



The Downey Patriot



Girls spread Christmas cheer
See Page 8



Nursing students graduate
See Page 12



Helping the less fortunate
See Page 3

Friday, December 25, 2009

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

Message from the mayor

BY ANNE M. BAYER,
MAYOR OF DOWNEY

Dear Downey Neighbors, I find it hard to believe another year has come and gone.

As Mayor and on behalf of the entire City Council, I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a holiday season full of hope and joy for the future. As this year draws to a close, I want to express my personal thanks to the thousands of volunteers that make each holiday season so special to so many. Their generosity, year after year, brighten smiles and lift the hearts of our community. Even with many families struggling to get through this current dip in the economy, the unselfish giving has once again proven the true spirit of the season is alive and well in Downey.



We are so blessed as a city to be so well positioned during this time. Special thanks to Downey's management team for their commitment to fiscal conservatism, which has resulted in substantial saving over the past decade. This commitment has resulted in substantial increases in the city's reserves, which today allow for cautious optimism instead of deep concern. I personally want to thank our soon to retire Assistant City Manager, Lee Powell, for his decades of service to our city. Lee has overseen the city's finances in an outstanding manner and has always kept the long term financial health of Downey as his number one priority. The results of this philosophy are now paying off. Thank you, Lee, you will be missed.

2009 was an outstanding year in terms of progress and improvements to our wonderful city. Programs like neighborhood watch, the annual holiday tree lighting, and concerts in the park continue to draw record participation. The infrastructure improvements completed along Lakewood Boulevard, specifically at the Firestone and Imperial intersections, eliminated two of the worst traffic headaches in our city. The weekly farmers market and the newly installed military banners bring the small town feel to Downey.

As residents, we have many reasons to be thankful this holiday season. I commend my colleagues and our city staff for the outstanding job in 2009. Downey stands ready to become the destination to live, work, shop, and play in southeast Los Angeles County.

So as we celebrate this holiday season, I hope you find even more time to spend not just with your family, but with those very special friends and neighbors in this great town. Let us all use this time to reflect and count our blessings. For God has truly shined a special light over Downey. Remember His love and remember the true meaning of the season.

To our family and friends who can't make it home to Downey this year but who may be reading this message over the internet, as Mayor of Downey, I extend our most heartfelt Christmas greetings, wishes and prayers to you.

And to everyone here in Downey, I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous, healthy and Happy New Year in 2010.

God Bless you all.



RENDERING COURTESY DOWNEY ROSE FLOAT ASSOCIATION

Rose Parade float decorating begins tomorrow

■ Float is 45 feet long, 31 feet tall, 16 feet wide, and is costing approximately \$80,000 to build.

BY HENRY VENERACION,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – By today, the "building" phase of the Downey float will be over, with all the pounding, all the welding, all the screening of shapes, all the touchups done.

Tomorrow, the day after Christmas, the decoration phase – the real fun part – begins. This is when more than 100 volunteers – young and old alike, from Downey and beyond – will participate in breathing life into a goliath's skeletal frame that has lain motionless for months in its Erickson Avenue hangar.

They will be gluing on seeds, lentils, ground carrot, orange beans and the like for the first four days before blanketing the float with fresh pink roses and myriad types of orchids in the run-up to the Tournament of Roses Parade New

Year's Day.

In its final configuration, the Ford 351 Windsor float truck with its brand-new engine, a rebuilt transmission, and its accoutrements will roll down Colorado Boulevard in all its 45-ft. long, 16-ft. width, and 31-ft. tall glory.

Downey's maritime-themed entry this year, "Jewels of the Pacific," features all manner of tropical fish swimming about a coral reef. The most prominent are three huge puffer fish, while jellyfish hover and angel fish and clown fish circle close by, while sea snails, sea stars, and a stingray hug the ocean floor. As usual, Miss Downey and her court will round out the float.

The depiction of some of the sea's marvels again sprang from the fecund imagination of Jason Redfox. Its wonderful rendering was done by Thom Neighbors.

The Downey Rose Float Association's entry last year won the prestigious Founder's Trophy, the ninth time it has won the award since its founding in 1952. Association president this year is Susan Domen.

Home invasion reported at Downey apartment

■ Robbers escape with \$2,300 worth of property. No one was hurt.

BY CHRISTIAN BROWN,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – Downey police are still on the search for the three suspects who invaded a Downey apartment complex on Sunday, taking nearly \$2,300 worth of possessions.

According to police, the home invasion robbery took place late Sunday night around 11 p.m., when the victims, who live on the 10000 block of Imperial Highway, heard a

knock at the door.

Upon opening the door, the first suspect asked for an individual by name. When the victim told him that no one by that name lived at the residence, a second suspect wearing a black ski mask and brandishing a handgun ran inside the apartment.

The victims were ordered to the ground, and one was bound, while the three suspects ransacked the apartment.

The suspects escaped on foot with the property, leaving the victims shaken up, but unharmed.

Police describe the suspects as Hispanic males in their early 20's. Sgt. Alex Irizabal said police

canvassed the area, but have picked up no solid leads yet.

Sunday's invasion marks the second home invasion in the last two weeks, but Irizabal assures residents that there has been no large spike in home invasions.

"They're very sporadic," he said. "But please be vigilant – talk to people through the window. You open the door to help these people, but they're just trying to get you to lower your defenses."

Anyone with information on the robbery should contact Detective Steve Aubuchon at (562) 904-2361 or Detective Paul Hernandez at (562) 904-2368.

A Christmas display far from ordinary

■ House at 7857 Cole St. leaves spectators in awe.

BY CHRISTIAN BROWN,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – This Christmas, Johnny Sibaja wasn't going to put up his usual lights display, but after some quick contemplation, the 32-year-old engineer couldn't resist.

With 112 computerized channels, 7 circuit boards, 25 spot lights and 6 water pumps that shoot streams of water high into the air, Sibaja's outdoor Christmas display is far from ordinary.

Since 2007, the Downey native has produced an elaborate light and water show in his front yard using a computer program called Light-O-Rama, which allows its owners to animate their light displays by synchronizing them with holiday music.

When Sibaja first saw the technology in action, he was mesmerized.

"A couple of years ago, there was a video going around the internet of this house. It was somebody back east – their lights and music were all synchronized," said Sibaja. "My sister forwarded it to me and said, 'Top this.' I said, 'That's my new challenge – I need to do this.'"

After some online research, Sibaja, who graduated from ITT Technological Institute in 2002 with a Bachelor's degree in Electronics Engineering, found the Light-O-Rama software and began drafting his own light show.

Before his computerized orchestration comes to life, Sibaja programs each light and water feature, selecting which actions they must do for every second of the 13 songs he runs continually in a loop each night.

Although the music is played

outside the home, visitors can also listen to the music inside their cars. Sibaja uses a small FM broadcaster, which plays his music on 107.7 FM, broadcasting the holiday tunes more than 200 feet from his house so sightseers can hear them, while viewing the choreographed show.

As jazzy horns blast in the background, bright beams of light skip, hop and twirl over wide arches. In the front window, a life-sized bear dressed in a red Santa suit moves his lips as if to sing "Jingle Bells," while water pops up into the air, colored by green, blue and red lights.

Depending on its length, Sibaja said it takes anywhere from four to eight hours to program one song into his computer.

"I try to concentrate on one particular area at a time," he said. "I can see the peaks in the music and I try to match the lights with it."

Though the intricate display adds about \$50-\$60 more to Sibaja's monthly light bill, the Downey High School graduate maintains that the sacrifice is well worth it.

"I've spent over \$1,000 for the equipment I have so far," said Sibaja. "I do it for the people. I've always decorated, but I just wanted something unique and different. The kids love it – I just want to give back to them and say 'Merry Christmas.'"

Sibaja's home is located at 7857 Cole St. where his show runs Sunday through Thursday from 6 – 10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 5:30 – 10:30 p.m. However, Sibaja said he will extend the show until midnight this weekend for Christmas. The show will end after New Year's weekend.

As for Sibaja, the buzz word for next year's light show is "more."

"I'm already thinking of what to do next year," he said. "I want more channels, more LED lights – maybe more water features."

Economist Jack Kyser bearish on economy

BY HENRY VENERACION,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – As 2009 draws to a close, Downey resident and Los Angeles economic guru Jack Kyser sees the California economy in the midst of a "very, very slow recovery period" lasting into 2011.

On a year-to-year basis, unemployment continues to go up, he said, while it shows signs of going down in some sectors. Meanwhile, manufacturing is still groaning "under a lot of pressure."

The paucity of activity in construction, especially in the commercial sector, may put a brake on economic activity for two more years. In this regard, a handful of major construction projects are on track to benefit LAX and John Wayne airports.

Investment activity has of course not yet gotten its legs back as a result of the global financial crisis.

Signs of a modest recovery in international trade (a major California mainstay), coupled with a modest uptick on tourism, another economic driver ("One boost is the

just-completed 1,000-room Marriott-Carlton hotel that will cater to the Staples/Convention Center area"), are encouraging but the consumer is still cautious in his spending.

"It's not so easy to get a credit card nowadays," Kyser said, even as he gave a thumbs-up on the coming of Fresh & Easy market.

In short, he said, we've had a "not so wonderful year," but at least the economy has not been exactly derailed.

In an exclusive phone interview, Kyser further said that next year's governor's race will be very interesting as some initiatives are put on the ballot.

"Some of these will be controversial and the protagonists will resort to a lot of advertising. This is good news, of course, to the advertising industry which has also taken hits."

As far as Tesla Motors is concerned, he said, "We're keeping our fingers crossed. If it comes to Downey, it will be very positive for the city."

Giving spirit is alive at Cerritos College

NORWALK – Couches and tables in the Student Activities office were completely buried in mountains of canned soup, snacks and instant noodles the week before Thanksgiving this year.

The Annual ASCC-sponsored Student Activities Office Food Drive competition has been a tradition at Cerritos College for more than 20 years. The food was donated to the Norwalk City Council's Holiday Food Basket Program to help less fortunate families in the Norwalk area.

More than 36,000 non-perishable food items were brought in by campus clubs and individuals from the community.

Members of the City of Norwalk were stunned when they saw the "wall" in the Student Activities office.

"I'm seeing more donations today than any previous years," said Tak Hamabata, director of Social Services at the City of Norwalk. "These will get us through early next year, which means we can help families in need have a happy holiday season."

With the economy still in a slump and unemployment in double digits, Hamabata said he sees many middle-class families and individuals who have never needed assistance before applying for help this year.

"Considering it's the toughest time for everybody, Cerritos College students really stepped up and collected an amazing amount of donations," said Gordon Stefenhagen, vice mayor of Norwalk, who started the City of Norwalk Food Basket Program over 20 years ago. "Cerritos College students sure are giving back to their community, and we truly appreciate it."

Celena Murillo, president of the Court Reporting Club, called and visited local grocers and collected



PHOTO COURTESY CERRITOS COLLEGE

More than 36,000 food items were donated to Cerritos College to help needy families in the Norwalk area. Officials said they are seeing more middle-class families in need of assistance.

over 7,000 food items. "I am grateful for all the local grocers who willingly helped us," said Murillo. "But a can which individuals donate from their pantry really does count."

"Personally, I am in awe of the generosity I have seen this year in donations. What a refreshing experience," said Mickey England, Court Reporting Club advisor, who collected upwards of 4,000 food items. "Thank you for this opportunity to give back. It has been a joy!"

Food is not the only thing being donated at Cerritos College. The Follett Bookstore participated in the 9th Annual City of Norwalk Angel Tree Project.

The bookstore has participated in the effort since the project's inception, according to Paul Flovick, the Follett Bookstore's store manager.

Working with the City of Norwalk Social Service Center, the campus bookstore hangs laminated angel ornaments on a Christmas tree. Each angel has the name, age, sex and clothing size of a local needy child. The donor can pick which child they would like to buy for, and then return a wrapped gift back to the bookstore.

"This year we received about 25 angels," said Flovick, adding that it took a little longer than before to have all of the angels

adopted this year, probably due to the economy. "But they all eventually found a donor."

"It's a wonderful opportunity for everyone on campus to reach out to local kids in need," said Flovick.

"It's nice in these economic times that our students have shown their holiday spirit and stepped up at a record pace at this year's food drive," said Student Activities Director Holly Bogdanovich. "We are proud of the Cerritos College students who are giving back to their community. Their donations truly make a difference."



The office of Assemblyman Hector De La Torre donated toys, including remote-controlled cars from Tesla Motors, to a needy Downey family last week. The family, shown above with City Council members, Dr. Robert Jagielski of the Downey Unified School District and Mike Hollon of De La Torre's office, also received gift certificates.



The TLC Family Resource Center was joined by the Angel Tree committee last Sunday to celebrate its 10th anniversary in Downey. TLC has assisted more than 3,000 children since its inception. On Sunday, more than 300 kids received gifts and met with Santa Claus.



Betty Monroy was the recipient of a Habitat for Humanity home, which was dedicated last week. Volunteers spent more than 8,500 hours constructing the home, located on Blodgett Avenue. From left: council members Roger Brossmer and Mario Guerra, Monroy, Mayor Pro Tem Luis Marquez and Councilman David Gafin.

Two people shot at Downey nightclub

DOWNEY – Two people are expected to survive after being shot last week at Vasilio's nightclub in Downey.

Police responded at about 1:09 a.m. on Dec. 18 to a "shots fired" call in the parking of Vasilio's, located at 7931 Firestone Blvd., police said in a news release.

Police found two gunshot victims, described as a 24-year-old female, of Altadena, and a 28-year-old male, of Compton.

The victims are listed in stable condition at local hospitals, police said. Their wounds are not considered life-threatening.

A fight inside the club may have spilled into the parking lot where the shooting occurred, police said. After the shooting, the suspect, described only as a male black, fled in an unknown color vehicle.

Police believe the shooting may be gang-related.

Anyone with information on the shooting is asked to call Detective Maria Villegas at (562) 904-2342 or Detective Sam Gatfield at (562) 904-2391.

Toastmasters open house

DOWNEY – Residents interested in improving their communication, speaking and leadership skills are invited to the Toastmaster Club 587 open house on Jan. 5 at First Baptist Church of Downey.

Chris Bowen, a teacher in the Downey Unified School District, will be the guest speaker. He will sign copies of his book, "Our Kids: Building Relationships in the Classroom."

Bowen was recently honored



Chris Bowen

as Teacher of the Year for Los Angeles County.

The open house will be held inside Room 116 at 6 p.m. The public is invited and light refreshments will be served.

For more information, call Fionnuala Anderson at (562) 928-2658 or John McAllister at (562) 500-7675.

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Art competition accepting entries

DOWNEY – Entries are now being accepted for an art competition sponsored by Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-34).

The contest is open to students in grades 9-12 who live in the 34th Congressional District, which includes all of Downey.

Artwork must be two-dimensional, no larger than 26 inches by 26 inches, and must be an original concept. Digital art entries are acceptable this year.

The winning entry will represent the 34th District for one year in a national exhibit at the U.S. Capitol. The winning student will also receive a \$1,000 scholarship, a gift certificate for art supplies, cash prize, and travel arrangements for the student, a guardian and their art teacher to attend the opening exhibit in Washington, D.C.

“The congressional student art competition helps build self esteem in young artists and provides the community with valuable insight into the life experiences, challenges and joys of our talented high school students,” said Roybal-Allard, who is honorary chair of the competition. “The art competition also recognizes the hardworking and caring teachers who provide their students with the inspiration, skills and tools they need to develop their artistic abilities.”

Entries and completed entry forms should be delivered to Roybal-Allard’s District Office at 255 E. Temple St., Suite 1860, in Los Angeles. Entry deadline is Feb. 11.

Complete guidelines and information packets are available at all high schools and online at www.34thcdsac.org. For more information, call Angelita Ramirez at (213) 628-9230.

Winners will be announced during a gallery reception on April 17.

Church to ring in the New Year

DOWNEY – The Long Beach Mass Choir will headline a New Year’s Eve celebration at the Love, Peace and Happiness Church in Downey on Dec. 31.

The event will include two separate services, from 7-9 p.m. and 9 p.m. to midnight.

Bishop Leon Martin will lead a sermon, and prayers will be taken for the sick and for debt cancellation.

Admission to the event is free. The church is at 11022 Old River School Rd.

For more information, call (562) 806-9890. Transportation is available.

Church opens third location

DOWNEY – The Love, Peace and Happiness Church is expanding its ministry and opening a new location in Los Angeles.

The church now has locations in Downey, Rialto and Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles church is located at 1850 W. 54th St., near Western Avenue. The first service will be held Jan. 3 at 11:15 a.m., with the official dedication at 3:30 p.m.

For more information or transportation, call (562) 806-9890.

McAllister elected club president

DOWNEY – Toastmasters Club 587 installed its newly-elected officers for 2010.

The new board consists of John McAllister, president; Raul Castillo, sergeant at arms; Freddy Clark, vice president of membership; Sunny Lee, treasurer; Teresa Madero, secretary; Alaina Niemann, vice president of public relations; and Ivan Fernandez, vice president of education.

Toastmasters Club 587 meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Downey.

For more information, call Fionnuala Anderson at (562) 928-2658 or John McAllister at (562) 500-7675.

City will recycle trees

DOWNEY – CalMet Services, the city’s franchised refuse hauler, will collect Christmas trees for recycling Dec. 26 until Jan. 16.

Residents who receive automated curbside trash collection – usually single-family homes – may place their trees on the curb on their regular trash collection day.

Apartment residents and businesses should call CalMet at (562) 259-1239 to schedule a pick-up date. However, trees must be set out at the curb and not by their trash bins.

All trees must be free of decorations and stands, and should not be in a bag. Flocked trees are OK.

Christmas trees can also be dropped off at the city’s public works yard at 12324 Bellflower Blvd., behind Independence Park.

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 8132 Firestone, Downey



Danielle Hernandez, Vanessa Lira and Kimberly Rivas, dental assistance students at Downey Adult School, volunteered at a homeless outreach event in East Los Angeles.

Students assist at homeless event

DOWNEY – A trio of students from the Downey Adult School dental assisting program participated in the Project Homeless Connect Community Outreach held Dec. 10 in East Los Angeles.

Danielle Hernandez, Vanessa Lira and Kimberly Rivas assisted in providing the homeless with food, clothing and dental services free of charge. A mobile dental unit provided instruction on dental hygiene and basic dental services to children.

Homeless guests also received information on housing, Medi-Cal, social services and welfare. Flu vaccinations were also available.

“Overall everything was great,”

Rivas said. “Helping out the needy about the personal satisfaction that someone received the help they needed and that we were able to make the slightest improvement, adjustment or difference in someone’s life.”

about the personal satisfaction that someone received the help they needed and that we were able to make the slightest improvement, adjustment or difference in someone’s life.”

Pet Blessing and FREE Prayer

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Donated books go to Ward students

DOWNEY – More than 165 new books for children were collected during a month-long book drive sponsored by Downey Federal Credit Union.

The books were donated to Ward Elementary School, the credit union's adopted school.

Ward teachers were invited to a book-wrapping party, where they chose books appropriate for students in their classroom. The teachers helped wrap the books and distribute them to their students.

"Books not only represent dreams and knowledge, but they can also lead to a child's success in the future," said Barbara Lamberth, president and CEO of Downey Federal. "At DFCU, we are proud to help the teachers promote literacy in the classroom, enabling students to become better learners."



Teachers from Ward Elementary School help wrap more than 165 new books that were donated to students. Ward Elementary is Downey Federal Credit Union's adopted school.

Sue Jurovich passes away at 83

DOWNEY – Former Downey resident Sue Foggia Jurovich, 83, passed away Dec. 16 in Anaheim.

She is survived by her husband, Nicholas; daughters, Kathryn Arce and Victoria Jurovich; and sisters, Rachel Costanzo and Jane Bullen.

A vigil was held Sunday at St. Pius V Catholic Church in Buena Park. The Rite of Committal was at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside.

Rebecca Shea laid to rest at Rose Hills

DOWNEY – Rebecca R. Shea, a resident of Downey, passed away Dec. 16. She was 80.

She was born Aug. 15, 1929 in McKeesport, Pa.

She married James in 1953 and resided in Los Angeles until 1969, when they moved to Downey. As her children grew, Shea became involved with and volunteered for numerous organizations, including the PTA and the local Lawyers Wives Chapter.

Shea was also involved in political fundraising and was a longtime member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Santa Gertrudes Chapter, serving in various positions.

She is survived by her husband of 56 years, James; son, James Jr. (Yvonne) of Fountain Valley; daughters, Colleen (Allen) Baylis of Huntington Beach and Maureen (Joe) Fuszard of Laguna Beach; and grandchildren, Lisa De Tores, Richard Baylis, Rebecca Baylis, Shannon Fuszard, Sean Fuszard, Irene Shea and Justin Shea.

A funeral Mass was held Monday at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, followed by burial at Rose Hills Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations in Shea's honor to the Diabetic Research Institute, www.diabetesresearch.org.



Metro Briefs

GATEWAY CITIES

Go Metro to The Roses

Celebrate the New Year on Metro. The Metro Gold Line can get you to the Rose Parade, Rose Bowl Game, viewing the floats after the parade and even the BCS game on January 7. Memorial Park, Lake and Allen stations are all just a short walk from the parade route. Shuttles can take you to the games and float viewing area. Find out more at metro.net.

Holiday Eve Free Fares

To help you enjoy the holidays safely, all Metro bus and rail will offer free service on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Specifically, no fare will be charged from 9pm on Thursday, December 24 until 2am Friday, December 25 and from 9pm Thursday, December 31 until 2am on Friday, January 1. Have a safe holiday. Go Metro.

Breaking Metro News Online At "The Source"

Get instant updates on the issues and actions that keep LA County moving. Just go to "The Source," a timely online news and feature service that is updated throughout the day on developments that affect Metro's projects and services. Look for it today at metro.net.

Driving Alone Costs \$1,480 Each Year

LA's commuting costs for solo drivers are among the nation's worst at \$1,480 per person in wasted fuel and time annually. Try sharing the ride this year in a carpool or vanpool and get some of that money back. Find out more at 213.922.2811.

Green Line Extension Being Studied

A proposed transit center in Torrance served by an extension of the Metro Green Line is being evaluated by Metro as the preferred option for the Harbor Subdivision Transit Corridor. The Harbor Subdivision is a 26-mile rail right-of-way between Vernon and Wilmington. Visit metro.net for more information.



If you'd like to know more, please call us at 1.800.454.2111, or visit metro.net.

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by your sideburns and cash
your wisdom and good times
gone through your nose
and nobody knew
you wrote this
til you died

–John Quincy Adams

Home Again

I walked by the long line that led to Santa in his magnificent gold chair

The glow of his red suit reflected on his cheeks
as he laughed with the children

The child on his lap suddenly was my child so many years ago
For a moment, I was the parent that warmly watched
as dreams came true

And it was then that I realized there was an empty spot
where a hug should be

Tears can sometimes sting your eyes,
but just for a moment and then I smile

It's Christmas and part of the Season is to reflect upon holidays
past

And to appreciate that those memories are close in my heart to
revisit

I close my eyes and breathe in the fresh
and familiar scent of a Christmas tree

And those that I sorely miss appear in my mind as clear as can be.
The flannel pajamas, the excited giggles and decorated cookies
on a tray

The door that leads to beautiful memories opens wide this time
of year

For that wonderful moment I walked in and was home again.

–Christina Anderson,
Downey

A Joyful Season

Decorated homes and trees aglow
Twinkling lights in artificial snow

Bring beauty to this wonderful season
Reminding Christians of the glorious reason
To rejoice and celebrate this time of year
And extend best wishes for a happy New Year!

Joy to the world we all now sing
Praise and glory to the new-born king,
Jesus Christ, and his miraculous birth

Bringing Christians hope throughout the earth.

–Martha J. Morrissey,
Downey

Diamonds on the Sea

Pure blue skies
Glowing platinum sun
Scattering millions of diamonds
Over the liquid silver waves
Twinkling liquid silver waves
As far as the eye can see.

–Leona Swanson,
Downey

Christmas Greetings

Friendly hearts
Reflect the glow,
The warmth of love
Like mistletoe, or
Starshine on
New fallen snow.

–Terese Akins Anthony
Downey

ProNetworkers of Downey



Join us each Friday at 7:15am

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YOUR HOMETOWN
COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Letters to the Editor:

Downey's flu campaign

Dear Editor:
We wanted to take an opportunity to publicly congratulate the city of Downey and their partners on a successful flu vaccination campaign this year.

For several months, the city of Downey, in partnership with the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health and several other community partners including Kaiser Permanente, has been planning and implementing one of the largest flu immunization campaigns in our community's history. The impressive effort has been led by Deputy City Manager Mark Sauter and Emergency Preparedness Public Health Nurse Dorothy Kidd from the L.A. County Whittier Health Center.

In total, this citywide collaboration has resulted in almost 8,000 people being vaccinated against the flu – both seasonal and H1N1. This endeavor will result in fewer children out of school, less people out sick from work, less patients in our local emergency departments and hospitals, and fewer of our neighbors succumbing to death from the flu this year. These benefits will not only help every sector of our community, but they will save lives.

In addition, the actual process and location of the vaccination campaign this year also benefits our community in better preparing for an emergency or disaster. By choosing to use the Downey Theatre site the city was able to test our predetermined Point of Distribution, or POD, site which would be activated in the event of a natural or man made disaster in order to facilitate mass vaccinations. These learnings will no doubt improve our city's ability to keep our community safe.

As a partner working to keep this community healthy and ensuring we are prepared for any type of disaster, we commend the Downey City Council, city staff, the L.A. County Department of Public Health and the numerous community partners that made this flu vaccination campaign such a success.

— **Binesh Batra, MD, Area Medical Director, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center, and Jane Finley, Executive Director, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center**

City's wants

Dear Editor:
From the items in the most recent *Downey Patriot* and the not-too-distant past, it seems as though there are a lot of WANTS in this city...

- Some want a greater "Cultural Identity".
- Some want more police enforcement for safer streets.
- Some want fewer police enforcement for skate boarders.
- Some want fewer police staff at a scene.
- Some want a place for teens to hang-out.
- Some want the teens to stop trashing the Warren High campus.
- Some want their coffee with a smile.
- Some want condoms to be given out.
- Some want pot to be dispensed.
- Some want more Mexican restaurants.
- Some want an art museum.
- Some want to litigate as to whom should manage it.
- Some want housing provided that is affordable.
- Some want to avoid the riff-raff which they believe that it will attract.
- Some want to tear-down and replace old buildings.
- Some want to retain and refurbish old businesses.

In order to accomplish this, it would appear that what we would need is more government legislation and bureaucracy to control, create, manage and enforce...

- the number of police at a scene,
- the smile on the coffee wait-staff,
- the location, quantity, and ethnicity of food service facilities
- the distribution of pot and contraceptives
- the opening of hang-outs
- the construction of living spaces
- the continuation of failing businesses
- the additional taxes needed to support these efforts

All of which would seem to virtually sum up to approaching the need for one city worker for every resident, in order to provide accommodations as per their individual needs, wants and desires. However, caution should be used in asking for government services, because of an oft-quoted observation that a government that is big enough to give you all you want, is also big enough to take it all away. George Orwell and Karl Marks would be happy to see some of their predictions reinforced.

As for places that have a greater cultural identity, like Manhattan which is beloved by some, my general feeling when I'm in such a place is one of distrust, insecurity, crime and uncleanness.

Downey isn't perfect, but what we really need is tempered regulation, fortitudinous responsibility and enterprise, prudent enforcement and reasonably deployed justice.

— **Hugh T. Hoskins, Downey**

Letters to the editor may be submitted by writing to *The Downey Patriot*, 8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240 or by e-mail to downeypatriot@yahoo.com. Letters may be edited for style and/or content. Letters must include a full name and address for verification.

It's the theater

Dear Editor:
I enjoyed the article on longtime Downey resident, Lawrence Christon, and am in sympathy with his feelings about the lack of cultural identity in our city. ("Christon Adds Voice to Cultural Cry in Downey," 12/18/09) That and the letter from Moises Alonso, who believes an art theater in place of the old Avenue might be the center draw to an active downtown, prompt me to write.

Once or twice a month, retired friends and I get together for an afternoon movie and lunch or dinner. We head up to the Laemmie Theater on Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, which has a wonderful selection of foreign and little-known production company films. As is noted in their literature, they "are not afraid of subtitles!"

We enjoy a nice meal at one of Pasadena's many restaurants, sometimes do a little shopping at the Paseo, and never leave without browsing Vroman's bookstore. Why can't we do that in Downey?

To borrow from Clinton's motto, "It's the theater, stupid!"

— **Nancy Krusbe, Downey**

Dear Editor:
If Lawrence Christon feels so strongly that downtown needs a bookstore (the last bookstore I remember in town was a little hole-in-the-wall opposite where Norm's is now), he should avail himself of the depressed commercial real estate market and lease one of the many vacant storefronts along Downey Avenue, and open a bookstore.

Come on Larry, if you feel it's so important, put *your* money where your mouth is.

— **Drew Kelley, Downey**

Dear Editor:
Many thanks to Moises Alonso and Lawrence Christon for their recent letters urging the citizens of Downey to reclaim the vital role of the arts in our community.

I recently moved to Downey this past September, following my spouse, Christie, who was called to be Pastor of the Moravian Church of Downey. I am a singer/songwriter and I enjoy performing in coffee shops, restaurants and other venues. Unfortunately, it seems that there aren't many venues to perform original music in Downey. I'm very thankful for the monthly Downey Folk Jam. The folk jam is a great opportunity to hear good music, share songs and collaborate with other musicians.

I agree with Alonso that the old Avenue Theatre could be a great space for a thriving hub of creative activity. This is a hopeful vision. The arts contribute a lot of healthy energy for people of all ages and especially for youth. For instance, arts-based after school programs can create an environment for teaching artistic and social skills, building ties between youth and mentors, and equipping students to develop a stronger sense of self-worth.

A small choir of voices is forming in favor of re-exploring the arts in Downey. Are there other voices to be heard?

— **David Melly-Gibbons, Downey**

Dear Editor:
As a 19-year-old Downey resident, I speak for most of my friends when I say we will never see a foreign-language film at the Avenue. The last movie we saw was "Avatar." (The special effects were great and I recommend it.)

We need something fun for young people. And let's be realistic: most teens don't like art or culture. Maybe an arcade, lounge or bowling alley would be a good idea. But it needs to be monitored and kept safe to keep out the bad crowds.

To repeat, I will not see a foreign-language film downtown. When I'm at the movies, I don't want to read.

— **Chris Billups, Downey**

Dear Editor:
Thank you, Mr. Christon, for bringing a much-needed rational voice to the call for a cultural core to the city of Downey.

While I am for the building of low-income housing for the people, to build such housing in the downtown area makes no sense. Is an apartment building the desired icon for the culture of Downey? I think not.

Mr. Christon is right when he points out that the Krikorian multiplex is the only attraction in town. The Avenue Theatre and several other empty businesses along Firestone Boulevard would make excellent venues for supper clubs with legitimate theater for stage productions, improv houses, boutique shops, book stores, real coffee houses (not Starbucks) with a true patronage of literati. Brea and Fullerton have all these attractions, and Costa Mesa has a quality performing arts center.

Where are the visiting symphonies, the repertory theaters, the performing artists who would revitalize the center of Downey to attract a vibrant patronage of Southern California's cultured class?

If you renovate the downtown area to include the kinds of businesses and cultural attractions Mr. Christon and the AAF are calling for, they will come.

— **Michael J. Parmer, Downey**

Councilman's 'machismo'

Dear Editor:
I worry about the city of Downey, not because of the election of Mayor Anne Bayer, but for the unbridled exercise of machismo by Councilman Mario Guerra.

The selection of mayor by rotation is a time-honored tradition in this city. Guerra, who in this writer's opinion suffers from incurable narcissism, is attempting to exercise uncontrolled powers over the City Council.

Bayer has only one vote and no more. Her duties as mayor are prescribed by the city charter, and she essentially acts as the titular head of the city for ceremonial matters. The city charter grants her no more power than any other council member. To attempt to circumvent the normal rotation of the City Council is a blatant attempt by Guerra to undermine the city charter.

I trust the citizens of Downey will remember that Guerra's first act as a councilman was an attempt to repeal term limits. He led the campaign against term limits which had been overwhelmingly voted by the citizens of Downey almost 20 years ago.

It should be noted and emphasized that his unnecessary and wasteful actions cost the city over \$80,000 for an unwanted city election.

Does Guerra have the best interests of the city in mind? His past conduct may indicate that he does not. My only question to Councilman Guerra is when will he try to repeal term limits again?

— **Joseph Di Loreto, Paramount (Di Loreto is a former mayor of Downey)**



Traffic hazzard

Dear Editor:
I am a concerned parent that has been ignored several times about a danger that may be putting our Downey children at risk.

Dr. Rani Maline-Bertsch, principal at Gallatin Elementary School; Dr. Wendy Doty, superintendent at Downey Unified School District; and administration at the Downey Police Department have all been informed various times about the risk children are exposed to on a daily basis.

As you travel northbound on Brookshire Avenue you will see three gates that function as entrances/exits. And Monday through Friday, while children come to, or go out of school, the two main gates closer to Gallatin Road are closed. Unfortunately, parents are using these two driveways as drop-off/pick-up stations.

The danger this poses is as follows: Using the example of the morning time, a child walking northbound on Brookshire is completely unaware that a big SUV or minivan may be suddenly coming against him/her because the vehicle needs to use driveway.

In addition, the approaching vehicle is blindsided by:

- a) The parked vehicles, which do not allow the approaching vehicle to see if a child may be walking right behind parked vehicles.
- b) The approaching vehicle (driver) sometimes, and sometimes too often, may be on the phone, increasing the danger of not giving the driver the opportunity to react.
- c) The approaching vehicle has to drive fast onto the driveway due to the traffic traveling southbound on Brookshire.
- d) The approaching vehicle, if it happens to be traveling northbound, is obligated to make a type of "U-turn" in order to use driveway, thus increasing the risk of missing seeing the child behind the parked vehicles.

The solution is not an easy one, but at least pro-activeness can serve as a great tool. Safety cones can perhaps be the first type of prevention.

As mentioned above, all the individuals in charge of doing something about avoiding a tragic accident have been informed.

The only one that was responsible enough to respond to my requests was Dr. Doty. She did inform me that safety cones would be set in place in order to keep vehicles from using driveway. Unfortunately the cones did not last; it seems Gallatin school has forgotten to be consistent on this request.

Sadly, the principal was never eager to hear my request/suggestion, instead she said: "my only business is educating."

As a parent of a current Gallatin student this saddens me deeply. My hope is that you select my concern and print it in your newspaper. I believe it can speak to those parents that are currently using driveways as drop-off/pick-up stations, with the hope that they will not use driveway because a child may be using it as a walkway.

— **Edgar Serrano, Downey**

Unsung heroes

Dear Editor:
I often enjoy letters written by some of your "regulars," which are informed, logical and humorous.

However, recently I have been dismayed at the tone of some letters, and even editorials. They have sounded venomous, not fully-informed, and were presented as personal attacks on individuals or groups.

Much has been made of the school district's Character Counts program. Character does certainly count -- whether good or bad. My husband was one of a group of pastors about 10 years ago who founded a "Values" campaign in Downey, promoting positive characteristics such as kindness, honesty, etc. These are good activities: the Bible tells us to think on good things.

The media, in its many guises, often promotes very poor values, by glorifying sports stars, movie stars, politicians, etc., whose lives are anything but good role models for our children. This is unfortunate. But worse, in some ways, is for adults in our own city to model poor values, while giving lip service to good ones.

We have all had our moments when we were less than we should have been. Hopefully we learned from those moments. When a teacher makes fun of a student having learning problems (I know personally of two Downey children who were treated this way); when a parent behaves badly and a child sees; when someone representing Downey in some public way (sports, etc.) behaves in an unacceptable manner, and that gets Downey on the evening news, as we have witnessed a few times in the past, that is extremely unfortunate. Actions speak louder than words.

I see lots of buildings and streets in Downey named for well-known Downey citizens. But for me, the best citizens in Downey have been the unsung heroes: people like Carol, the former Downey children's librarian, who treated each child as a unique individual, with different needs, talents and interests; then there was Kathy Tribe, one of my unsung heroes, so kind to me when I joined the DAR, and such a hard-working, committed Downey citizen. There is Walter Butler, not famous in Downey, yet a model for us all as he fought beyond a lifelong disability to get college degrees and help others working at Rancho and for the courts. There is Teri Lambros, a gentle lady, with years of caring actively for Downey.

I could fill a book with these heroes who have lived in ways that truly counted, not famously or publicly, but consistently. I see many of these individuals at concerts, at the Memorial Day service, at church services, at clubs, volunteering at the Rose float, and just around town. I wish to thank them.

"You do not know how important you are. I can't name anything for you, but you will live in my heart and the hearts of others, as persons who lived what they believed."

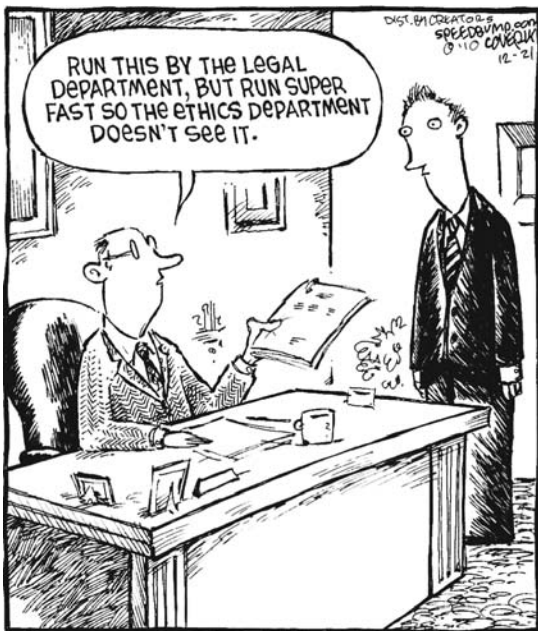
— **Glory Derryberry, Downey**

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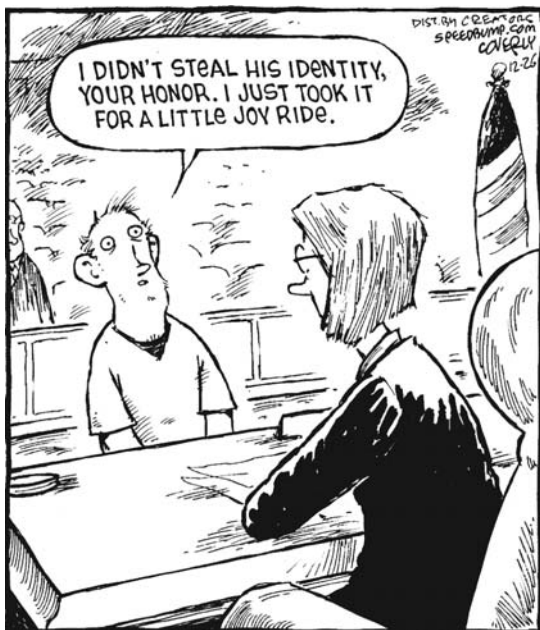
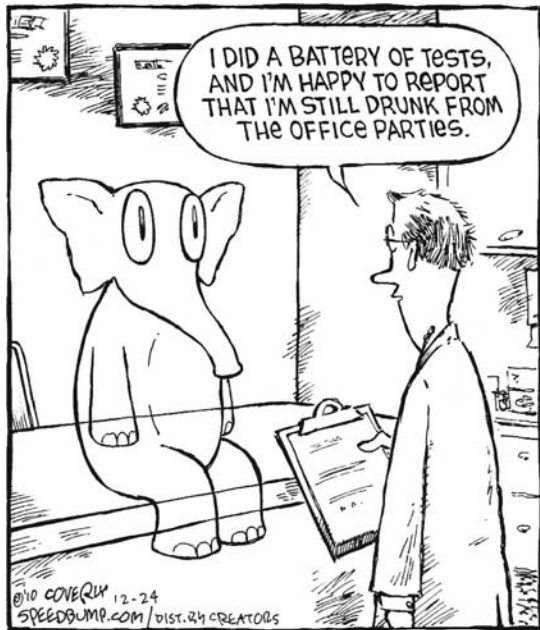
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SPEED BUMP



DAVE COVERLY



On This Day...

- Dec. 25, 1066:** William the Conqueror is crowned king of England.
- 1223:** St. Francis of Assisi assembles one of the first Nativity scenes, in Greccio, Italy.
- 1776:** Gen. George Washington and his troops cross the Delaware River.
- 1818:** 'Silent Night' is performed for the first time at the Church of St. Nikolaus in Austria.
- 1977:** Comedian Charlie Chaplin dies at age 88.
- 1995:** Singer Dean Martin dies at age 78.
- 2006:** Singer James Brown dies at age 73.
- Birthdays:** Singer Jimmy Buffett (63), baseball player Rickey Henderson (51) and singer Dido (38).

Downey Community Calendar

Events For December

Sat. Dec. 26 - 31: Rose float decorating, South Rancho campus on Erickson Ave., 24 hrs
 Thurs. Dec. 31: Performance by Long Beach Choir, Love Peace & Happiness Church, 7 p.m.

City Meetings

1st Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.: Redevelopment Project Area Committee, Cormack Meeting Room at Downey Library.
 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.: Planning Commission, Council Chamber at City Hall.
 1st Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.: Recreation and Community Services Commission, Council Chamber, City Hall.
 1st Thursday, 9 a.m.: Traffic Committee, Training Room, Second Floor of City Hall.
 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.: City Council/Community Development Commission, Council Chamber.
 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.: Library Advisory Board, at Downey City Library.
 3rd Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.: Water Board, at City Hall.
 4th Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.: Emergency Preparedness Committee, at Fire Station No. 1.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Mondays

8:00 a.m.: Job Club, at The First Presbyterian Church, for info. call 861-6752.
 2nd Mon., 11 a.m.: American Legion Auxiliary #270, at United Methodist Church, for info. call 923-2481.
 2nd Mon., 3 p.m.: Keep Downey Beautiful, at City Hall, for more information call 904-7159.
 4th Mon., 7:30 p.m.: Downey Numismatists, at Downey Retirement Center, call 862-6666.

Tuesdays

9 a.m.: Downey Bocce Club, at Apollo Park, for information call Pat Rooney at 923-5352.
 9:30 a.m.: Downey Seniors Club, at Apollo Park, for information call Nadine Morris at 923-9422.
 12 p.m.: Rotary Club, at Rio Hondo, for information call Brian Saylor at 927-2000.
 6:00 p.m.: Toastmasters Club 587, at First Baptist Church, for info call John McAllister 869-0928.
 7 p.m.: Boy Scout Troop 2, at Downey United Methodist Church, for information call 869-6478.
 2nd and 4th Tues., 6 p.m.: Sertoma Club, at Cafe 'N Stuff, for information call (562) 927-6438.
 2nd Tues., 6 p.m.: Downey Fly Fishers, at Apollo Park, for information call 425-7936.
 3rd Tues., 6:30 p.m.: Community Emergency Response Team meeting, Fire station 1, 12222 Paramount.
 3rd Tues., 7:30 p.m.: Writer's Workshop West, at at Downey High School library, for info call 862-3106.

Wednesdays

7 a.m.: Kiwanis Club, at Rio Hondo Events Center. Call Steve Roberson at 927-2626.
 1 p.m.: Women's Bocce Club, at Apollo Park.
 7 p.m.: Out Post 132 Royal Rangers, at Desert Reign Church, for info call 928-8000.
 1st Weds., 10 a.m.: Woman's Club of Downey, for information call Barbara Briley-Beard 869-7618.
 1st Weds., 11:30 a.m.: Downey Coordinating Council, at Community Center, for information call 923-4357.
 1st Weds., 7:30 p.m.: Downey Stamp Club, at Maude Price School cafeteria, for information call 928-3028.
 2nd Weds., 7 p.m.: Downey Sister City Assoc., at Maude Price School, for information call 884-9657.
 2nd Weds., 7:30 p.m.: Downey Model A Club, at Gallatin School Cafeteria, for information call 928-4132.
 2nd & 4th Weds., 11:30 a.m.: Downey AARP, at Barbara J. Riley Senior Center, for info. call Lorene Frazier 861-6075.
 3rd Weds., - Downey Dog Obedience Club Apollo Park, for info. call Gina 869-5213 or Valerie 420-2972.
 3rd Weds., 6 p.m. - American Business Women's Association, Rio Hondo Country Club, Call Barbara Carlson 863-2192.
 4th Weds., 12:00 noon: Retired Federal Employees, at Barbara J Riley Center, call 943-5513.
 Wed. & Fri., 10:15 a.m.: Senior Bingo, at Apollo Park, for information call 904-7223.

Thursdays

7:30 a.m.: Connections Networking, at Cafe N Stuff, for information, call Sandy Esslinger, (310) 491-8989.
 7:30 a.m.: Soroptimist Int'l of Downey, for information, call Pat Heineke, 904-3534.
 12 p.m.: Kiwanis Club of Downey, at Rio Hondo Events Center, call Roy Jimenez 923-0971.
 12:30 p.m.: Take off Pounds Sensibly, at First Christian Church, call (800) 932-8677.
 6:30 p.m.: Downey United Masonic Lodge # 220, 8244 3rd St., Call 862-4176.
 7 p.m.: Troop 351, Boy Scouts of America, at First Baptist Church, for information call 776-3388.
 2nd Thurs., 7:30 p.m.: Beaming Rebel Foxes Collectors Club, for more information call Carl D. Jones at 923-2400.
 4th Thurs., 10 a.m.: Assistance League, at Casa De Parley Johnson. for information call 869-0232.
 4th Thurs., 7:30 p.m.: Downey Historical Society programs, at Community Center. Call 862-2777.

Fridays

7:30 a.m.: Pro Networkers, at Mimi's Cafe, for information call Barbara Briley Beard at 869-7618
 3rd Fri., 8:30 a.m.: Women's "In His Glory" Ministry at Los Amigos C. C. (562) 622-3785.

Saturdays

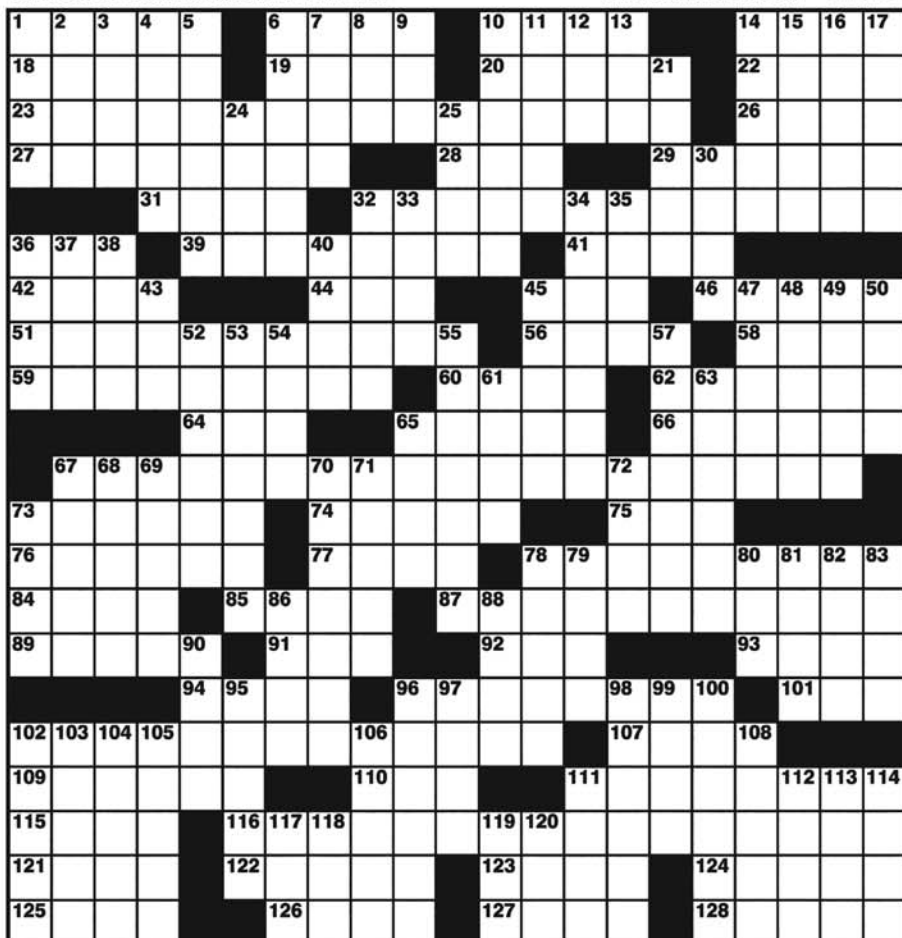
9 a.m.: Farmers Market, Second Street at New Avenue, for information call (562) 904-7246.
 2nd Sat., 12:30 p.m.: AAUW, Los Amigos Country Club.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
COUNTRY COOKING: From breakfast to dinner
 by David W. Cromer

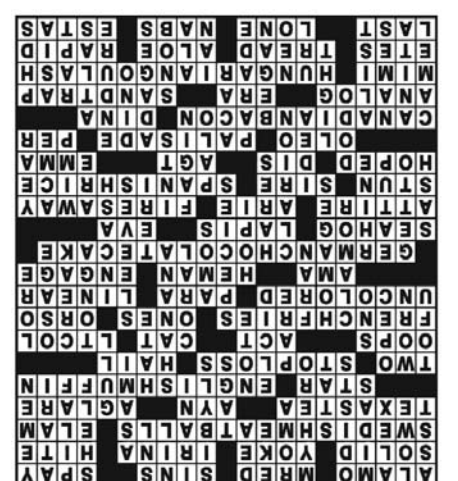
- ACROSS**
- 1 You must remember this
 - 6 TV equine
 - 10 Transgressions
 - 14 Do a vet's job
 - 18 State of matter
 - 19 Oxen link
 - 20 Gold-medal skater
 - Rodnina
 - 22 Sociologist Shere
 - 23 Banquet hors d'oeuvres
 - 26 Ancient Mideast civilization
 - 27 "Black gold"
 - 28 Writer Rand
 - 29 Blazing
 - 31 Have the lead
 - 32 Breakfast bread
 - 36 Tango quorum
 - 39 Sort of stock-market order
 - 41 Pellet precipitation
 - 42 "My mistake!"
 - 44 Take steps
 - 45 Lynx or leopard
 - 46 Rank above Major: Abbr.
 - 51 Fast-food order
 - 56 Change for a five
 - 58 Approximator's phrase
 - 59 Plain, in a way
 - 60 Prefix for legal
 - 62 One-dimensional
 - 64 Doc bloc
 - 65 Body builder
 - 66 Hire
 - 67 Rich dessert
 - 73 Porpoise
 - 74 Lazuli
 - 75 NASA spacewalk
 - 76 Closet array
 - 77 India of R&B
 - 78 Starts asking questions
 - 84 Knock for a loop
 - 85 Royal address
 - 87 Spicy side dish
 - 89 Had aspirations
 - 91 Insult, informally
 - 92 Sales rep.
 - 93 Jane Austen novel
 - 94 Spread in a tub
 - 96 Fence made of stakes
 - 101 _ annum
 - 102 Breakfast order
 - 107 Actress Merrill
 - 109 Digital forerunner
 - 110 Time period
 - 111 Course hazard
 - 115 *La Bohème* character
 - 116 Spicy stew
 - 121 Hot times on the Riviera
 - 122 Stair component
 - 123 Spiny houseplant
 - 124 Expeditious
 - 125 Bringing up the rear
 - 126 Solitary
 - 127 Puts the collar on
 - 128 These: Sp.
- DOWN**
- 1 Helper: Abbr.
 - 2 Actor Rob or Chad
 - 3 Trebek on TV
 - 4 Mythical king
 - 5 Some verse writers
 - 6 Rescued damsel's cry
 - 7 Tomato type
 - 8 _ out a living
 - 9 Narc's org.
 - 10 Female prophets
 - 11 Gum resident
 - 12 Zero
 - 13 NBC show since 1975
 - 14 Pantry feature
 - 15 Mideast dish
 - 16 Video-game pioneer
 - 17 Saudi Arabia neighbor
 - "Me too"
 - 21 GNP, e.g.
 - 25 License plates
 - 30 Shore bird
 - 32 Charlton Heston role
 - 33 Brief missive
 - 34 Doo-wop group at Woodstock
 - 35 Loathe
 - 36 Vegan staple
 - 37 Frayed
 - 38 Crude group
 - 40 Remove, as rinds
 - 43 _-cone
 - 45 35th anniversary gift
 - 47 Pacific Island kingdom
 - 48 Floor noise
 - 49 Inedible orange
 - 50 Traditional knowledge
 - 52 Din from a crowd
 - 53 Tributes
 - 54 Drescher of *The Nanny*
 - 55 Biological grouping
 - 57 Record holders
 - 61 "Famous" cookie man
 - 63 One way to be paid
 - 65 Arizona Indian
 - 67 Arrive at
 - 68 Deavour
 - 69 Cologue's river
 - 70 Trumpet call
 - 71 Long-eared leapers
 - 72 Hatcher or Polo
 - 73 Kimono closer
 - 78 *Oliver Twist* villain
 - 79 QB's mishaps
 - 80 Exist
 - 81 Ineffectual one
 - 82 High point
 - 83 Diary length, often
 - 86 It may be bright
 - 88 _ Alto, CA
 - 90 Bygone bird
 - 95 Beer variety
 - 96 Holiday event
 - 97 Rent-__
 - 98 Words of wisdom
 - 99 *Flintstones* pet
 - 100 Withstand
 - 102 Ship of the desert
 - 103 Baker who sings
 - 104 Gives a title to
 - 105 One's "who's who"
 - 106 Got to work
 - 108 Brother of Prometheus
 - 111 Nose-in-air type
 - 112 Transfixed
 - 113 Where K2 is
 - 114 Advanced degrees: Abbr.
 - 117 Internet address
 - 118 Opposite of paleo-
 - 119 Author Fleming
 - 120 Menu phrase

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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.

Russian pairs skater IRINA Rodnina (20 Across) won three consecutive Winter Olympics gold medals from 1972 to 1980. The ancient civilization of ELAM (26 Across), located in what is now southwest Iran, was just east of Mesopotamia. TONGA (47 Down) is the last of the Polynesian monarchies.



Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer



Everybody's talking about health promotion and prevention. Blame the economy: with sky-high deficits and ever more costly health care, the focus has shifted to keeping Americans healthier. It makes perfect sense - not only will everyone benefit by enjoying better health, but also our health care costs will decline. This focus on health promotion is on a policy level as well as on an individual patient level. My focus today is on each of us, the patients. In fact, over the next several articles, I will present what our individual responsibilities should be in achieving our best possible state of health.

My favorite definition of health promotion is "the science and art of helping people change their lifestyle to move toward a state of optimal health." What does this mean to you? While the focus of public health is to ensure that citizens of a society are limited in their exposure to unhealthy pollutants, toxins, contaminated water, unsafe restaurant food, dangerous germs, etc, the focus for the individual is quite different. Personal responsibility begins with the choices we

make each day. From the moment we get up each morning, those choices play a role in our health, and it's amazing just how many decisions we make that can have a significant impact.

Let's walk through a typical day. The moment we rise in the morning, the number of hours slept will have an immediate and long-term effect on our health and on just how well we will function throughout the day. Are we putting on clothes that keep our body temperature comfortable? Did we brush and floss properly? Was breakfast balanced, low fat, and with limited simple carbohydrates? Did we put on our seat belt, and drive within the speed limit? Will we get at least three balanced meals during the day? Will we limit our junk food? During winter, especially in the heart of an epidemic, will we limit our exposure to crowded public places in order to reduce the risk of infection?

How is your mental health? Are you doing something worthwhile and personally satisfying with your life? If not, are you volunteering or involved with other charitable activities that make you feel better? Is your life tobacco-free? If not, have you made a commitment to quit, and do you need help?

Are you physically active? If you are not already, start small and work up to 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity most days of the week. Walking briskly, mowing the lawn, running, dancing, swimming, and bicycling are just a few examples.

Are you eating a healthy diet? If not, start today. Focus on natural

foods such as beans, nuts, fruit, vegetables, fish, chicken, turkey, soy, eggs, and non-fat dairy. Eat foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars. Stay at a healthy weight. Balance the calories you take in from food and drink with the calories you burn off through activities. Check with your doctor if you start to gain or lose weight.

If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. Have no more than two drinks a day if you are under 65, and no more than one drink a day if you are older. A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

Are you participating in dangerous activities, such as unprotected sex or drug abuse? Get help as soon as possible, before the inevitable crisis. Start with your doctor and formulate a plan.

The next step in your own personal health promotion plan is to ensure that you are receiving the necessary care from your personal physician. Initiate this conversation at your next visit; it will include proper testing, vaccinations, and discussion of any aspect of your health that concerns you.

More specifics to come. Until then, I wish you good health on your personal journey, and a healthy and happy holiday season!

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

Catholic bishops call health care reform bill 'deficient'

The current health care reform bill is "deficient" and should not move forward without "essential changes," the chairmen of three committees of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops said December 22.

The chairs, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities; Bishop William Murphy of Rockville Centre, New York, of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; and Bishop John Wester of Salt Lake City, of the Committee on Migration, stated their position in a December 22 letter to senators working to pass the Senate version of health reform legislation.

The legislative proposal now advancing "violates the longstanding federal policy against the use of federal funds for elective abortions and health plans that include such abortions -- a policy upheld in all health programs covered by the Hyde Amendment as well as in the Children's Health Insurance Program, the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program -- and now in the House-passed 'Affordable Health Care for America Act,'" the bishops said.

They said that the health care bill passed by the House of Representatives "keeps in place the longstanding and widely supported federal policy against government funding of elective abortions and plans that include elective abortions" and "ensures that where federal funds are involved, people are not required to pay for other people's abortions." The Senate bill does not maintain this commitment.

In the Senate version, "federal funds will help subsidize, and in some cases a federal agency will facilitate and promote, health plans that cover elective abortions," the bishops said. "All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people's abortions in a very direct and explicit way, through a separate premium pay-

ment designed solely to pay for abortion. There is no provision for individuals to opt out of this abortion payment in federally subsidized plans, so people will be required by law to pay for other people's abortions." The public consensus against abortion funding, said the bishops, "is borne out by many opinion surveys, including the new Quinnipiac University survey of December 22 showing 72 percent opposed to public funding of abortion in health care reform legislation."

"This bill also continues to fall short of the House-passed bill in preventing governmental discrimination against health care providers that decline involvement in abortion," the bishops said. And it also "includes no conscience protection allowing Catholic and other institutions to provide and purchase health coverage consistent with their moral and religious convictions on other procedures."

The bishops also called for all immigrants, regardless of status, to be able purchase a health insurance plan with their own money.

"Without such access, many immigrant families would be unable to receive primary care and be compelled to rely on emergency room care," the bishops said. "This would harm not only immigrants and their families, but also the general public health. Moreover, the financial burden on the American public would be higher, as Americans would pay for uncompensated medical care through the federal budget or higher insurance rates."

The bishops urged removal of the five-year ban on legal immigrants accessing federal health benefit programs, such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and Medicare, which was proposed by Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ). His proposal, "which would give states the option to remove this ban, should be included in the bill."

The bishops said they want health insurance to be affordable

and said that while the Senate bill "makes great progress in covering people in our nation," it "would still leave over 23 million people in our nation without health insurance. This falls far short of what is needed in both policy and moral dimensions."

The bishops urged Congress and the Administration to "fashion health care reform legislation that truly protects the life, dignity, health and consciences of all."

Right now, they said, "in all the areas of our moral concern, the Senate health care reform bill is deficient. On the issue of respect for unborn human life, the bill not only falls short of the House's standard but violates longstanding precedent in all other federal health programs. Therefore we believe the Senate should not move this bill forward at this time but continue to discuss and approve changes that could make it morally acceptable. Until these fundamental flaws are remedied the bill should be opposed."

"Regardless of the outcome in the Senate, we will work vigorously to incorporate into the final legislation our priorities for upholding conscience rights and longstanding current prohibitions on abortion funding; ensuring affordability and access; and including immigrants," they added. "We hope and pray that the Congress and the country will come together around genuine reform."

Hand sanitizers gain in popularity

The Advertising Specialty Institute announced that hand sanitizers now rival pens as the most popular logoed items that companies are giving away to clients and employees.

Indeed, searches of the key words "hand sanitizers" by promotional products distributors via the Advertising Specialty Institute's promotional products database jumped 439% for the period between October 2009 and October 2008. Only searches for pens - which for years have been the best-selling logoed product - were higher that period. In addition, searches for sanitizer products of all kinds jumped by triple digits this year.

"Certainly, there's been a dramatic increase in sales of sanitizer sprays, gels and other anti-bacterial products," said Larry Wilhelm, CEO of Custom HBC, one of the many suppliers of customized health and beauty products for the advertising specialty field. The item is now a best-seller, Wilhelm said. "Since May, sales on this item have increased from about 400,000 to 750,000 units a month."

Sales of all logoed sanitizing products surged in early spring, and again in September, at the start

of flu season, Wilhelm said. The "swine flu," or H1N1, is a new influenza virus first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that when soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used to help prevent the spread of germs.

Wilhelm says sanitizing prod-

ucts aren't just used as promotional giveaways. More human resources departments are buying them for employees to reduce absenteeism caused by illness.

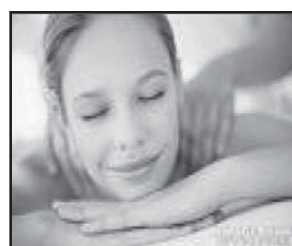
Sales of promotional products were nearly \$20 billion in 2008. Buyers identify such products as the most effective medium among all advertising, next to the Internet, according to a recent study from the Advertising Specialty Institute.

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Word of MOUTH
by Soheir S. Azer, D.D.S.
So-called "peg laterals" are small, cone-shaped teeth that develop on either side on the top two front teeth. These undersized teeth appear to be "baby teeth" surrounded by larger permanent teeth. As a result, the smile looks imbalanced. Fortunately, the dentist can restore peg laterals to the size of normally developed incisors by building them up with composite material. This tooth-colored resin restoration requires no anesthetic and can be accomplished in one visit. After the dentist acid-etches the tooth's enamel so it can properly accept the resin, layer upon layer of resin is applied to the tooth. After the composite material cures properly, the augmented tooth is shaped and polished. The result compares favorably with surrounding natural teeth.
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Konjoyan preserves Carpenters' legacy

By Christian Brown,
Staff Writer

In the 1970s, Jon Konjoyan idolized the Carpenters, but never dreamed that 30 years later he would lead a campaign to save the pop duo's iconic home.

After moving to Downey in 1963, Karen and Richard Carpenter garnered worldwide success with such hits as "We've Only Just Begun" and "Close to You," many written inside their Downey home.

"There's no one like them," said Konjoyan, a radio promoter who worked at A&M Records in the 1980s. "It's interesting that they still have relevancy — 26 years after Karen's death."

In 1973, the Carpenters featured their Newville Ave. home on the front of the best-selling album, "Now and Then," driving fans to visit the two-story home ever since.

"To someone who's not a fan, that house has no meaning," said Konjoyan, 52. "But to the fans, it has significance."

Once current owners, Manuel and Blanca Melendez Parra, made plans to raze the Carpenter home, fans rallied the Parra family to save the building.

Konjoyan learned of the demolition while attending an estate sale hosted by the Parra family in 2007.

"They were selling a lot of things said to be owned by the Carpenters," said Konjoyan. "I heard there were plans to raze the house and build something new there."



After sending the news out to everyone on his e-mail distribution list, Konjoyan was contacted by the *Los Angeles Times*. In 2008, the Times published an article, featuring a photograph of Konjoyan standing in front of the house holding a copy of the Carpenters' "Now and Then" record album.

"I thought the story would appear on the back page of the Calendar section," he said. "I never thought it would be on the front page of the paper."

Konjoyan said he was contacted by the Downey Historical Society, who expressed concern, citing that no city ordinance existed to protect

such buildings.

The campaign sought to have the house purchased or declared a landmark to save it from demolition, however, the Parras continued with their plans and half of the house, which occupied two lots, was tore down.

The main portion of the home, where Karen Carpenter died in 1983, is still intact.

"Richard Carpenter is not interested in saving the house," said Konjoyan. "But what should be remembered is the music — The Parra family owns the house and I respect that."

Richard Carpenter sold the house in 1997.

Konjoyan assures that he will continue to preserve the history of the Carpenters.

"Tourist from all over the world still come to see that house," said Konjoyan. "It's 2009, but the Carpenters still had a number one album in Japan this year. A lot of people still care. They were long-time Downey residents — Downey should be proud of that."



Downey High School cheerleaders spread holiday cheer by spending a recent afternoon at the Downey Retirement Center. The girls did crafts and sang holiday carols with the residents.

Low-cost pet vaccinations

LONG BEACH — Low-cost vaccinations and microchips will be offered Jan. 30 at the Pitchford Companion Animal Village located inside El Dorado Park in Long Beach.

Microchips will be \$25 for dogs and cats. Rabies vaccines are \$5; DHPP, FVRCP and leukemia vaccines are \$15; and Bordetella vaccinations are \$10.

The clinic is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and sponsored by the spcaLA. For more information, visit www.spcala.com or call (562) 570-7722.

Genealogy lecture Jan. 16

WHITTIER — The Whittier Area Genealogical Society (WAGS) will meet Jan. 16 at the Whittier Masonic Lodge.

Genealogical lecturer Anita Cheek Milner will be guest speaker.

The meeting begins at 1 p.m. For more information, call Joyce Biby at (562) 296-6372.

New Titles at the Downey City Library

Fiction

- **"The Casebook of Victor Frankenstein"** by Peter Ackroyd. In Ackroyd's haunting and atmospheric novel, two 19th-century Oxford students--Victor Frankenstein, a serious researcher, and the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley--form an unlikely friendship.
- **"Faces"** by Martina Cole. From international bestselling author Cole comes a gritty, gripping, and utterly unforgettable new tale set in the heart of London's criminal gangland.
- **"Hidden Empire"** by Orson Scott Card. This sequel to Card's bestselling novel "Empire" continues the author's message about the dangers of extreme political polarization and the need to reassert moderation and mutual citizenship.
- **"The Long Shot"** by Katie Kitamura. A brilliant debut novel that follows a former mixed martial arts star and his longtime coach over the course of three fraught days as they prepare for his momentous comeback match.
- **"Spoooner"** by Pete Dexter. This is the story of the lifelong tie between former naval officer Calmer Ottosson and his step son, Warren Spooner--a troubled adolescent-turned-violent-adult, whom Calmer will never understand.

Non-Fiction

- **"Beauty and the Soul: The Extraordinary Power of Everyday Beauty to Heal Your Life"** by Piero Ferrucci. The bestselling author of "The Power of Kindness" shows how the ability to appreciate beauty--far from being a luxury or an afterthought--is vital to leading a happy, balanced, and satisfying life.
- **"The Best American Science and Nature Writing (2009)"** by Elizabeth Kolbert. Kolbert, one of today's leading environmental journalists, edits this year's volume of the finest science and nature writing bringing together promising new voices and prize-winning favorites.
- **"Dawn Light: Dancing with Cranes and Other Ways to Start the Day"** by Diane Ackerman. In an eye-opening sequence of personal meditations through the cycle of seasons, Ackerman awakens readers to the world at dawn--drawing on sources as diverse as meteorology, world religion, etymology, art history, poetry, organic farming, and beekeeping.
- **"Forgotten God: Reversing Our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit"** by Francis Chan. Chan contends that Christians have ignored the Holy Spirit for far too long, and it's causing disastrous results. Thorough scriptural support and compelling narrative form Chan's invitation to stop and remember the Spirit of the living God.
- **"The Man Who Loved Books Too Much: The True Story of a Thief, a Detective, and a World of Literary Obsession"** by Allison Hoover Bartlett. While most thieves steal for profit, rare-book thief John Charles Gilkey steals purely for the love of books. With a mixture of suspense, insight, and humor, "The Man Who Loved Books Too Much" immerses the reader in the world of literary obsession and reveals how dangerous it can be.

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10:45

* **ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL** PG (10:30, 12:45, 2:55, 5:10),
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* **UP IN THE AIR** R (11:00, 2:00, 4:40),
7:20, 10:00

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Warren proves tough on the road

By JOSEPH APODACA,
SPORTS INTERN

DOWNEY – The Alhambra Tournament ended on a high note for the Warren boys' basketball team, who bounced the Gabrielino Eagles off the court, taking home the night's victory, 72-51.

The victory against the San Gabriel Gabrielino team marks the fourth victory in the Bears' tournament games out of six in total. They triumphed over Firebaugh High School from Lynwood winning 66-31, Sierra Vista High from Baldwin Park ending at 61-50, and a 51-42 victory against South Torrance.

They lost two games in their tournament efforts, one to North High from Riverside, 58-49 and a 38-35 loss to Narbonne from Harbor City. The Bears have closed in on an overall season record of 5-3, all without holding a single game in their home facility.

The Bears continue to improve as their season progresses into conference games following the holiday break. Junior Cejay Anderson remains the team's standout guard, scoring 44-plus so far this season. Senior point guard Moises Benitez also shines as a key scorer, with more than 41 points this season. Senior captain Eddie Romero rounds out the top scorers of the

team with over 22 points this season in addition to tallying up the most points of the rebound with more than 17 points.

Head coach Ryan Hart and his boys have worked hard to prove that the Bears have what it takes on the basketball court. Their offensive strategies have been on point the entire preseason, making good use of the shot clock and moving the ball down court effectively and making smart passes. Defense has also been tight and concise, where the boys continue to perform strong blocks and doing their best to keep opponents away from their basket.

This time last season, the Bears were practically in the same situation they are in now. They had better than average success in their tournament games, putting themselves ahead in games as much as 50 points at times. It wasn't until their conference games where we saw the Bear's star begin to fade, losing every single San Gabriel Valley League game.

Only time will tell if in fact lightening strikes twice for the Bears or if they will do a complete 180 turn successful in their conference games. There's no doubt with the team's new attitude and outlook on the game that they will come fair well in 2010.

Downey's soccer offense is MIA

By ALYSSA WYNNE,
SPORTS INTERN

DOWNEY – The first game of the Mustang Soccer Tournament did not turn out promising for the Vikings losing their first game in a 2-0 shutout. The game was followed by a 0-0 tie the very next day.

This miserable streak continued to run rampant as the Vikings entered their game against California last Tuesday, a 1-0 loss, and again in their game against El Rancho that following Thursday in another 0-0 tie. Downey's game against Whittier Christian on Monday was cancelled.

Many people despise the sport of soccer because of the outrageously low scores and silly idea of there being no points whatsoever. But what most critics fail to realize is the absolute difficulty to score in a net that measures 24' x 8' when

there are 11 players in your way, and a person ready to throw themselves in front of the ball. Like all sports, soccer proves to be difficult.

Nonetheless, the ladies of Downey's soccer team are not living up to their expectations this season. The star team that strutted onto the field last year left behind quite a legacy that the 2009-2010 girls have yet to fulfill. But with this being only preseason, there is still hope that they can pull through by Jan. 12, which marks the day that season officially begins.

Downey will be hosting the North Orange County Classic, which begins on Dec. 28 and ends on Dec. 30. The first match for Downey is against Magnolia High School of Anaheim and their record of 4-1 will certainly serve as a strong competition for the Vikings.



The DJAA's Downey Mayhem placed first place in the SCMAF Southeast Section Eighth Grade Division for football. Both the Mayhem and the Ballers will represent Downey in the state tournament tomorrow in Fontana. Back row, left to right: Coach Ryan, Matthew O., Gerardo O., Eddie T., Jonah G., Jordan D., Josh C., James C., Luis M., Coach Daniel and Coach Steve. Front row: Anthony O., Deron J., Vincent F., Tanner M., Darren M. and Lorel J. Not pictured is Coach Level.

Turnovers doom Downey girls

By ALYSSA WYNNE,
SPORTS INTERN

DOWNEY – Downey launched itself into the Arroyo Tournament for girls' basketball and breezed through the games against Mountain View and Charter Oak but came to a stop in the close games against Bell Gardens and Arcadia.

It all began against Arcadia last Tuesday and by the first quarter it seemed inevitable that the Vikings would lose with Arcadia scoring 20 points and Downey only eight. They started off with a poor defense and were still unable to rise up even with a strong period of 17 points in the second quarter.

By halftime, Downey was up by just one point despite 11 rebounds, 15 steals, and the 31 turnovers Downey committed. Players Katie Marifian, Debra Lovell, Demetria Love, and Amanda Mazon played hard but not hard enough to get their teammates pumped as well. The fourth quarter placed Arcadia with a 10-point lead and Downey stuck in a rut; they lost 52-42.

Downey's victory against Mountain View proved to be an easy one, 48-22. Each quarter averaged a 6-point lead and Mountain View definitely turned out to be a defensively weak team when matched up to Downey. Downey had 27 offensive rebounds, 13 of which grabbed by Love, and then 20 defensive rebounds with Anissa Segura taking seven of them. Lovell aided greatly in the points made for her

team with six assists. Janei Hawkins contributed defensively with six steals and offensively with 10 of the 48 points made for her team. Kaylan Lane followed closely behind with nine points. Last Thursday's victory gave Downey an even 4-4 record for their preseason.

But then the Vikings lost again, this time to Bell Gardens who had an 11-point lead in the end. Bell Gardens was down 10 points at the end of the second quarter and remarkably came back up and fought viciously for their victory. Downey went from winning by 16 points at the half to losing to Bell Gardens, 51-41.

In spite of the losses to two schools, Downey came out even with one more win against Charter Oak, which concluded the tournament. The game was close with the teams flip-flopping scores every quarter. Downey was up by five in the first quarter but Charter Oak scored 15 points so they could have a four-point lead by halftime. The Vikings came back with 16 points in the third and fourth quarters and succeeded in beating the Chargers 52-50.

With this victory, Downey earned a 5-5 record for their preseason games. Downey anticipates it's next match to be with Rialto to spark the Palm Springs Tournament. Rialto has a 5-2 record and is expected to give Downey a run for their money. The tournament, which will be in Palm Springs, begins Dec. 28 and ends on New Year's Eve.

Downey water polo dominant in pre-season

By JOSEPH APODACA,
SPORTS INTERN

DOWNEY – Practically perfect in every way describes the Downey girls' water polo team, who yet again have dominated the waters, this time against the Rowland High Raiders winning 11-1.

The win against the Raiders marks the Viking's ninth victory so far in their preseason, which includes non-league and tournament games. So far they have only lost one game in overtime at the El Rancho tournament, while otherwise they have made a significant splash this season. The girls have brought down some of their toughest opponents early on in the season, defeating the likes of Millikan, Lakewood, Santa Fe, San Marino and Estancia.

"I'm just very proud," said senior Dominique Diaz. "The team deserves to be proud and we've been playing really hard, especially in the Millikan game and even in our sudden death loss against South Pasadena."

Returning players Diaz, Brenda Rosero, Sarah Aguayo, Felicia Aguirre, Jessica Badalamenti and goalie Faith Hundtoff have proven

their chemistry as a team is strong and their strategies in the water continue to work. The girls continually put up a strong offense, where Rosero leads as whole set. They are consistent with their passing abilities, making use of their shot clock and moving the ball across the pool with vigor and ease. Even new players, like Meghan Nevarez, are making themselves known in the water, taking over for the returning teammates when ahead in the game.

"In the Rowland game, the starters didn't play at all in the 2nd half because we were just killing them," said Diaz. "The new girls have been playing really well, keeping the pace of the game and continuing to play strong offense and defense."

With all the success the girls have seen so far in their preseason efforts, a well-deserved break is in store for them with games resuming January 12 against Costa Mesa at the Downey pool. Despite the large gap between their regular season games, the girls keep themselves busy with club games and practices during school.

The girls will begin San Gabriel Valley League games against Gahr Jan. 14.

Vikings regroup after loss to Paramount

By SCOTT COBOS,
STAFF WRITER

DOWNEY – If Saturday's basketball game against Paramount is a precursor of things to come in San Gabriel Valley League play, then it could be a long season for the Downey Vikings.

In a 61-47 loss, Downey never led and Paramount outscored them in every quarter. The scary thing about the loss is that Paramount is supposed to be one of the teams that Downey needs to beat in SGVL play if they have any hopes of returning to the CIF playoffs.

Downey did manage to keep

the game close only being down by six points at the half, 26-20, but when Downey tried to rally in the second half, the Pirates always had an answer.

In that second half, Downey made key adjustments that helped them put the ball in the hoop more efficiently, but as their offensive output increased, their defensive ability crashed.

The last quarter proved to be the most costly with Downey allowing a game high 19 points.

Downey now has a 2-week break and won't play again until Jan. 7 in their last preseason game.

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Q: Where can I find information on acquiring an identification card? Is there a fee for a new card?

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Q: I bought a vehicle with a clean air sticker. Is the sticker still active even though I wasn't the original owner?

A: Yes, all Clean Air stickers remain with the vehicle they were originally issued to and cannot be transferred to any other vehicle. If you purchase a vehicle that has a Clean Air Sticker you may transfer the sticker to your name.

To transfer the Clean Air Sticker to your name, complete the following steps:

Complete an Application for Clean Air Vehicle Stickers (REG 1000).

Check the "Replacement ID card only" box.

If the clean air vehicle is a hybrid and you are a resident of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano or Sonoma County, you must include an original Bay Area FasTrak receipt as evidence of a FasTrak toll account.

Q: I received a traffic ticket last week. Can I pay for it on the DMV Web site?

A: To pay your citation, please visit www.dmv.ca.gov, click on How do I Pay for a Traffic/Parking Ticket Online and click on the county where your citation was received. Those with tickets issued in certain counties may need to visit their local court's website or contact the court directly.

Q: How much insurance am I required to have?

A: These are the minimum liability insurance requirements for private passenger vehicles:

- \$15,000 for injury/death to one person.

- \$30,000 for injury/death to more than one person.

- \$5,000 for damage to property.

Liability insurance compensates a person other than the policy holder for personal injury or property damage (comprehensive or collision insurance does not meet vehicle financial responsibility requirements). Check your policy to make sure you have sufficient liability insurance coverage.

Do you have questions about general driving-related requirements like registration and insurance? The California Department of Motor Vehicles has answers. "Save Time by Going Online" at www.dmv.ca.org.

Sweet Celebrations

Festive desserts with an exciting twist

FAMILY FEATURES

A great dessert makes any special occasion even more wonderful. Celebrate this season with classic dessert recipes given an exciting twist with the sweet addition of California dried figs.

Dark purple Missions and golden, slightly nutty flavored Calimyrnas are the secret touches that will turn these recipes into new holiday favorites.

Chocolate Crinkles are chewy on the inside and have rich chocolate taste with bursts of sweet fig flavor. Chewy Ginger-Molasses Fig Cookies take traditional ginger molasses cookies and add sweet chunks of Mission figs, making them crispy on the outside, chewy on the inside. They freeze well, so make a double batch and save some for giving.

This German Chocolate Cake recipe starts with the ease of a cake mix. The crowning glory is the luscious topping made with California dried figs, coconut, and toasted pecans. Wow family and friends by popping the cake under the broiler just before serving for an outstanding finale.

Interchangeable in most recipes, dark Mission and golden Calimyrna figs are chewy, sweet and moist, always available, and easy to keep on the shelf for snacking and cooking.

Visit www.valleyfig.com for more recipes, cooking tips and nutrition tips as well as holiday baking supplies and gifts.



Chocolate-Fig Banana Bread

Makes 1 loaf

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups mashed, very ripe bananas (about 4)
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup stemmed, chopped Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs
- 1/2 cup miniature chocolate morsels

Preheat oven to 350°F. In large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, soda and salt.

In separate bowl, whisk together bananas, eggs, oil and vanilla. Whisk liquids into dry ingredients, mixing just until blended. Stir in figs and chocolate. Scrape batter into oiled 9 x 5-inch loaf pan. Bake in the middle of the oven for 60 to 70 minutes (cover with foil after about 30 minutes to prevent over browning) or until pick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool 10 minutes in pan. Run sharp knife around edge of pan and remove bread from pan to wire rack to cool. Wrap airtight and store at room temperature or freeze.

Chewy Ginger-Molasses Fig Cookies

Makes about 30 cookies

- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 large egg white
- 3 tablespoons light molasses
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup stemmed, finely chopped Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar

Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat brown sugar and oil in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until blended. Beat in egg white and molasses.

In separate bowl combine flour, ginger, soda, cinnamon and salt. On low speed, slowly beat in flour mixture until combined. With spoon, stir in figs.

Shape 1-tablespoon portions of dough into balls. Roll in granulated sugar. Place 2 1/2-inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet. Place sheet in center of oven and bake cookies 7 to 9 minutes, until crackled on top and set around edges. Cool on wire rack.

Chocolate Fig Crinkles

Makes about 30 cookies

- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup stemmed, finely chopped Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs
- 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar

Beat brown sugar and butter with electric mixer on medium speed until blended. Beat in melted chocolate. Beat in eggs, one at a time, and vanilla.

In medium bowl, stir together flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. On low speed, slowly beat into chocolate mixture. Stir in figs. Cover bowl and chill 3 hours.

To bake, preheat oven to 350°F. Form 1-tablespoon portions of dough into balls. Roll in confectioners' sugar. Place balls, 2 1/2-inches apart, on greased baking sheet. Place sheet in center of oven and bake cookies 7 to 9 minutes, until crackled on top and set around edges. Cool on wire rack.

German Chocolate Cake With Broiled Fig and Coconut Topping

Makes 2 single-layer cakes

Cake:

- 1 18 1/4-ounce German Chocolate Cake Mix (Check cake mix for additional ingredients — oil, eggs, water)

Fig-Coconut Topping:

- 1 cup stemmed, chopped Blue Ribbon Orchard Choice or Sun-Maid Figs
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 6 tablespoons whipping cream
- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 1/2 cup chopped, toasted pecans

Follow package directions and prepare two 8-inch round cakes. Bake and cool as directed.

For topping, in medium saucepan combine figs, sugar, butter and cream. Stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a simmer. Simmer 1 minute, stirring constantly. Stir in coconut and pecans. Spread warm topping on top of each cake layer, dividing evenly.

Place one cake at a time on a baking sheet or heatproof pan. Broil 4 to 5 inches from heat for 15 to 30 seconds, or until topping bubbles, watching constantly. Remove from oven. Repeat with second cake. Cool. Transfer cakes to serving plates to serve.



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Don't worry, it's only a dummy. This home at 8358 Lubec St., between Brookshire and Downey avenues, got into the Christmas spirit by hanging a realistic-looking dummy off the roof. "We made it look like he was hanging Christmas lights," homeowner Kandy Grzebyk told *The Downey Patriot* through e-mail. "We have had so many people stop to help our dummy. We sit in the garage and move his legs with fishing wire. It has been a lot of fun. People are stopping by to take pictures with him."



Downey Adult School held its fifth graduation and pinning ceremony Dec. 14 for its vocational nursing program. Principal Roger Brossmer and assistant principal Blanca Rochin gave speeches, and awards were given to students based on attendance record and clinical performance. The graduation concluded with a candle-lighting ceremony, in which all nurses in the audience joined the students in reciting the Nursing Pledge.




The Warren High School Vocal Ensemble, led by director Bob Peterson, sang Christmas and other holiday songs at a Downey Coordinating Council meeting on Dec. 2. It was the ensemble's first holiday performance of the year. The Coordinating Council, which works to prevent duplications of events in Downey, meets at noon on the first Wednesday of every month (except in the summer) at the Barbara J. Riley Community and Senior Center. For more information, call Leonard Zuniga at (562) 869-5444.

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