Friday, Feb. 19, 2016 Vol. 10 No. 3 12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

Governor proposes \$176.6M to clean up Exide

VERNON - Governor Jerry Brown on Wednesday proposed a \$176.6 million spending plan to fund expedited and expanded testing and cleanup of residential properties, schools, daycare centers and parks around the former Exide Technologies facility in Vernon.

"This Exide battery recycling facility has been a problem for a very long time," said Brown. "With this funding plan, we're opening a new chapter that will help protect the community and hold Exide responsible."

The administration's plan was detailed in a Department of Finance letter sent to the California State Senate and Assembly Budget and Appropriations Committee chairs.

The \$176.6 million plan will ensure all residential properties, schools, daycare centers and parks within the 1.7 mile radius of the Exide Technologies facility are tested and contaminated soil removed where lead levels are the highest and potential exposure the greatest.

This plan expedites and expands efforts already underway and includes an exemption to the California Environmental Quality Act, authorities

Local legislators reacted positively to the plan.

"I am very pleased to hear that Governor Brown is proposing \$176.6 million in funds to test and clean up land around the former Exide plant. Residents of these contaminated areas have been clamoring for urgent relief.

"Governor Brown's funding proposal, and his support for expediting the cleanup process, are important steps in making our communities safe once again. To date, the state's effort has been dangerously slow and underfunded. This announcement is Ian Calderon (D-Whittier) introduced "Residents of Skilled Nursing Facilities non-direct caregiving personnel to provided by CNAs by instituting a much-needed change of direction in the state's work to clean up Exide. I am hopeful the governor's announcement will help ensure that the DTSC will have all the funds needed to test and clean up the affected properties."

"Given the urgency of this crisis, I implore the state legislature to immediately approve this funding in order to expedite the critical work of cleaning up the poisons in our contaminated neighborhoods. The health and well-being of our communities depends on swift and sustained action by the state."

"I have been working closely with the Governor on securing funding for Exide," added Assemblymember Cristina Garcia. "I look forward to working with my colleagues to create a necessary CEQA exemption to expedite the testing and cleanup of these homes.

"Today, along Assemblymember Miguel Santiago and I will be introducing legislation on a proposed battery fee. This measure would create a state mandated Lead-Acid(Car) Battery Recycling program, and have \$1 from that fund go to repay the \$176.6 million loan program.

"The Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) will continue to pursue holding Exide responsible for repaying the loan. If Exide cannot be held liable my legislation will repay the initial \$176.6 million loan and continue to fund the cleanup of the 10,000 homes surrounding Exide and other areas of the state contaminated by lead acid batteries.

I look forward to continuing to work with Assemblymember Santiago, Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee Chair, Assemblymember Luis Alejo and Vice Chair, Assemblymember Brian Dahle as my bill moves through the Assembly. I thank them for their commitment to our community's health and their leadership. Without a team effort we cannot be successful."

The problem with senior housing (or lack of it)



By Sharon Smith Contributor

NORWALK - You can't read the newspaper today or turn on the radio and TV without hearing or seeing something on the subject of senior housing. I never would have known it to be such a drastic problem until it became reality for me.

After having worked from age 16 to 76, having two failed marriages, and making not-too-smart financial decisions, I was living in a mobile home in need of endless repairs. After 14 years of living there, I was persuaded to retire, and my Social Security became my sole source of income. Having lived with various relatives in situations not working for us, I decided it was time for me to check into senior housing. Was I ever in for a rude awakening!

Assembly Bill 2079 (AB 2079)

minimum number of direct care

service hours for nursing assistants in

order to improve the quality of care in

primary providers of direct care who

meet the needs of seniors and people

"Nursing assistants are the

nursing facilities.

SHARED STORIES:

THE TIES THAT BIND

phoning each listed facility and eliminated those offering assisted living, since I am fortunate enough to be in good health and capable of taking care of all my needs.

Over the course of the next few weeks, dear friends Maggie and Eddie accompanied me to facility after facility where I was told the wait could be as long as two to six vears; the shortest wait time being one year! Some facilities were taking applications; others had such an extensive waiting list that they were

no longer taking applications.

A studio apartment, 525 sq. ft., goes for \$788 in Norwalk (in my income bracket). I applied to two of their apartments, but they could not tell me how long the wait would be. It's all dependent upon a tenant's dying or giving the 30-day required notice of moving; even then there's that waiting list to deal with!

Totally frustrated by now, one empathetic woman to whom I talked gave me the phone number of someone she knew at the Housing Authority who she felt sure would be able to help me. I quickly called him, explained my dilemma in detail and asked, "Isn't there anything available for an American senior citizen who has contributed to the system for 58 years?" To which he promptly replied, "I know what you're going through. I am a Mexican American citizen also, and I can't help my own parents and friends with their housing needs. The immigrants, homeless and lower income brackets have the priority."

I even learned in one conversation that HUD and Section 8 Housing Authorities are no longer taking applications. They, too, are inundated with seemingly endless waiting lists!

There's ongoing publicity surrounding the current and the impending homeless population due to the upcoming El Nino crisis and the influx of the immigrants. It tugs at my heart-strings, and we can all empathize with the lower income opening another window each time population, or when seeing the homeless living under pup tents on

our streets, and out of shopping carts full of their meager belongings.

But, in my opinion, not enough is being brought to the forefront regarding the plight of senior citizens and the middle class with their ever-escalating costs of housing – be it buying or renting.

Not giving up too easily, my next approach to the problem was to check into the Whittier area, in particular, as they are known to have "casitas," "granny houses" or "mother-in-law quarters" behind the main house. The older section also has an ample variety of duplexes and triplexes as well. Those dear friends of mine again drove me up one street after another. We saw very few "For Rent" signs, and the several numbers I did call turned out to be for one bedrooms that went for as much as \$1,100 to \$1,300 which just about amounted to my total Income per month. So, that, too, turned out to be an effort in futility.

Feeling totally frustrated and "down in the dumps" about the situation, I decided to share my problem with my particular group at the writing class. Bless their hearts! Word got around, a classmate made an offer I couldn't refuse, and it has been a win-win situation in a lovely home that came with a cute and playful dog named Dency.

I'm back to my usual "attitude of gratitude," and thanking God for answering the prayers of my friends and loved ones and for always

Weekend at a Glance



THINGS TO DO



Bob Saget Friday, Saturday - Brea Improv

The "Fuller House" star embraces his "dark side" in a stand-up comedy special, \$30



Murder Mystery Saturday, Downey Elks Lodge -5:30 p.m.

A murder-mystery dinner show benefiting the Downey Rose Float Assoc. \$50



Comic Expo Saturday and Sunday, Long Beach

All things comics, including actors, exhibitors, artists, and more. \$20-\$30



Roller Derby

Saturday, Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Culver City, 5:30 p.m.

Angel City Derby opens its 2016 season with a double-header. All ages. \$13

FROM OUR FACEBOOK

Insufficient senior housing options

Anna Gabriel: This is the biggest problem for people. Rent is outrageous. About 10 years ago the city of Santa Monica offered rent control to people. It's a great idea; somebody in LA County, preferably Norwalk should do something about

Kellean Mullen Day: My mom has been on a list for years! Actually on multiple lists. She did get called about one but it was upstairs and they had no elevator. At 78 that's not an

landlords gouging people.

Reach us on Facebook at: Facebook.com/NorwalkPatrio

I take a "Memoirs Writing Class" at the Norwalk Senior Center, and I asked the receptionist about senior housing, and she gave me a list covering a number of cities in the surrounding area. These were Norwalk, Downey, Bellflower, Lakewood, Santa Fe Springs, Pico Rivera, and Whittier. I began by

Legislation would require nursing homes

to publicly post number of nurses on duty

and heal in a timely manner."

Current staff requirements for

Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) do

not meet the direct care needs of

nursing home residents. The California

Department of Public Health enacted

regulations that converted the 3.2-

hour requirement into ratios; however

these regulations do not differentiate

between types of direct caregivers. This

WHITTIER - Assemblymember with disabilities," stated Calderon. means operators of SNFs can include a minimum number of hours of care meet the 3.2 nursing hours per patient care requirement. This causes chronic shift. under-staffing of registered nurses (RNs), licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), and certified nursing assistants (CNAs) in these facilities and creates potentially unsafe living conditions for residents as they are subject to sub-par

care and greater risk of hospitalization. AB 2079 requires SNFs to publicly post, at all times, the number of direct caregivers on duty and assure

specified staff-to-patient ratios per

This bill would raise the minimum number of direct care service hours, transforming the care and environment in nursing homes to provide a more person centered level of care.

"AB 2079 helps to ensure that direct care staff are available to meet the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and people recovering from illness and injury," stated Calderon.

My Talented Mother

Wednesday, which would raise the environment to help patients recover

Even though Janice Collins's mother was run the restaurant. a farm girl, she could do so much more. She was good at algebra, geometry, and construction, as well as making cottage cheese and raising chickens to sell the eggs. Shared Stories is a weekly column lived. featuring articles by participants in a writing class at the Norwalk Senior Center. Bonnie Mansell is the instructor for this free class offered through the Cerritos College Adult Education Program. Curated by Carol Kearns.

By Janice Collins

I wish to acknowledge my mother, Gladys Josephine Fouts Hager Husler, for who she was and the many things she did. She faced many hardships in

Mom was born in Missouri in 1906 and was the seventh of eight children. Her father died at an early age, and her mother had all of the children gathered around the deathbed of their father, telling him goodbye and praying. She was seven at the time and her younger sister was five. The hardship came to everyone because even she and her little sister had to help in anyway they

One thing was enjoyable for them as children. She and her sister liked to sing. They sang a duet for their school

enough money keeping books for the who was three years old, and my grain elevator in Passaic, Missouri, half-brother Arthur who was only six and she heard of a managing job at a months. Arthur had double pneumonia restaurant in Butler, Missouri. They moved to Butler and everyone helped

Later in life, as the children were becoming of age to manage better at other jobs, the family made a move to Belpre, Kansas, where Mom's uncle

Mom was in high school and doing well. She was an intelligent person and earned enough credits to graduate a year early. Mom was always good at reasoning problems and algebra, as well as geometry. The teacher would always send her to the blackboard to do these problems and explain them to her

Since my mother had her credits, my grandmother allowed her to quit school and get married. Andy Hager asked Mom to marry him, and since her mother liked Andy, she agreed. Andy owned a farm. He was good to Mom. Since Mom liked horses, he bought a horse for her to ride. He also taught her to drive.

After four years of marriage, Andy had a swelling of his throat, and the doctor traveled to Hutchinson, Kansas, to get the necessary medication. Andy died, however, before the doctor could get back to Belpre. Mom was by his side, and he told her he probably wouldn't make it. The swelling cut off his oxygen and he stopped breathing.

Mom and Andy had two children My grandmother couldn't earn at that time - my half-sister Juanita and a nurse was caring for him.

Mom delivered milk to the people

in Belpre, and she tried to keep the mule. This was in the late 1920's. Times got hard again, and she could not make the necessary money to pay her taxes. So the farm was taken from her.

My grandmother and mother She was known to be good at it. moved into a place together so my grandmother could take care of Juanita and Arthur, and also make money by babysitting other children. My mother went to work for the Larned Mental Hospital as head cook. Together they made a living.

After a while, my mother started dating the man who would become my father, Louis Husler. They dated three years before they were married. They made a good couple. My mother had two more children - my brother Edward and myself.

My father had been working his father's farm at this time, and when his father died, the farm was sold because his siblings didn't want to keep it. Dad rented land in Kansas to continue farming, and then later, when I was twelve, we moved to Colorado.

During these years Mom helped Dad with farm work, raised a large garden, and canned fruits and vegetables. She also raised chickens and gathered eggs to take to St. John,

My parents separated cream and sold the cream to a creamery. Mom made our own cottage cheese and churned the butter. Chickens and steers were butchered and taken to a rented freezer in town.

We moved to Stratton, Colorado, farm going by using a plow behind a where Dad bought his own farm. Colorado had a serious drought in the 1950's and both of my parents had to get outside jobs. Once again Mom became a cook - this time at the Stratton Café.

> When a trailer factory opened up in Stratton, both of my parents got a job there. My mother was good at measuring to perfection when put to carpentry work. She could use an electric saw and turned out good looking cabinets for the trailers

Mom stayed on the farm after dad died, but she finally hired people to do the work since she was in her '70's.

At the age of 80, my brother Edward told her she needed to be with someone. They noticed that she would fall asleep and drop necessary pills under her rocker. Also, she would forget which day it was. People would come from Stratton to check up on her because they worried. Her driving skills weren't good anymore.

Mom went to live in the Boulder Mountains where my brother owns a large house. He gave her a beautiful bedroom with a veranda by the mountain. She was happy there. His wife was a nurse practitioner.

Mom died at the age of 92. She had many hardships in her life, but she was good at anything she put her mind to. She was buried in a Stratton cemetery

TWEET OF THE WEEK

@CerritosFalcon: Almost was eaten by a lion but anyways how was your day today?



02 Friday, Feb. 19, 2016 The Norwalk Patriot

In La Mirada, parents educated on cyber safety

LA MIRADA - Vigilance and online experience for school-age children, concerned parents learned

Opening Ceremonies

8:00 a.m.

strong communication are the keys by the Norwalk-La Mirada and online addiction. to maintaining a safe and rewarding Unified Instructional Technology Department, centered on common sense practices that parent and child at a Cyber Safety workshop at can agree on, as well as an overview Dolland Elementary School on Feb. of popular mobile phone apps and the proliferation of cyber threats

The Arc's 20th Walk for Independence

SAVE THE DATE

March 12, 2016

A one or three mile Walk to raise funds for people with

intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

Stonewood Center – Downey – Acapulco Restaurant

Registration Fees: 18 and over is \$25, ages 11-17 is \$15

and children under 10 are FREE.

Celebrity Guest Phillip Palmer from ABC7 Host Sponsors - Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe Wescom WeCare Foundation

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Acapulco Restaurant, Stonewood Center

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The workshop, presented such as bullying, predators, ID theft have had difficulty keeping pace habits.

"Cyber safety is a paramount concern for our community," NLMUSD Superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian said, "We are committed to providing education and resources for parents who

The Arc

Walk Starts

8:30 a.m.

Los Angeles & Orange Counties

with rapidly evolving modern technology."

Technology Integration Coach, led the discussion with a PowerPoint presentation outlining numerous strategies for being a good digital citizen. De Alba urged Dolland parents to sit down with their children to discuss and sign an Internet Agreement detailing family rules and safe habits regarding online activity.

De Alba stressed that although parents cannot monitor their a day, they can take steps to ensure consultations with Dr. Danielian. children keep themselves safe, think first and keep a healthy balance between their online and physical activities. She advised parents that

"If your child is on the computer, make sure they are where you can Cathy De Alba, a District see them," De Alba said. "Make them understand you have the right to look at what is on their phone and delete anything that may be inappropriate. However, you cannot be too strict. Communication is the key."

Graciela Romero, who has two children that attend Dolland, signed the Internet Agreement after attending a Coffee with the Superintendent monthly meeting. The Cyber Safety workshop was children's online activity 24 hours organized as a direct result of parent

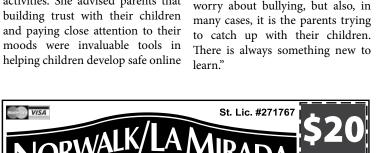
> "It's a matter of safety. Your child is online and you don't know who is on the other side," Romero said. "I worry about bullying, but also, in

> > Laminate & Hardwood

In addition to the Cyber workshop, a 10-week computer class for adults has begun at Waite Middle School. Parents who have never had an email address or touched a computer keyboard before are meeting twice weekly for ten weeks. They are learning the Microsoft Office suite of programs with curriculum centered on how to protect their children on the Internet by monitoring their use and adding filters to their computers. They are also learning how to use the Internet to support their students in other ways, including the college and financial aid application process much of which is now accomplished

"I congratulate our parents for participating in the workshop and in the computer classes," NLMUSD Board of Education President Karen Morrison said. "As a District, we want to do everything we can to help parents understand the importance of cyber-safety. These parents are taking the time to learn about the importance of Internet safety and stepping out of their comfort zones to learn new skills."

NLMUSD has also built a comprehensive Digital Citizen and Online Safety Resource Library for parents, students and teachers on its website with a series of links, including suggestions for setting rules for mobile phone use and "myths and truths about internet safety" supporting the concepts of digital citizenship.





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Library hosting citizenship clinic

NORWALK - Norwalk Library will host a citizenship clinic Thursday, March 10, from 5-7:30 p.m.

Participants will receive free application support, legal advice, study materials and a fee waiver application.

Register by calling the library at (562) 868-0775. The clinic is held in partnership with the South Asian





03 Friday, Feb. 19, 2016 The Norwalk Patriot

Cal High teacher chosen to help develop statewide curriculum

School arts teacher Julie Tonkovich is one of only 10 public school teachers appointed to serve on the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC), an advisory body to the State Board of Education, providing her the opportunity to help develop and strengthen education standards that will benefit students across the state.

Tonkovich – who has been teaching visual arts at her alma mater for 24 years – will begin serving her four-year term in January 2017. She will work with an 18-member commission to help revise and update the framework for education, drawing on her

and social science credentials within her art classes.

appointment, Under this Tonkovich will advise the state Board of Education on curriculum and recommend instructional materials that will assist teachers in successfully implementing standards-based instruction.

"I try to keep up on education trends by attending development classes and conferences. If my students are going to be entering this modern 21st-century workforce, I need to teach

arts teacher and utilizing her English have this opportunity and am excited to make a difference in the education community."

> Tonkovich was selected as the California Art Education Association's Outstanding Visual Art Educator in 2013 and has developed a keen ability to establish new arts standards and curriculum at the local level, while meeting the needs of a diverse student population.

At Cal High, Tonkovich teaches Art 1 and 2, Advanced Placement (AP) Studio Art for 2-D and drawing, AP Art History, and Video and Cinematic them how to navigate it ahead of time," Arts — a course she developed. She

WHITTIER - California High experience as a visual and performing Tonkovich said. "I am so fortunate to keeps current on trends in the art teaching. world by constantly reading blogs and news articles, attending conferences and workshops, and continuously trying to improve her knowledge of technology with opportunities such as iMovie lessons, bringing up-to-date, 21st century teaching to her students.

> In addition to teaching AP classes, Tonkovich has also been teaching arts courses for English learners and special education students for more than two decades. She has attended trainings to assist English learners and participated in several conferences and workshops on Asperger's syndrome and autism to learn more about special education

"I work well with a diverse student backgrounds and preferences of my

are also a regular part of Tonkovich's curriculum. Students attend monthly trips outside the classroom to deepen their understanding of art and also exhibit their work at campus, local or Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson national competitions. Her students themselves in their artwork, think critically and make deliberate choices culture and the innovative frameworks in the creative process.

"I want my students to always get the 'big idea' when it comes to their projects," Tonkovich said. "I make sure everything they do has a lasting value outside the classroom. I hope to bring all of this with me when I begin my

work with IQC."

Additionally, Tonkovich has population," Tonkovich said. "Every presented lectures at the National Art student learns differently, so I alter my Educator Association conventions for teaching style to address the diverse eight years and is a mentor and peer coach at several area universities.

"Julie has demonstrated her ability Field trips and art exhibitions to strengthen standards, instruction and assessment, while capturing the attention of her students through her engaging, inclusive teaching style," Whittier Union High School District said. "Our District student achievement have also been taught to reflect rate continues to grow thanks to our quality teachers, our collaborative our teachers help to develop, and I am confident that Julie will inspire that same forward thinking at the state

Senator calls for safety alarms on California school buses

Mendoza (D-Artesia) on Tuesday introduced a measure that would require school buses in California to be equipped with child-safety alarm systems to ensure that children are not left on buses unattended and in potentially hazardous circumstances.

Mendoza's proposal comes after an autistic student died last September after being forgotten on a school bus in Whittier. Authorities say Hun Joon Lee was left inside the hot bus for seven hours after being forgotten by a substitute bus driver.

"California should join other states that require child safety alarm systems on school buses. It is vital that we do everything we can to protect the many thousands of children transported daily to and from school," said Mendoza. "It is my hope that we can find some meaning in the recent tragic loss of a Whittier student on a school bus, in the form of meaningful change that will safeguard other children. It should not take events like this one to spur us into action on these issues."

Specifically, SB 1072 will:

*Require all school buses to be equipped with an operational childsafety alarm system that prompts the driver to inspect all seats before leaving

by the CHP and hard-wired into the each pupil's bus stop and at the final vehicle's electrical system and activated trip destination. when the ignition is turned on.

of their annual school bus driver safety California Special Driver Certificate certificate to receive training in childsafety check procedures.

*Impose a penalty for a driver, school district or contractor who knowingly permits a child to be transported in a bus in which a child safety alarm has not been installed, is not properly maintained, or is not in good working order.

*Direct the CHP to promulgate rules to implement this section and provide a list of child-safety alarms that are approved for use in school busses and a qualified technician or mechanic that can install the system.

*Grant school districts and school bus contractors a grace period of three months after the date that the CHP issues the rules to install a child safety

Current law requires public and private school districts to create and follow a transportation safety plan containing procedures for school personnel to follow to ensure the safe transportation of pupils. The plans must include specific procedures on

Additionally, to operate a school *Require drivers upon a renewal bus, a driver is required to obtain a from the Department of Motor

the bus. The system must be approved boarding and exiting a school bus at Vehicles (DMV), which entails classroom instruction, special training, and testing. Annual renewal of the certificate is required and involves 10 hours of renewal classroom instruction, or behind-the-wheel or in-service training.

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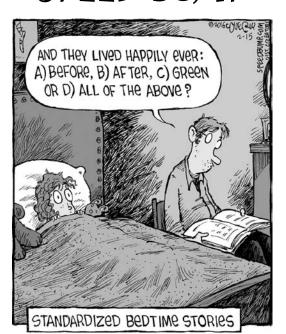
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The Norwalk Patriot Friday, Feb. 19, 2016

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Editor, Press Releases, photos,

meeting and club schedules!

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Email:

news@thedowneypatriot.com

TUESDAYS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Farmers Market - Excelsior High School 1st & 3rd 6:00 p.m. - Toastmasters Meetings - Registrar Recorder/County Clerks Office 2nd & 4th, - Toastmasters Meetings - Norwalk Library 1st & 3rd, 6:00 p.m. - City Council - Council Chambers 3rd, 5:45 p.m. - Housing Authority - Council Chambers

WEDNESDAYS

10:30 a.m. - Woman's Club - Masonic Lodge 12:00 p.m. - Rotary - Doubletree Hotel 1st, 12:30 p.m. - Soroptimist International - Soroptimist Village 1st & 3rd, 7:00 p.m. - Lions Club - Bruce's Restaurant 2nd & 4th, 1:30 p.m. - Alondra Senior Citizens - Social Services Center 2nd & 4th, 7:30 p.m. - Planning Commission - Council Chambers 4th, 11:30 a.m. - Coordinating Council - Arts & Sports Complex

THURSDAYS

7:00 p.m. - Boy Scouts Troop 924 - Norwalk United Methodist Church 2nd, 7:30 p.m. - Golden Trowel -Norwalk Masonic Lodge 3rd, 8:00 p.m. - American Legion Post No. 359 - 11986 Front St.

SATURDAYS

2nd, 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. - Pancake Breakfast - First Christian Church of Norwalk Have an event you want listed? E-mail news@thedowneypatriot.com

On This Day...

Feb. 19, 1945: Some 30,000 U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima and began a month-long battle to seize control of the island from Japanese forces during World War II.

2008: An ailing Fidel Castro resigned the Cuban presidency after nearly a half-century in power.

2010: Golfer Tiger Woods admitted infidelity and acknowledged receiving therapy.

Birthdays: Singer Smokey Robinson (76), actor Jeff Daniels (61), singer Seal (53), actor Benicio Del Toro (49). actress Haylie Duff (31) and actress Victoria Justice (23).

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com) FOR VALENTINE'S DAY: AKA 29 Down

by S.N.

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Kid-lit bear

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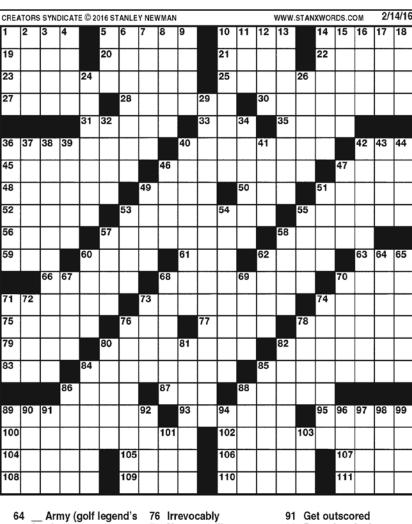
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Opinion O5 Friday, Feb. 19, 2016

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Letters can be mailed to The Norwalk Patriot, 12040 Foster Rd., Norwalk CA 90650 or via e-mail at news@thedowneypatriot.com.

Supreme Court vacancy

President Obama: "This is the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land. It's the one court where we would expect elected officials to rise above day-to-day politics. I understand the stakes. I understand the pressure that Republican senators are undoubtedly under. This would be a deciding vote. But that's not how the system is supposed to work."

Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-New Hampshire): "We're in the midst of a consequential presidential election year, and Americans deserve an opportunity to weigh in given the significant implications this nomination could have for the Supreme Court and our country for decades to come. I believe the Senate should not move forward with the confirmation process until the American people have spoken by electing a new president."

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa): "I would wait until the nominee is made before I would make any decision. In other words, take it a step at a time."

Sen. Thom Tillis (R-North Carolina): "I think we fall into the trap if [we] just simply say, sight unseen, we fall into the trap of being obstructionists. [But] if he puts forth someone that we think is in the mold of President Obama's vision for America, then we'll use every device available to block that nomination."

House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wisconsin): "The Supreme Court is not an extension of the White House. The president has absolutely every right to nominate someone to the Supreme Court, but Congress as an equal branch also has every right not to confirm someone.

The president has tried everything he can to empower the executive branch at the expense of the legislative one. His Supreme Court nominees have all contributed to that, those that he has placed on the bench already. So not only does Congress have the authority to stop a nominee, it has an obligation to defend itself against a president and a radically altered court that would continue to seize its powers."

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Connecticut): "Rejecting this constitutional obligation will rightly prompt public outcry and outrage — eventually forcing the right outcome. The Republican leadership can spare the court and the country damage by doing the right thing."

Hillary Clinton: "Justice Scalia's passing means the court hangs in the balance. Now the Republicans say they'll reject anyone President Obama nominates, no matter how qualified. Some are even saying he doesn't have the right to nominate anyone, as if somehow he's not the real

"That's in keeping with what we've heard all along, isn't it? Many Republicans talk in coded, racial language about takers and losers. They demonize President Obama and encourage the ugliest impulses of the paranoid fringe. This kind of hatred and bigotry has no place in our politics or our country."

Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vermont): "It appears that some of my Republican colleagues in the Senate have a very interesting view of the Constitution of the United States, and apparently they believe that the Constitution does not allow a Democratic president to bring forth a nominee to replace Justice Scalia. I strongly disagree with that. And I very much hope that President Obama will bring forth a strong nominee, and that we can get that nominee confirmed as soon as possible.

"The Supreme Court of the United States has nine members, not eight. We need that ninth member. A lot of important issues coming up."

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas): "We have 80 years of precedent of not confirming Supreme Court justices in an election year... There is a long tradition that you don't do this."

Donald Trump: "Ted Cruz, along with Jeb Bush, pushed Justice John Roberts onto the Supreme Court. Roberts could have killed ObamaCare twice, but didn't!

"Jeb Bush and Ted Cruz are not electable presidential candidates, Hillary would destroy them. Ted may not be eligible to run - born in Canada."

What's at stake with the Supreme Court

By Marge Baker

Nearly every issue that matters to the American people eventually finds its way before the

Whether it's access to health care, the right of women to make personal medical decisions, the ability of workers to defend themselves against discrimination, or simply having access to the voting booth, it's difficult to look at any part of our lives and not find evidence for the importance of our nation's highest court.

But even that list of challenges doesn't convey the total importance of filling the seat vacated by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. With Republican senators threatening to block any replacement put forward by President Barack Obama, the integrity of our political system is also

What happens next will shed light on whether our political process is so broken that one party can ignore the plain language of our Constitution — which entrusts nominations to the president, in every year of his or her term — and do serious harm to our federal courts, all to score political points against a president they don't like and tilt the Supreme Court towards the decisions they prefer.

The Constitution is clear about how we should handle vacancies on the Supreme Court. Article II, Section 2 says that the president shall "with the advice and consent of the Senate" name a new justice. That's pretty simple, right?

Yet within minutes of media reports of Scalia's passing, Senate Republicans, led by presidential candidate Ted Cruz, announced that they wouldn't even consider anyone Obama might nominate. It didn't take long for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to say the same, and for senators like Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire and Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania to line up behind him.

Their refusal to fulfill their constitutional obligation is, to put it kindly, breathtaking. Over the past three decades, the longest confirmation process took 99 days. The last four justices, spanning two administrations, were confirmed in an average of 75 days. There are more than 300 days left before the end of the Obama administration.

If Congress fails to act, the Supreme Court will go two terms — well over a year — with a vacancy. Since the 1980s, Congress has almost never left a vacancy during a Supreme Court

But more important than the numbers is the idea that the Supreme Court — an institution Americans have traditionally thought of as operating above politics, where ordinary individuals are supposed to get the same shot at justice as enormous corporations or powerful special interests — is just another political pawn that Republicans can hold hostage.

Obama has said that despite the threats, he intends to nominate someone to fill Scalia's seat. And already a few conservatives are rejecting the GOP's partisan attacks on the Supreme Court. Senator Susan Collins of Maine and former Attorney Alberto Gonzales have made clear that the Senate should evaluate a nominee based on his or her merits.

Are Republican leaders willing to put partisanship aside, to honor our Constitution and give President Obama's nominee fair consideration? Or will they let partisan rancor and petty politics damage our nation's highest court?

There's a lot at stake with pending Supreme Court cases. But the question of whether Republicans are willing to fulfill their constitutional obligations may be the biggest question of all. Marge Baker is the executive vice president of People For the American Way. PFAW.org

No candidate is perfect

By Jill Richardson

Let me tell you something people your views. don't often say when arguing about presidential candidates on Facebook: No candidate is perfect.

choosing to support one.

For example, you can support Bernie Sanders because you believe he's the best all-around candidate, while simultaneously accepting that he tends to be clumsy when it comes to matters of race.

It's also possible to support Hillary Clinton while noting that you dislike her vote in favor of the Iraq War, or are party in November could create an concerned about the millions of dollars her family's foundation accepted from in the direction of your choice for the Saudi Arabia.

The same goes for Republican candidates. Each of those contenders with advantages disadvantages.

In other words, whatever your leanings are, you need to weigh each candidate's pros and cons. How well do their proposals match your values? Do you believe they have a shot at actually getting something done?

It's a balancing act.

Hillary has more foreign policy experience than Bernie, although you might not consider that a good thing if you don't like the decisions she made as a senator and secretary of state. Bernie doesn't have a history of supporting pro-corporate economic policies like Hillary, and that's a perk if you share his economic populism.

A ridiculous way to choose a candidate, by the way, is by selecting the one whose genitalia matches your own. And it's an insult to women to suggest that any of us ought to, as former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright did when she said there's a "special place in hell" for women who don't support Hillary Clinton.

Even if you make your choice based on the issues, however, whomever you choose is still imperfect. In fact, it's dishonest to claim that your preferred candidate is, by virtue of being the best person running in your eyes, without

And it's dumb.

If you want what's best for America, then it makes sense to pick the best candidate - and then push them to become even better.

On the flip side, it's also foolish to abstain from supporting any candidate

because no contender perfectly matches

The death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is a good reminder of one of the most enduring legacies that But that doesn't mean it's not worth any president can leave: Supreme Court justices. President Ronald Reagan appointed Scalia, who carried on Reagan's values long after he left office.

Our next president will remain in office for up to eight years, but his or her Supreme Court nominees will probably shape our legal system for decades to come. No matter your feelings on the individual candidates, a win for your opportunity to nudge the Supreme Court next 20 or 30 years.

In other words, we should behave like rational, logical grownups as we select the next leader of our country. All candidates have their own flaws. Our job as citizens is to pick the best one and push them to become even better after

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The Norwalk Patriot 06 Friday, Feb. 19, 2016



Commentary: Parking, canopies, converted garages, oh my

By Raul Samaniego Contributor

NORWALK - On Tuesday, the Norwalk City Council agreed to disagree on where to go with the issues brought up in a Sept. 8, 2015 special meeting held in the south of Norwalk at the Social Service building on Alondra Boulevard.

Is that right? Sept. 8, 2015? Judas priest, that's over five months ago!

Having arrived at the same by asking my conclusions neighborhood amigos and compadres y comadres (that's basically friends), they were formalized by the city team

- 1) Parking issues.
- 2) Storage of trash cans in plain
 - 3) Converted garages.
 - 4) Canopies.

Okay, this is for my nine readers (remember, one is in Austin, Tex.). We know there are parking issues in Norwalk. I see it and anyone who owns or rents in this community sees it or experiences it on a daily basis as

Oh, I forgot, or remembered, most of the paid management level team in the city administration do not live in the city of Norwalk.

As for parking, even the council members get their name on a curb in front of the council chambers.

What are they going to do when construction begins on refurbishing and installation of a new concourse area in 2019 (based on turnaround times so far)?

So, what about these parking issues? The only solution was to schedule another meeting to discuss, eh, the findings of the second meeting?

I had this conversation with a real estate agent who was walking the south Norwalk neighborhood recently. I asked as I do most strangers (and city staff), do you live here in

Of course his answer was no. At least he was in the urban ballpark by being based in Buena Park, just up the

Money, money! (In my best Jan Brady voice).

That's all we hear today when issues are addressed to this council (and I am sure every elected body anvwhere).

"We do not have the money" was echoed by Council Member Cheri Kelley.

My question is, for what?

Do we hire more or new "canopy police" to go around and warn residents their canopy is blocking the sun of their neighbors and that they were reported for sun abuse?

That is a serious crime in California (Even though the nearest beach is 13 miles away by my best estimate)

Hey, I understand my neighbors aren't innocent. I see their converted garages, "personal stuff stuffed" garages, the orange cones and even trash bins marking their "adopted" territory in front of their properties.

Last week, my neighbor asked to park her car in my available driveway for she and her mother were going to be away in Vegas to watch the Super

Having her car for most of a

week, I was able to drive to three and it says, "Credit card only." medical appointments, one dental appointment and numerous cups of

Not bad, except the one day I needed to get to Los Angeles for my retinal specialist appointment, I decided to take the train. The Metrolink

Having taken the train many times, I figured that I'd give my bike -- the Raulmobile -- a rest and drive to the Metrolink station near Bloomfield.

Normally I would ride to the No. 3 starting point on 166th, chat with the driver for about 18 minutes and then ride over to the Northbound side of the station.

Always have a backup plan.

I always do. I missed the scheduled 8:12 departure time, so I stopped at my favorite green-monikered national coffee shop and picked up a cup of Joe

Arriving a good thirty minutes ahead of the next train, I found out that parking was not free.

Okay, prepared for that too.

I approached a safety officer who was dealing with a parking issue of

"Yes, they do charge and there is a machine over there," the uniformed officer said and pointed to a walled

Okay, I walked over to the machine prayer breakfast.

Still not a problem.

Like Casey at bat, I confidently pulled out that plastic monster and slipped it into the slot.

"Credit card does not work."

Wwwwwwwwhat?

No problemo, as I said, always have a backup plan, right. I eagerly and confidently reached back into my wallet and pulled out a tensky.

Ahhhhh! No slot for cash!

I was blanked.

Think! Ahah, the backup to the backup plan.

I would drive away from the Transportation center, park the car in free zone and jump on a bus to the center; exactly what I would have done two hours before.

My backup to the backup plan did not work.

So, what's the moral of the story? When it come to parking in the City of Norwalk, have a plan, have a backup plan and a backup plan to the backup

When the backup to the backup fails, call and reschedule that "Took 60 days to set up that Retinal Specialist" appointment for only four weeks later.

Darn, I should have asked Mayor Shryock to pray for you parking enthusiasts at Wednesday's mayor's

Leon Emerson, lawyer who helped Downey incorporate, dies at 90

DOWNEY - Judge Leon Emerson, who served as president of the Downey Chamber of Commerce in 1958, died in his sleep Feb. 11 at 90.

As a young local attorney, Emerson was an active member of the Steering Committee for the Incorporation of Downey. When the movement for incorporation won the vote in 1956 (a similar vote had failed in 1954) the instant city of 86,000 began to establish processes and take over services that had previously been supplied by the

an important time in the city's early history, when debates raged about what the services would be, and how much they would cost.

He also became president of the Exchange Club and several other local groups. He was a Scoutmaster, longtime member of Downey Kiwanis and the Shriners, and a founder of Downey Counseling Center.

In 1961, he was appointed to the Downey Municipal Court, and served most of his 30 years on the bench here.

He therefore led the Chamber at Judge Emerson was a local leader who ultimately left a national impact in his tireless crusade to get drunk drivers off the road. Time Magazine hailed him as a courtroom innovator.

> He met Bud McDonald, a former child actor in the "Our Gang" series, and they became friends and collaborators. Together they developed what is known today as the court card, used by judges nationwide to confirm attendance at a local Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meeting under a judge's order.

> Like many early Downeyites, Judge Emerson came from the heartland of America. The eleventh of 13 children, he grew up on an Oklahoma farm. In WWII, he fought at Iwo Jima and the Battle of Okinawa. He then used the G.I. Bill to attend Compton College and Loyola, and graduated from the Southwestern School of Law.

He is survived by his wife, Lora; daughter Julia; sons David and Donald; granddaughter Ayisha; two grandsons and two great-grandchildren; and an older sister, Cleo LeVally of Oklahoma.

A short military ceremony is set for 11:30 a.m. on Feb. 29 at Riverside National Cemetery, 22495 Van Buren

Judge Emerson told his daughter he wanted a "fun funeral." So whether attending or not, those who wish to honor him are "encouraged to wear bright, fun colors on Leap Year day. And smile to remember the loud jackets and ties he often wore under his dark judicial robes."



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