



The Downey Patriot

Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023

Vol. 22 No. 39

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As parade nears, Downey Rose Float works on finishing touches

■ For the first time ever, Downey's Rose Parade float will include a live performing band.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY - With just a few short days before the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade, the Downey Rose Float Association is hard at work putting the finishing touches on its 2024 entry.

This year's parade theme is Celebrating a World of Music. Going along with that theme, Downey's entry - called Rhythm of the Caribbean - will feature five large flamingos, 10 animatronic butterflies, Ms. Downey and her court, and steelpan drum band The Islanders, who will be playing live.

The float was designed by Jason Redfox.

"The float's got that touch of the Caribbean with the flamingos and the tropical look, and of course the live steel band playing," said Construction Chair Kelley Roberts. "It's going to be a very musical, fun, colorful, floral float to see in the Rose Parade."

According to Rose Float President Jeremy Clifton, The Islanders have been "playing together and by themselves for several decades."

"Cecil Frances, the gentleman I spoke to to kind of get the ball in motion with it, has been playing the steel pan for 60 years," said Clifton. "He started at 8 years-old out of Trinidad. Each one of those individuals, there's four of them, are originally from the island."

"They've played in different symphonies around the world," added Roberts. "They've taught steel pan, they've done productions, they've done Carnival, they've been everywhere."

The Islanders are donating their time and their performance to Downey Rose Float.

Downey Rose Float Association also has a relatively new source of help in an annual \$30,000 grant from the city that was approved in August.

Clifton called it "truly a blessing."

"Fundraising hasn't been as great as it should be," said Clifton. "As most people know, every single one of us works a full-time job, things have changed in a lot of our jobs, and so we - I don't want to say lack of interest - but lack of time and [we've] been priced out of a lot of venues to do our fundraisers at."

"With the city helping, it is a tremendous relief on the burden on all of us, but we still do fundraise to get to where we're at."

Downey Rose Float association opened up their barn to community volunteers on Tuesday for their annual "Dec week." Prior to its start, Clifton and Roberts said they were ahead of schedule if they "keep their foot to the pedal." Decorations actually started a week before Dec week.

"We're usually the other way around," joked Roberts.

There won't be any relaxing until Jan. 5, when everything is said and done and the float returns to the barn and is "back home." Still, despite all the hard work, long nights, and heaping amounts of stress that come with building a float, there's a sense of pride and legacy that comes with seeing it roll down Colorado Boulevard that makes it all worth it.

"We're a legacy float; we're only one of six that are actually designed, built and decorated solely by volunteers in the granddaddy of them all,



Top: Miss Downey Princess Aliyah Dubon paints one of the five large flamingos that will be featured on Downey's Rose Float.

Bottom: Heidi Baker and other volunteers screen and prep what will eventually be flowers before decoration. (Photos by Alex Dominguez)

Rose Parade," said Roberts. "That's pretty special. It is very special to be one of the six, and now with more support from the city, it's helping us

tremendously.

"Even the support with Los Angeles County, it's like Jeremy said, it's been a

blessing. Because a lot of this stuff could not get done or would not get done without everyone's support in making this float happen."

Warren's JROTC is first high school in country to complete AI course

■ Students discusses AI and its implementations, pros, cons, and ethics.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY - Students in Warren High School's JROTC program were recognized Tuesday for their completion of their Introduction to Artificial Intelligence Course.

The curriculum was a condensed, pilot version of the usually two-semester course from The Coding School. Major Victor Shen described it as "a quick introduction of data sets, machine learning, and how artificial intelligence on the back-end works."

"The significance of artificial intelligence, as we all know with technological advances, is so important that young people understand and learn the foundations of it and get exposed to it early," said Shen. "The first time that they should be exposed to it is as early as possible, and so this is a great setting."

"Whether or not they use it today, we know that they'll use it tomorrow, and so it's extremely important to understand the good, the bad, the ethics behind it, but also the foundations of it."

Warren's JROTC is the first high school JROTC program in the nation to complete the course.

According to Lt. Col. (retired) Melissa Gardner, the senior army instructor for Warren's JROTC program, the Army JROTC program has been making moves more towards STEM-oriented curriculum.

She said having the opportunity to have an AI course "has been phenomenal."

"In preparation for this class...We talked about, 'Where is AI in our everyday life,' and then we talked about the ethical considerations," said Garner. "Once you start looking at it, it's amazing, every single day you see multiple articles and things happening with regards to AI."

This is still just the first year that JROTC has been offered at Warren. Principal Carrie White expressed enthusiasm for the program's continued growth.

"I'm really excited to see the growth in just a short period of time," said White. "I think hiring Lt. Col. Gardner has allowed us to jump in and expose our students to an AI course in their first semester of the program is a phenomenal feat. I'm excited to see where this program will be a year to four years from now, because our students are our future leaders, and to know that they are getting up-to-date, relevant, critical information that is impacting education and the military, as

well as our communities and our overall lifestyles is really encouraging."

Civilian Aide to the Army Mario Guerra commended Downey Unified School District for being "amazing in promoting the educational opportunities for their kids."

"There's no other school in the country that's getting this, nobody else has that infrastructure, has the support from the principal, from the school district," said Guerra. "This is amazing. Our kids are going to be better off for having this."



BIRTHDAYS

Actress MAGGIE SMITH (89), actor DENZEL WASHINGTON (69), TV show host SETH MEYERS (50), R&B singer JOHN LEGEND (45) and actor MILES BROWN (19).

Weekend at a Glance

Friday 65° ☁

Saturday 62° ☁

Sunday 63° ☁

ON THIS DAY

1612:

The first observation of Neptune - Galileo observes and records a "fixed star" without realizing it is a planet.

1732:

Benjamin Franklin under the pseudonym Richard Saunders begins publication of "Poor Richard's Almanack."

1832:

John C. Calhoun becomes the first Vice President to resign due to differences with President Jackson.

1860:

Harriet Tubman arrives in Auburn, New York, on her last mission to free slaves, having evaded capture for 8 years on the Underground Railroad.

1902:

Trans-Pacific cable links Hawaii to US.

1934:

"Bright Eyes" premieres starring Shirley Temple and featuring the song "On the Good Ship Lollipop."

1945:

Congress officially recognizes "Pledge of Allegiance."

1950:

Chinese troops cross 38th Parallel, into South Korea.

1957:

USSR performs atmospheric nuclear test.

1958:

"The Greatest Game Ever Played": Baltimore Colts win the 26th NFL championship against the New York Giants 23-17 at Yankee Stadium, in the first ever sudden-death overtime game in NFL history. 17 future members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame were involved in the game.

1997:

Sting beats Hollywood Hogan for WCW Championship

10 things I'd like to see in Downey in 2024



Editor Eric Pierce would like to see a sold out Downey Symphony performance next year. (Photo by Alex Dominguez)

■ Editor Eric Pierce lists off what he would like to see for the city of Downey in 2024.

By Eric Pierce
Editor

DOWNEY – The 2003-04 NBA season was a rough one for the Lakers.

Favorites to win the championship, they muddled through the regular season before advancing past Houston, San Antonio and Minnesota in the Western Conference playoffs. But in the Finals, they

were stopped by a less flashy but more disciplined Detroit Pistons and the Lakers season was over.

For the Lakers, a franchise that hangs only championship banners in its rafters, the season was an unmitigated failure. In response, they blew up the team, firing head coach Phil Jackson and shipping superstar center Shaquille O'Neal to Miami.

It was time to reset. It was time for new leadership with fresh ideas.

In Memory of



Rosina Panagiotou

May 23, 1935 - December 11, 2023

With immense sadness, the family of Rosina Panagiotou held her hands and surrounded her with love as she passed on Monday, December 11, 2023. Rosina slipped away after a 21 day hospital stay at the age of 88.

Rosina was born on May 23, 1935 in Apatin, Yugoslavia. Taken into a concentration camp in Yugoslavia at the age of nine, Rosina became a fighter early on. With the strength of her mother and sister, they escaped the camp and came to the United States on December 7, 1951 at the age of sixteen. She resided in Inglewood with her mom, dad, and sister, Elisabeth.

She eventually met her beloved husband, John, bought a home in Downey in 1968 and raised their three daughters there. The house has had numerous parties with Rosina as the hostess, always celebrating family and friends.

After retirement, Rosina and John spent much time in John's native homeland of Skyros, Greece. They loved these trips together spending quality time with multiple friends and family.

Rosina was not afraid to try new things or to speak out for what she believed in. She was fearlessly strong and independent even during a time when it wasn't so popular. She was an amazing mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, and friend. She will be deeply missed and is survived by her beloved husband John(92) and their children: RaeLene Reppmann, Amaris Ransom (Craig), and Rosanna Lorberter (Jimmy); grandchildren: Damian, Reannon, Raven, Kelsey, Sydney, Kailyn, and Avery; great grandchildren: Kyler, Corbin, Zander, Malia, Rylee, Giovanni, Charlotte and Stella; and sister: Elisabeth Filijan. She also leaves behind several nieces and nephews who will deeply remember her love and feisty spirit.

Rosina's kindness and passion extended beyond her immediate family, touching the lives of many others who had the privilege of knowing her. She cared deeply for her family and neighbors. She did this not out of obligation, but because of who she was. She was always the first to offer help.

It would be wrong to say that Rosina lost her battle because she never stopped fighting. No matter how sick she was, she was always determined. Through her, her family knows what strength, resilience, and perseverance truly looks like. There was no quit in Rosina. Just because she is no longer here, it doesn't mean she lost her fight. While her family grieves the loss of their strong, independent, and beloved matriarch, they take solace in knowing that she is happily looking down upon them with love and pride.

A celebration of life will be planned in the future to rejoice in her life's accomplishments.



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T-shirts and Chinese food: My Downey wishlist for 2024

With momentum in mind, Alex Dominguez shares what he'd like for Downey next year.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY - As I prepared to sit down and write this article (as has been tradition for a while now), I went back and read my previous entries.

It's amazing to see how far we've come in just a span of a couple of years; there's most definitely been some lows in the city, at times seemingly outweighing the highs.

This time in 2020, we were fully ensnared in the wake of a pandemic, not to mention reeling from the effects of what would prove to be one of the most impactful elections in our city's recent history. By 2021, pandemic fatigue had set in, and with it still, unrest within our city's leadership. Entering 2023, we were looking to plug the holes we had sprouted, starting with the city manager.

But now the city finally feels to be on an upswing; we have fresh, new leaders at our administrative level, and - for the first time in a long time - a full city council.

With that momentum in mind, it's time to present my yearly wish list for the city in the new year.

More Downey-centric merch

I remember being excited to learn that Downey had

merchandise, specifically t-shirts. Unfortunately, I didn't really connect with any of the designs.

Still, I love the concept.

I started to look elsewhere. Sure, I could easily do something custom or search online, but I'd prefer authenticity; I want something of Downey, for Downey, from Downey.

Be it from the city, another organization, a school, or even a small business, I would love to see (and buy) more merch to show off my Downey pride.

More support for Downey Historical Society

When I write these yearly wish list stories, I really try to not repeat myself from previous years. That said, I wrote about the Downey Historical Society needing more support last year.

However, I recently spent a considerable amount of time at the museum to do some research for an article, and experienced first hand just what condition it really is in.

It's cramped and - in certain places - bursting at the seams; it's not easy to spread out several materials at once. In an era of digital cataloging and research, some of the best they could offer was an old microfiche machine.

I pulled out a few folders of old newspapers, and the shelf broke, almost as if it had collapsed out of relief from a heavy load.

None of these revelations are jabs or digs at the Historical Society; I adore them from the bottom of my heart.

I share this experience to emphasize just how much help Bob, Bobbi, and the rest of the folks at the Downey Historical Society really need.

Their materials need to be digitized and cataloged. They could use tidying and reorganizing. In a perfect world, they'd have a new, bigger space.

All of that would require - at the very least - thousands of hours of manpower, and likely a fair amount of money to accomplish, and it can't be done by their few members alone.

The Downey Historical Society needs volunteers. It needs donors. It needs partnerships. It needs support.

The city of Downey has always claimed to be invested and proud of its history; the Historical Society is a great place for it to start.

Trim the beginning of City Council meetings

Every second and fourth Tuesday at their regular council meetings, each member of the city council has time to speak on what they've attended since last they met, as well as pitch ideas for future agenda items, or updates on certain topics. Then,

Manager Roger Bradley gets his turn. Then, if there are any special presentations (awards and such), they come next.

It's not uncommon for a meeting to have gone on for at least an hour before the city council gets to the actual business at hand that evening; to those unlucky enough to have items scheduled at the end of the meeting, vaya con dios.

In the meantime, public comment time has trended to be cut shorter and shorter, based on how many people have requested to speak.

Now, in full disclosure, I was in favor of the initial public comment cuts, having sat through countless meetings where gadfly Armando Herman and his supporting cast of naysayers could easily extend meeting times by one to two hours on their own. If I'm being honest, I rather like the city's current format when it comes to public speaking time, as I think it has mitigated a lot of the challenges that one small group of individuals seems dead-set to impose.

But it becomes harder to swallow when the city council is so generous with their own time at the beginning of the meeting. There needs to be a balance.

I'm not saying that the city council shouldn't say their piece, nor am I saying that awards should never be given;

just that the city council could stand to cut the fat a little.

Keep initial comments brief. Make public presentations fewer and farther in between.

Most importantly, if the meeting is busy enough to cut the public's time to speak, it's busy enough to cut the city council members' time too.

The return of Peking China

It's been over a year since Peking China caught fire.

I know, I miss it too.

While neighboring Bastards has recently "soft opened" and is gearing up for a full return at the beginning of the year, little has been said concerning the fate of the Downtown Downey staple.

While nothing official has been announced in regards to a return, I recently called the Downey Planning Department and was told that permits for demolition (of the damaged components) had been pulled in September, with an inspection occurring in late November.

While it's not much, I'm taking this as a good sign that things are moving forward towards a return of my (and many others) favorite Chinese

restaurant.

Specialty stores

I know I asked for a Target last year; that doesn't mean I don't like specialty stores too.

I would love for Downey to see more niche brick and mortar shops that offer specific products to varying clientele.

Several stores have already popped up over the last few years. Brick LA Caters to sneakerheads and street wear enthusiasts. OG Collectibles to gamers and funkoo collectors.

Maybe it's just me, but I think it's high time we got ourselves a comic book store!

Businesses like these not only contribute to the economy, they provide a sense of personality and flair to the community.

Through the good and the bad, it has been my utmost pleasure and honor to be the staff writer at the Downey Patriot, and to keep the community - the community that raised me - informed on its news and happenings. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year, Downey. I hope that the new year brings you peace, prosperity and health (and Chinese food).

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		ALL SPECIALS ARE SERVED FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL CLOSING. ALL DINNERS INCLUDE YOUR CHOICE OF SOUP OR SALAD, CHOICE OF POTATO, VEGETABLE DE JOUR AND A DINNER ROLL.	
Lobster Tail \$39.95	New York Steak \$32.95	LOBSTER TAIL \$39.95 NEW YORK STEAK \$32.95 New York Steak Broiled to your Taste	
		Dec. 31st New Year's Eve 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.	
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California is doing just fine

Don't let the naysayers fool you; the grass isn't always greener in Florida and Texas

By Froma Harrop

Follow Froma Harrop on Twitter @FromaHarrop. She can be reached at fharrop@gmail.com.

There's a neurotic need in the right-leaning media to declare that California is going down. The future belongs to Texas and Florida, where "woke" is a discouraging word — and climate change is somebody else's problem, if it is a problem.

California has lost population in each of the last three years, while Texas and Florida are growing fast. The "story" is that high taxes are driving the rich out of California. And it's true that some high-profile California magnates have left for Texas and Florida, neither of which tax income.

But that's only a piece of the truth. The number of millionaires in California is actually surging as global wealth continues to flood into the Golden State, according to Bloomberg News. From 2019 through 2021, California's population of millionaire taxpayers has grown by 116,000. The number of residents pulling in more than \$50 million surged 158% to 3,182!

Nonetheless, every time a company moves from California to Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott crows that his

state's lower taxes and laxer environmental laws are draining California's economic might. Texas does regulate businesses with a light touch. Different story if you have a woman's body.

Same goes for Florida, which, like Texas, has virtually banned abortion. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has made a specialty of attacking local businesses for oddball reasons. He pushed through a law forbidding employers to require proof of vaccinations from their workers. And he reserves special punishments for Disney, his state's largest private employer, for daring to disagree with him on gay rights.

Losing population is not always a bad thing. The raps against California include the high cost of housing and brutal traffic. Fewer people means less competition for real estate and fewer cars on the road. Meanwhile, the cost of housing in Austin and Miami has shot skyward.

With 39 million people, California still has 10 million more residents than does Texas, the second most populous state — not that this should matter on the individual level. What does the population race have to do with the quality of life?

That's not to say all is nifty in California. The Californians going elsewhere tend to be middle-class or

poor. Many end up in next-door Arizona or Nevada. The result has been a growing and concerning disparity in wealth.

California still has nice weather and, for those who care about show business, Hollywood. But its great draw is brain power supported by top universities and the tech magnet of Silicon Valley.

Right-wing politics can turn off rich people more than low taxes turn them on. Dave Nixon of the Patriotic Millionaires, a group of well-to-do business leaders who advocate for "fair" taxation, moved back to California in 2022 after selling his St. Pete Beach home in Florida.

San Francisco Mayor London Breed said she knows "several" people who recently returned from Austin for similar reasons. This is clearly anecdotal evidence, but one can believe that a sharp right turn in local politics could get some former Californians down.

There's no point, though, in playing one cultural preference against another. People may go to Florida or Texas — or stay in California — for different reasons. And even some progressive-minded people dislike some of the silly woke stuff or flashy esthetics coming out of Southern California. They would include liberals in Washington state. But suffice it to say, California's economy is doing just fine. A new members-only club demanding initiation fees as high as \$100,000 is opening in San Francisco. Core's backers are assuming that the city's stressed downtown will be coming back.

"If people were telling us, 'I'm planning my exit,'" a club spokeswoman said. "We wouldn't come here."

Will anyone step up to Donald Trump?

Despite him being "out of control," it remains to be seen if anyone will challenge Trump at the Republican Primary

By Susan Estrich

Accusing his political opponents of being "deranged" and "thugs," Donald Trump delivered his Christmas message on Truth Social: "May they rot in hell." Trump is totally out of control. His rhetoric is that of an unstable man. In words that sound like Hitler, he accused immigrants of "poisoning the blood of our country." This is a man who is leading the polls to be the Republican nominee for the presidency. Facing 91 criminal counts, he clearly cannot control himself. The question is who will take him on.

Rep. Debbie Dingell, the congresswoman from Michigan and the widow of John Dingell, the longest-serving member of Congress (59 years), did on CNN, and she got the Trump treatment. She told CNN, rightly, "I think it was one of the most pathetic Christmas greetings I've heard when a former president of the United States who wants to return tells people on Christmas Day that they can rot in hell. He is contributing to the divisiveness and division in this country."

Hours later, Trump went after her. Returning to a grudge he has held since she voted for his impeachment in 2019, he attacked her and her late husband. "When I gave, as President, her long serving husband, the absolute

highest U.S. honors for his funeral, a really big deal, she called me, crying almost uncontrollably, to say that she couldn't believe I was willing to do that for a Democrat," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "She thanked me profusely. Two months later, she was back on the trail ranting and raving about 'TRUMP.'"

It was a repeat of his earlier rebukes of Debbie Dingell, who he excoriated in 2019, complete with attacks on her late husband who he said was "looking up" from hell. As she told CNN, "After he went after me, quite frankly, there were men outside of my house with assault weapons, and I have had threats." His comments on Tuesday no doubt will produce more threats, which didn't slow him down.

Who will?

Not Nikki Haley, at least not yet. The woman who is emerging as Trump's leading challenger for the Republican nomination is pursuing a strategy that commentators generously call "playing it safe." She is, depending on which poll you believe, leading the pack of Republicans who are trying to catch Trump, who, despite being out of control, is still well ahead. Haley has yet to call him out for the divisiveness and ugliness that Dingell took issue with. "He was the right president for the right

time," she says of Trump, who she announced at the first debate she would support even if he was convicted of criminal charges. "The thing is, normal people aren't obsessed with Trump like you guys are," she told one reporter earlier this month.

The strategy of not taking on the front-runner may make sense in a Republican primary, but it is not a sign of courage or leadership. Whether or not "normal people" are obsessed with Trump, the fact is that he poses an existential threat. What a president says matters, and having a president who is as out of control as Trump clearly poses real dangers. Imagine what would happen if Joe Biden talked like that. He would be accused of having "lost it" completely. Trump gets away with it because those who know better don't dare to speak up, lest they offend his base and get the Trump treatment, complete with assault weapons at their door. Haley, known as a disciplined campaigner who sticks to her scripts, is letting the most undisciplined man to contend for the highest office get away with murder.

Is she running for president or for a place on his ticket?

Donald Trump Jr. was busy this week trying to stop the buzz about Haley joining the ticket. "I wouldn't have her and I would go to great lengths to make sure that that doesn't happen," he told Newsmax. Maybe not. But would his father? The test for Haley in the weeks between now and the voting is whether she will step up to the challenge of running against a man who she herself acknowledges brings "chaos" in his wake, or continue to play it safe. Debbie Dingell has courage, which is what we should expect of our leaders. Does Nikki Haley?

Public shift on crime may be Gascon's downfall

By Debra J. Saunders

Debra J. Saunders is a fellow at the Discovery Institute's Chapman Center for Citizen Leadership. Contact her at dsaunders@discovery.org.

In 2020, after Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon won office with nearly 54% of the vote, advocates for so-called reforms in the criminal justice system could exhale.

When he runs for reelection in 2024, however, Gascon's sweet ride may come to an abrupt halt. During his tenure, Angelenos have become more concerned about crime, not less. Incarceration is not the dirty word it once was.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, violent crime in California rose by 5.7% between 2021 and 2022.

Critics point to Proposition 47, a ballot measure approved by voters in 2014 that reduced penalties for nonviolent crimes and downgraded theft under \$950 from a felony to a misdemeanor. A shorthand description of Prop. 47 would be: Steal a gun, don't go to prison.

Gascon, then San Francisco District Attorney, was a co-author of the measure. He can't escape history, so he's repeating it.

Gascon just named a new chief of staff, Tiffiny Blacknell, a former public defender who, as the 2020 George Floyd riots erupted, posted an expletive-laden rant on the platform then known as Twitter.

"So please don't come on my page complaining about protesters or looters," Blacknell wrote. Blacknell, who is Black, also described America as "a country where your people are murdered by a militarized police force paid to control YOU."

Morale has not been particularly high in law enforcement of late. So, what does Gascon do? He hires as his chief gatekeeper someone who defended looters while she trash-talked police.

And he has done so with the arrogance of a politician who hasn't really paid for his mistakes. Yet.

Gascon is a political animal. He had the right progressive politics as he rose in office. Ergo, in 2011, he was appointed to serve as San Francisco district attorney after (now Vice President) Kamala Harris was elected state attorney general.

Unlike Harris, Gascon had yet to try a case in court — but that didn't stop then Mayor Gavin Newsom from making Gascon the city's top prosecutor.

The savvy politician sees how public opinion changes — slowly, then all at once. But Gascon doesn't seem to see where this likely ends.

You've heard the saying that a conservative is a liberal who got mugged.

California voters don't want to think they were wrong to pass Prop. 47, which is why past attempts to shave it back have failed. But they also don't want to be afraid to go out at night.

If someone must be afraid to venture forth, let it be shoplifters and burglars. Because they're not afraid now.

The Downey Patriot

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Legal Notices

Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023

FICT. BUS NAME

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023271408

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) RIZO INSURANCE AGENCY, 8217 BIRCHCREST RD, DOWNEY CA 90240, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) MAGDALENA LILIANA RIZO RIZO, 8217 BIRCHCREST RD, DOWNEY CA 90240 State of Incorporation: CA

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 12/2023

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/MAGDALENA LILIANA RIZO RIZO, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 19, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023274449

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) PERFORMANCE POWER AND CONTROLS, 14351 RAMO DR, LA MIRADA CA 90638, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) JOHN BUSCH, 14351 RAMO DR, LA MIRADA CA 90638

State of Incorporation: CA

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/JOHN BUSCH, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 22, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023268054

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) IMG MVR PRODUCTIONS, 7226 BENARES ST., DOWNEY CA 90241, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) KARLOS RAMIREZ, 7226 BENARES ST., DOWNEY CA 90241

State of Incorporation: N/A

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 10/2022

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/KARLOS RAMIREZ, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 14, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023268785

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) SILVIAS 99 CENT & UP, 228 GLENDALE BLVD, LOS ANGELES CA 90026, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) SILVIA ELIZABETH SOLANO, 228 GLENDALE BLVD, LOS ANGELES CA 90026

State of Incorporation: N/A

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 12/2023

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/SILVIA ELIZABETH SOLANO, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 15, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed

in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023246385

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) AIRMAN FLIGHT TRAINING, 4235 DONALD DOUGLAS DRIVE, HANGER 1, LONG BEACH CA 90808, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 16923 STOWERS AVE, CERRITOS CA 90703

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) AMBEYO LLC, 4235 E. DONALD DOUGLAS DRIVE, HANGER 1, LONG BEACH CA 90808

State of Incorporation: CA

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: a Limited Liability Company

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/MAGDALENA LILIANA RIZO RIZO, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 19, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023246385

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) AIRMAN FLIGHT TRAINING, 4235 DONALD DOUGLAS DRIVE, HANGER 1, LONG BEACH CA 90808, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 16923 STOWERS AVE, CERRITOS CA 90703

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) RAUL MORENO FLORES, 1151 E LANZIT AVE, LOS ANGELES CA 90059

State of Incorporation: N/A

THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

S/RAUL MORENO FLORES, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 28, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/27/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023252794

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) STAN4DRIVE, 125 POPPY AVE, B, MONROVIA CA 91016, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) STANLEY NICHOLAS JR MASSEY, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/27/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023252794

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) STAN4DRIVE, 125 POPPY AVE, B, MONROVIA CA 91016, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) STANLEY NICHOLAS JR MASSEY, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot

12/27/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24, 1/18/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File Number 2023252794

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) STAN4DRIVE, 125 POPPY AVE, B, MONROVIA CA 91016, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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Legal Notices/Classifieds

Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023

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Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023252304

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) TRUE VINE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH, 5238 CLARK ST., LYNWOOD CA 90262, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) TRUEVINE COMMUNITY OUTREACH, 5238 CLARK ST., LYNWOOD CA 90262

State of Incorporation: CA THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: a Corporation

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/TRUEVINE COMMUNITY OUTREACH, TREASURER, THOMAS MATTHEWS

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 22, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/7/23, 12/14/23, 12/21/23, 12/28/23

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023259461

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) ZAUDIS-OM, 17129 LESLIE AVE, CERRITOS CA 90703, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, P.O. BOX 3332, CERRITOS CA 90703

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) JOSE ALEJANDRO BRITO, 17129 LESLIE AVE, CERRITOS CA 90703 (2) Zaida Judith Gomez De Brito, 17129 LESLIE AVE, CERRITOS CA 90703

State of Incorporation: CA THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: a Married Couple

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/JOSE ALEJANDRO BRITO, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 4, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/14/23, 12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023257465

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) FUL COACHING, 1706 HARPER AVENUE, REDONDO BEACH CA 90278, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) FEAST LLC, 1706 HARPER AVENUE, REDONDO BEACH CA 90278

State of Incorporation: DE THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: a Limited Liability Company

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 10/2023

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/ FEAST LLC, MEMBER, RACHEL PALAY

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 30, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/7/23, 12/14/23, 12/21/23, 12/28/23

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023259005

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) JC MOTORCYCLE PARTS AND GEAR, 4980 FIRESTONE BLVD, SOUTH GATE CA 90280, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) ALBERTO CORREA ROMO, 4982 FIRESTONE BLVD, SOUTH GATE CA 90280

State of Incorporation: N/A THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/ALBERTO CORREA ROMO, OWNER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on DECEMBER 4, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023260909

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, 10402 NEWVILLE AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241, COUNTY OF

LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, 10402 NEWVILLE AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241

State of Incorporation: CA THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

I declare that all the information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions Code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, MEMBER, RACHEL PALAY

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on NOVEMBER 30, 2023

Notice - In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the affidavit of identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name in violation of the rights of another under Federal, State or Common Law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code).

The Downey Patriot
12/21/23, 12/28/23, 1/4/24, 1/11/24

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023260909

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, 10402 NEWVILLE AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241, COUNTY OF

LOS ANGELES

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number (if applicable): AI #ON: N/A REGISTERED OWNERS(S): (1) ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, 10402 NEWVILLE AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241

State of Incorporation: CA THIS BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED BY: an Individual

The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: N/A

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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File Number 2023260909

THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) IS (ARE) DOING BUSINESS AS: (1) ELITE PERFORMANCE CLUB, 10402 NEWVILLE AVE, DOWNEY CA 90241, COUNTY OF

Transgender teen stands up for NLMUSD Wellness Centers

Damien Berry has defended the Wellbeing Center in NLMUSD while navigating his own journey of self-discovery and acceptance.

By Vincent Medina
Contributor

NORWALK - Damien Berry, a 15-year-old sophomore at Norwalk High School (NHS), listens as over a dozen people voice their transphobia and spread misinformation about the Wellbeing Center at John Glenn High School until it is finally his turn to make a public comment. The Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District meeting room is silent as Berry explains that, as a trans person, he feels it is important kids have somewhere to go where they feel safe if they don't feel they can talk to friends or family.

Members of MassResistance, a group that was labeled a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, have been coming out regularly since June to protest the center with like-minded anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQIA+ advocates. The organization spreads the unfounded claim on social media that Planned Parenthood trained the staff at the center to push abortions and an agenda of "sex mutilation" on students to become transgender.

Erin Berry, Damien's mother, learned of the group and their activism and spoke out against them during a school board meeting in August. She later told Damien about the group's messaging, and he decided to get involved. He and his friends went to a meeting in September, where he defended the center and his trans community.

"People were getting a lot of misinformation and they didn't understand why the Center was

there," Damien said. "I thought it was important to show people [the center] could help kids and it was actually a good thing the center was there."

The Wellbeing Center provides substance use prevention, mental health support, sexual health education and support to students. It also includes parent education workshops to teach parents how to communicate sensitive topics to their children effectively.

"I don't like bullies, and I don't like when people attack something just because they don't understand everything or agree with everything," Erin said. "I saw they were posting online that 'no one is born gay,' 'No one is born trans' and it made me pissed and scared for kids who are."

In school and growing up, Damien explained something was different between him and his peers. After discovering his love for theater and finding friends he could relate with, he still felt he was missing something.

"I knew I was different in one capacity, but I didn't know if it was because I liked guys and girls or if it was because I didn't fully feel comfortable in my body," Damien said. "I was different from people, but I didn't know exactly how different until I realized that I was trans."

Damien began to understand he was transgender in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As his knowledge of the LGBTQIA+ community was very limited, Damien did not know a person could be transgender. He struggled to describe how he felt until he discovered the trans community on social media and people whose stories heavily reflected his own. Damien resonated with their discussions of feeling like they did not belong anywhere, feeling uncomfortable

in their bodies, and feeling they were not their gender assigned at birth.

Not ready to accept that he was transgender, Damien experimented with different names and pronouns, trying to find which felt more comfortable to him. He described the process as "picking different ice cream toppings then realizing you don't need all of them until finally, you find the perfect base."

He tried using gender-fluid pronouns they/them and the name Alchemy. He found it fitting as alchemy is defined by Merriam-Webster as the medieval chemical process of transformation, where base metals were turned into gold.

Damien received support and acceptance from his mother. However, Erin asked him for patience as she adapted to the new name and frequently changed pronouns, explaining his pronouns would change as he figured out what felt best.

"It didn't necessarily get me confused, it was just it was a lot to go from something that changed all the time," Erin said. "It was kind of overwhelming, and I messed up the name a lot, but when he told me he wanted to be called Alchemy and his pronouns, I said, 'okay' and accepted it."

She found that switching from calling him by the name he was born with, his dead name, to Alchemy was easier than switching from calling him Alchemy to Damien.

A year ago, Damien accepted that he was transgender instead of gender fluid. He took on the pronouns he/him and the preferred name Damien, with Alchemy as his middle name.

Erin and Damien agreed that his younger brother Jeremiah was the most accepting, expressing

he had forgotten Damien's dead name because he is used to calling him by his chosen name. Jeremiah began calling him Alch, short for Alchemy, and then Dami for Damien.

However, his father was not as understanding of Damien. Initially coming out to him as gender fluid, Damien said he and his father argued about his gender identity, and it shattered his confidence.

"I told him, 'I think I'm gender fluid,' because I wanted to lay it down softly on him. Then he went, 'Honestly, I don't think you are,' and I could not talk to him for three days," Damien said. "I ended up talking to him about it and saying, 'This is who I think I am. I may not fully know yet, but I know I'm not [deadname]. So, I just wanted to tell you because I trusted you.'"

Damien is also worried about how the rest of his family would react, as they are very conservative. He and Erin are working out the right way to tell them.

At school, his friends do their best to support him and understand what he needs to be comfortable.

Erin and Lydia Wackerman have been friends for years, and subsequently, their children also became friends.

Paul Wackerman is a junior at Norwalk High School, but he and Damien first met in elementary school when they had to attend a PTA meeting with their parents.

As their friendship grew, Damien confided in Paul when he was gender-fluid and again when he realized he was transgender.

"Nothing changed for me, they are now he," Paul said. "He's still my friend, that's not going to change anything."

Lydia explained she has



always taught her kids to be open and accepting of others and to be an ally to the LGBTQIA+ community.

"I was a Scoutmaster, and one of the kids came out to me, and I was worried if the boys were going to share a tent with him, but Paul had no problem with it," Lydia said. "I love the younger generation because it seems to be more accepting."

The Wackermans were there to accompany Damien when he defended the Wellbeing Center in September.

Damien explained Norwalk High School's wellness center can help him when he becomes overwhelmed. The on-site counselor he can talk with to manage his anxiety, usually during pep rallies when it is too loud.

"I could remember having a big panic attack, so last year we decided that whenever a pep rally happened, I would just go to the Wellness Center," Damien explained. "It was way too loud. I could feel everything, and I realized that my brain just shut down. I talked to a school therapist about it, and he said that a major contributor to everything was my anxiety and depression."

The Wellness Center at NHS focuses more on mental health, while the Wellbeing Center at John Glenn High School offers more services for mental health, education and therapy. Damien is passionate about fighting for it so others like him can access its resources.

After graduating high school, Damien hopes to continue pursuing theater and advocate for the transgender community. He also hoped to connect with more members of the LGBTQIA+ community over the summer.

MassResistance has expressed their desire to continue protesting against the Wellbeing Center during Norwalk La Mirada Unified board of education meetings, which they believe is pushing "transgenderism" on students.

Damien hopes to be there to speak against them.

"There is an argument that kids are not born gay, but that would also mean kids are not born straight," Damien said. "I would also argue that if kids are not born trans, then they are not born cis."

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HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024

DOWNEY COLLECTIVE CALENDAR

March 23rd

**STONEWOOD MALL
DOWNEY, CA
11AM-3PM**



April 13th

**FRONT STREET
NORWALK, CA
2PM-7PM**



May 4th

**BROOKSHIRE AVE.
DOWNEY, CA
10AM-4PM**



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Assemblywoman Pacheco secures endorsement

DOWNEY - Continuing to pick up steam in her re-election campaign for State Assembly District 64, Assemblywoman Blanca Pacheco announced a sought-after endorsement from the California Young Democrats.

In making public their endorsement of Assemblywoman Blanca Pacheco's re-election campaign, Navkaran Gurm, California Young Democrats (CYD) Political Director, remarked:

"Blanca Pacheco has been a courageous and bold leader for the people of California's 64th Assembly District. She also recognizes the challenges young people face in California, from the lack of housing that is affordable to the sky high cost of higher education and the need for more good paying jobs. That's why Blanca has been a champion for

young people in the legislature, working to advance an agenda that addresses these key issues, while building a California that is more fair and just for everyone. The California Young Democrats proudly endorse Blanca Pacheco for re-election."



By Dr. Alan Frischer

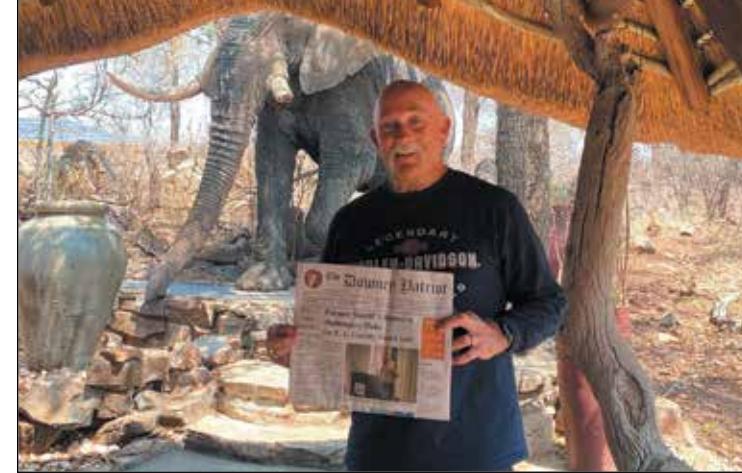
There have been advances in treatment for chronic kidney disease (CKD). We have, as you likely are aware, two kidneys, which are fist-sized bean-shaped organs located toward our back, on either side of our spine, and just underneath our rib cage. Their main job is to clean the blood - getting rid of toxins, waste and excess water through the urine. Our kidneys also balance electrolytes (including salt and potassium) and minerals, produce hormones that control blood pressure, make red blood cells, and keep our bones strong.

There are five stages of chronic kidney disease, with stage 1 (mild) through 5 (kidney failure) based on how well the kidneys filter out waste from the blood. The diagnosis is made through blood and urine tests.

Loss of kidney function can occur in a matter of days, or over years. As we grow older, there is some gradual decline of kidney function, but this loss accelerates when other factors are present. These include type 1 or type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, smoking, obesity, glomerulonephritis, interstitial nephritis, polycystic kidney disease, prolonged obstruction of the urinary tract (from an enlarged prostate, kidney stones, or some cancers), recurrent kidney infections, severe dehydration, lupus, multiple myeloma, and some medications.

In the early stages, chronic kidney disease typically shows no symptoms. Over time, as kidney damage progresses, the loss of kidney function can cause a buildup of fluid or body waste, or problems with electrolytes. Depending on how severe it is, symptoms can include nausea, vomiting, bubbly urine, itchy skin, loss of appetite, fatigue and weakness, sleep problems, urinating more or urinating less, decreased mental sharpness, muscle cramps, swelling of feet and ankles, dry skin, hypertension, shortness of breath, and chest pain. Because these complaints are seen in a number of conditions, a diagnosis may very well not be made until after irreversible damage has occurred.

What can be done to reduce your risk of CKD? Avoid excessive



While on safari at the Chobe National Park in Northern Botswana, Greg and Barbara Risher Welch, were visit by Dennis, an African Bull Elephant that was obviously curious as the happenings in Downey.

Musical shines light on life and music of George Michael

CERRITOS — The late Grammy winner and Rock & Roll Hall of Famer George Michael still ranks on Billboard's "Greatest Hot 100 Artists of All Time" list as well as Rolling Stone's "200 Greatest Singers of All Time" list.

"The Life and Music of George Michael" chronicles the singer-songwriter's amazing journey with music and his illustrious career. It comes to the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA) on Friday, Feb. 2 at 8 p.m. Ticket prices start at \$38.

Michael rose to fame as a member of the British Pop duo Wham! in the early '80s, selling more than 115 million albums with the international hit songs "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go," "Careless Whisper," "Last Christmas," "Freedom," "I'm

Your Man," and "Everything She Wants."

The resounding success catapulted Michael into an even more successful solo run with one of the biggest-selling pop albums of all time: *Faith*, which featured the No. 1 hits "Faith," "Monkey," "Father Figure" and "One More Try."

A new theatrical concert event, "The Life and Music of George Michael" uses staging and lighting to capture the performance and sound of the late legend who over the course of his illustrious career collected two Grammys, three BRIT Awards, three American Music Awards, and four MTV Video Music Awards.

For tickets or more information, call (562) 916-8500 or go to cerritoscenter.com.

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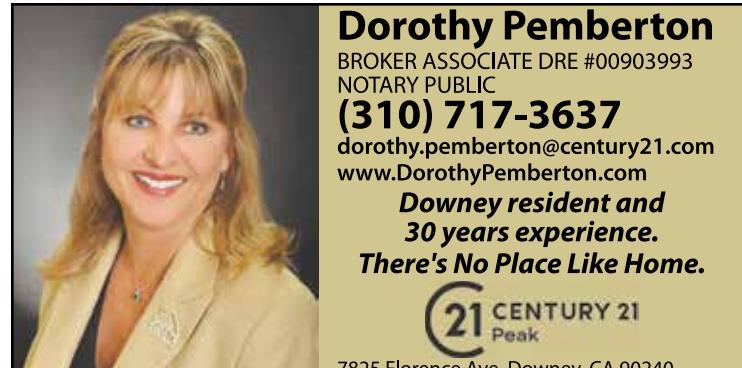
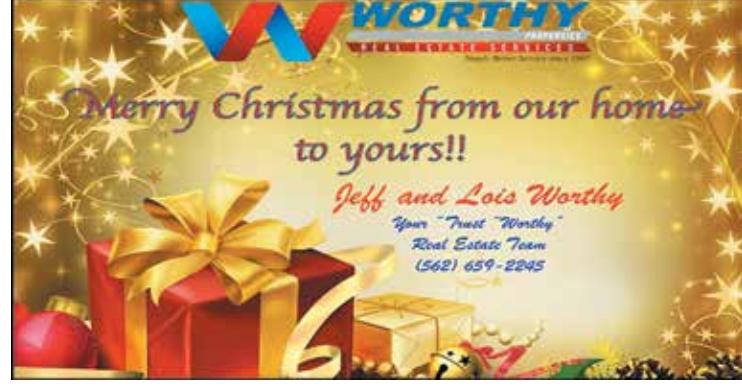
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-K. Ryan

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