan Antony, who came down from San Francisco to conduct the ceremony, saw that every last bill was paid.

The church interior was cool and quiet. I like to sit there and remember those Downey people who made the church possible, and for me, it is Harold Tseklenis who stands out. Harold led the way in fund raising and he also built the iconostasis for that early make--shift church in his work shop. Harold died two years ago, but he is commemorated in his church.

I remembered that first opening service. The floor was bare cement with the builder's chalk marks still on it and the seats were folding chairs borrowed from another Downey church. Now there are carved wooden pews, and carpeting. The white walls are covered with Bible-themed murals and stories of the saints in church history, and light is everywhere, thanks to the windows in the dome.

The new iconostasis is intricately carved blond sandalwood, bright with the gold-haloed saints, the chandeliers are glittering with hundreds of medallions beside each light. The first decoration to be made, twenty years ago, was in the center of the great dome overhead, a painting of Christ Pantocrator, Ruler of all. The Virgin and Child are painted below.

All the wall decorations have been done over the years by the same artists, a husband and wife team who live in Greece and come over when a new commission arises. Now the Gospel makers fill the corners, and the newest work is the paintings on the south and north transepts, bible stories about the Nativity, the shepherds and the Magi with Byzantine features.

Once home, I dove into the Greek dinner I purchased. I didn't expect a restaurant slice of pink and nearly rare meat: this is the village now. The lamb had been roasted till the meat really

was falling off the bones, and I got all the bones too. So tender it shredded itself, the lamb meat came with crackling skin, rich with the salt rub. It was finger food time.

Mark your calendar now for the first weekend in June in 2024. If you've been to Greece or just visited it on TV with The Durrells in Corfu; if you have danced in your imagination with Zorba on Crete: join the community of St George's Orthodox Greek Church in Downey for another glorious Food Festival and become Greek for the Day. Opa!

## POET'S CORNER

### Breakage

I go down to the edge of the sea.  
How everything shines in the morning light!  
The cusp of the whelk,  
the broken cupboard of the clam,  
the opened, blue mussels,  
moon snails, pale pink and barnacle scarred—  
and nothing at all whole or shut, but tattered, split,  
dropped by the gulls onto the gray rocks and all the moisture gone.  
It's like a schoolhouse  
of little words,  
thousands of words.  
First you figure out what each one means by itself,  
the jingle, the periwinkle, the scallop  
full of moonlight.  
Then you begin, slowly, to read the whole story.

Mary Oliver, *Poetry* (Poetry Foundation, 2003)

*Even with our days of June Gloom weather, there's lots to look for at the beach. Breakage becomes a positive concept, and June 8 is World Oceans Day. Poetry Matters is curated by Lorine Parks.*

# College offers summer program for entrepreneurs

■ The program is open to high school juniors and seniors and is free to attend.

**WHITTIER** — Rio Hondo College has partnered with Lemelson-MIT to guide local students in all disciplines to become a new generation of inventors and entrepreneurs through its Bridge to Invention Rio program.

The program runs from Monday, July 17 through Friday, July 28 and is available at no cost to Rio Hondo College students and high school juniors and seniors.

It will be held at Rio Hondo College from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and will be led by college faculty members in the disciplines of business, engineering, physics and architecture.

Students will learn how to form open-ended inquiries to explore solutions, develop interview techniques and communication skills, and generate business plans that cover pitching, prototyping and funding cycles.

"The Bridge to Invention summer camp will expose students to the problem-solving process that typical inventors go through to better their communities and learn about the invention process," Assistant Professor of Business Eric Caesar said.

"The program will break down the invention process into understandable, relatable, achievable and fun/engaging steps."

Funding for the summer program is made possible through the Title V HSI grant,

or Communities Uniting to Model and Build Regional Entrepreneurial Success, a federal grant created for Hispanic-serving institutions.

Business Management Instructor Marissa Young said she is looking forward to providing participating students with a structured and in-depth look at how to brainstorm, analyze and conceptualize new ideas within a team-based environment.

"Innovation and invention are at the center of progress, and by nurturing the creativity within our Rio Hondo College students and local high school students, we empower them to become catalysts for change," superintendent and president Dr. Marilyn Flores said.

"Our partnership with Lemelson-MIT gives us the opportunity to provide students

with unparalleled opportunities to explore, experiment and develop groundbreaking solutions to real-world challenges."

For more information, including how to enroll, please visit the Bridge to Invention Rio Hondo College website at [www.riohondo.edu/invention](http://www.riohondo.edu/invention) or email [cumbres@riohondo.edu](mailto:cumbres@riohondo.edu).



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**DOWNEY FOUNDATION**  
FOR INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM

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

**Donations can be mailed to:**  
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