

Norwalk official denies 'slanderous' report

By Chrisitan Brown
Staff Writer

NORWALK – Norwalk Planning Commissioner Rosa Barragan is publicly refuting a news report that suggests police found drugs, guns, and money at her Norwalk residence following a raid there on Tuesday morning.

“I am very distraught over this slanderous article,” said Barragan. “I have 36 years of experience serving others in this community and this [false article] could erase everything I’ve done.”

Barragan is disputing the bulk of the reporting by Hews-Media Group, which described a raucous raid of both her residence and her mother’s home where guns, drugs, and money were allegedly discovered inside and arrests were made, launching an investigation.

However, Barragan maintains that while police did search the homes looking for her brother, no illegal contraband was found, no arrests were made, and she is not under investigation.

“You can’t control who your family is...They were searching for my little brother,” said Barragan, who admitted he’s had trouble with the law. “But they made it seem like I was a kingpin.”

Captain Curtis Jensen of the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station confirmed that authorities did serve search warrants to both Barragan and her mother on the 12100 block of 163rd Street Tuesday morning around 3 a.m., but he also denied any reports that Barragan herself was ever in question.

“None of the information in that article came from my office,” Jensen said. “Ms. Barragan was never a suspect and she is not under any investigation.”

Barragan serves as the McKinney-Vento Program Coordinator for the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District and is currently running for the Cerritos College Board of Trustees. In 2015, she was honored as Assembly District 57 Woman of the Year by state Assemblymember Ian Calderon.

“I’m part of the fabric of this community. Service has been my main field of work and it will continue to be my number one objective,” Barragan said.

Book sale at Norwalk Library

NORWALK – Norwalk Library will host its semi-annual “Bag-of-Books Sale” this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thousands of books, movie and music will be available for purchase. Cost is \$5 for as many items that can be fitted into a supplied paper grocery bag. Multiple grocery bags can be purchased.

For more information, call (562) 868-0775. Cash and credit cards are accepted.

Citizenship fair April 30

NORWALK – State Sen. Tony Mendoza is hosting a citizenship fair Saturday, April 30, from 8-11:30 a.m. at Excelsior High School.

At the fair, residents can receive help in completing their documentation to become U.S. citizens.

RSVP by calling (888) 839-8682.

Wearing caps and gowns, Norwalk freshmen envision their future



A Norwalk High School freshman auditions for his future graduation day as members of the NHS Link Crew look on during the school’s third annual Commit to Graduate event on March 21.

NORWALK – Wearing a royal blue cap and gown, Norwalk High School freshman Vincent Medina joined 600 fellow freshmen on March 21 in imagining the excitement of graduation day as part of the third annual “Commit to Graduate” (C2G) event designed to inspire students to achieve their goals.

Students heard from nationally renowned motivational speaker Richard Parkhouse, took photos in graduation attire, signed “diplomas” to signify their commitment to graduate and pinned them to a banner that adorned a

Whittier High principal, assistant superintendent announce retirements

WHITTIER – A pair of veteran educators whose leadership has helped shape successful student programs will retire at the end of this school year.

Whittier High School Principal Lori Eshilian, who has helmed the Cardinal campus for almost eight years, and Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Services Rich Russell, who has been with the District for 22 years, will retire from their posts in June.

“Lori Eshilian and Rich Russell are two pillars of the Whittier Union High School District,” Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson said. “They are the epitome of our healthy organizational culture and they have made a significant and lasting contribution to the ongoing success of Whittier Union.”

A 1972 graduate of Whittier High, Eshilian has worked in various capacities throughout the District since 1987. She has served as a support work project specialist and mentor teacher for the District, Academic Community for Enrichment (ACE) program teacher at California High School and special education support teacher, department chair, assistant principal and, for the past eight years, principal at Whittier High School.

Under Eshilian’s leadership, Whittier High has won two Golden Bell Awards – one in 2010 for its block schedule with embedded support program and one in 2015 for its Academic Mentor program. Both awards recognized the school’s innovation in promoting excellence and increasing student achievement.

“It is an honor to be part of the Whittier Union family and strengthen the Cardinal legacy at my alma mater,” Eshilian said. “While it will be difficult

Hurting in profits, historic McDonald’s adding drive-thru lane



By Alex Dominguez
Contributor

DOWNEY – The City of Downey Planning Commission unanimously approved the addition of a drive-thru to the city’s classic McDonald’s location on Wednesday.

The fast food restaurant, located at the corner of Florence Avenue and Lakewood Boulevard, was the third McDonald’s location to be built by the now staple burger chain. The restaurant was built in 1953, and is currently the oldest operating McDonald’s in the world.

The iconic arch and animated neon “Speedee” sign were added in 1959. To this day the location has retained its original architecture and retro style.

However, McDonald’s claims that the often historically described location has struggled to make a profit in modern times, largely in part to its lack of a drive-thru. According to the popular food chain, other local McDonald’s locations conduct approximately 65% of their sales via drive-thru operations.

At Wednesday night’s meeting, a representative of McDonald’s indicated

wall of the Norwalk High gymnasium.

Parkhouse encouraged students to take advantage of electives and clubs on campus to see what interests and inspires them.

“You are going to grow into your graduation gowns socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. As you do, I urge you to explore your greatness, and find your very best selves,” Parkhouse said.

About 60 Norwalk High Link Crew students organized the event and shared their experiences with the freshmen.

“It’s good to know someone is there for me to ask questions – someone who knows what it really feels like to go through it,” said Medina. “It’s cool that they’re motivating us early to graduate. I’m looking forward to it.”

Link Crew members drew loud cheers from the freshmen as they closed out the event with a flash mob performance set to a mash-up of “High School Musical” songs.

“This event gives our freshmen students a leg up,” said Karen Morrison, NLMUSD Board of Education President. “Giving students the opportunity to visualize graduation day, reflect on where they are now, where they’re going, and how quickly the time passes is a true gift.”

Norwalk-La Mirada USD Superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian applauded the work of the Link Crew students for organizing the event.

“This event exemplifies Norwalk-La Mirada Unified’s commitment to doing whatever it takes to support our students’ success,” Danielian said.

On graduation day, the Class of 2019 will have the photos of themselves as freshmen in cap and gown returned to them.

“I’ve seen the look on their faces when they get those photos back,” said Emily Osongco, Norwalk High P.E. teacher and Link Crew coordinator. “There’s nothing like seeing that pride they feel shining through.”

to leave, I know that Whittier High School and its students will continue to flourish and gain the education they need to be prepared for college and career.”

Russell – who has been assistant superintendent of personnel services since 2014 – began his 40-year career in education as a guidance counselor at Moreno Valley High School, where he developed the career center and a sequential grade 9-12 career education curriculum. He was also a counselor/consultant for the Riverside County Office of Education before returning to Moreno Valley Unified as the coordinator of pupil services.

He joined Whittier Union in 1994 as director of Student Support Services, playing a pivotal role in developing the District’s Pyramid of Interventions, a systematic organization of support that results in intervention for students who may be struggling. This targeted support takes various forms depending upon the student’s needs, including tutorials embedded during the day, freshman programs, enrollment in special support classes, and incorporating the guidance of additional counselors and student academic mentors

“I am proud of the phenomenal programs and initiatives that we have put in place to increase student achievement across Whittier Union schools,” Russell said. “It has been an honor to be a part of the amazing growth Whittier Union has experienced, and I know it will continue long into the future.”

Santa Fe High School Principal Kevin Jamero will replace Russell. The Board of Trustees will decide on Eshilian’s replacement.

that the struggling restaurant was also competing with another McDonald’s location not too terribly far away, located at the corner of Gallatin and Lakewood. That location underwent a major remodel and update last year, which included improvements to a once cluttered drive-thru lane that often times overran into the parking lot.

Normally, the planning commission does not take financial concerns when considering a land use entitlement. However, in the case of the iconic McDonald’s, the continued presence and operation of the restaurant was deemed of vital interest to the community.

Public opinion had been mixed even before the commission’s vote. Several community members responded to an article published by The Downey Patriot via social media, with many showing excitement for the upgrade and others fearing the loss of the location’s historical value.

The oldest operating McDonald’s was deemed eligible to be listed on the National and State Registers of Historical Places back in 1984, however has not been included in either as of late. Many within the city and local areas consider the building to be a historical landmark despite this fact.

According to the plans that were approved, the future drive-thru will not take away from the location’s classic look and feel, and instead will be located in the ally directly behind the building. The plans also call for a modernization of the kitchen, allowing the restaurant to update their menu and offer products not currently available.

Before officially casting their vote, commission members briefly discussed their feelings on the matter, and were all unanimous in the thought that the drive-thru was long overdue.

“I think a drive-thru is a fantastic idea at this site,” said Vice-Chairman Jim Rodriguez. “It’s going to enhance this site. It’s going to bring better, additional business...”

“It’s the old McDonald’s. We all know it in Downey, and people outside of Downey know it,” said Chairman Matias Flores. “...It’s definitely something that I identify with Downey, and I’m glad we’re doing something to keep it up...”

The commission’s final vote was a unanimous 4-0 in favor. District 2 Commissioner Patrick Owens was not present.

Weekend at a Glance

Friday	66°	
Saturday	65°	
Sunday	65°	

THINGS TO DO

Downey Street Faire
Saturday - Brookshire Avenue, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Vendors, food booths, live music, motorcycle show, and more. Rain or shine.

5K Fun Run
Saturday - Angels Stadium, 8 a.m.
A 5K or optional 1-mile fun run, with proceeds benefiting Angels Baseball Foundation. \$30-\$45

Renaissance Faire
Saturday - Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area, 10 a.m.
Live entertainment, food, living history exhibits, jousts, parades, battle pageant, and more. \$29 adults, \$15 kids (ages 4 and younger free)

Book Sale
Saturday - Norwalk Library, 9 a.m.
Norwalk Library’s semi-annual book sale. \$5 for a bag of books.

Symphony Concert
Saturday - Downey Theatre, 8 p.m.
A professional symphony live in concert. \$29

Craft Beer Festival
Sunday - Balboa Village, 1 p.m.
Unlimited food and tastings, beer games raffles, live rock and roll. \$22

TWEET OF THE WEEK

@CarlosMolina562: Perfect weather 4 an afternoon walk around my city #norwalk #TeamMolina

Follow us! @DowneyPatriot

SHARED STORIES:
THE TIES THAT BIND

Farm Life with my Father

Raised on a farm in America's heartland, Janice Collins used to think that city kids were "lucky." Looking back on her childhood, she now praises the unique experiences that farm life gave her. Shared Stories is a weekly column 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

My father, Louis John Husler, was born July 6, 1908, in Belpre, Kansas, in the farmhouse that his father built. He was the youngest of four children, and he lived in that same house for years, taking care of his aging father and helping to run the farm.

Dad only had an eighth grade

education because in those days it was believed eight years was all that you needed to farm. Some of his education was given in a small, wood country school house which was only about a half mile from his home. My father and his three siblings all walked to school. They took packed lunches. Dad learned farming from his father, and machinery was also given to him by his father.

My mother Gladys was a widow with two children when she married my father in 1938 and moved in with him. My brother Eddie and I were born in Grandpa Husler's house. We were raised in the countryside, learning about farm life.

After Grandpa Husler passed away, the farm was sold and the money was split four ways. Dad then rented a farm in the area from a

relative of my mother's first husband. The farm had many buildings, all in great shape. We lived in Belpre until I was twelve years old.

Dad then purchased land near Stratton, Colorado in 1952. He bought land on old Highway 24 plus a half-section south of Stratton. Dad also rented other land to farm for extra income. That same old place still stands today.

Some years were difficult for the farmers because crops were hailed out, or drought caused poor crops. For additional income my father worked at various jobs helping the "bigtime" farmers. There were times that he worked at the Co-op or at a tractor factory in Stratton.

My father was a very caring person, always giving of his time and money. I have fond childhood memories of Dad trying to make us laugh when we were little. He would pick us up, give us a toss in the air, and then catch us on the way down. My father's lap was always available. As a child I would crawl up under his newspaper as he was reading and sit on his lap quietly.

He let us ride the tractor sometimes as he farmed. When the combine bin was full from harvesting wheat, my father let us climb on top of the wheat in the bin. This was a little-kids thing to do.

Dad would take us duck hunting with him. We followed his rules, waiting in the bushes quietly until the kill. Then our dog would help fetch the ducks. The ducks were carried home to be plucked and cleaned, ready for the freezer.

Dad was a raw veggie eater. He picked the vegetables from the garden, washed them with a hose, and had his snack. I sometimes took strawberries from the garden for Dad to snack on as he repaired machinery, or whatever farm job he was doing.

My father also loved to dunk donuts, toast, or anything dunkable in his coffee. He especially loved my mother's homemade bread buttered with homemade churned butter.

Fishing at Rattlesnake Creek was an enjoyment for Dad. We all went fishing. A picnic lunch was packed. Mom included either fried chicken

or sandwiches, along with a salad dish.

My children have similar memories of their grandfather on the Colorado farm. Paula remembers my father picking radishes from Mom's garden, washing them, and then eating them with salt. Natalie remembers that my father liked to eat pickled pigs feet from a jar on the counter. Jeffrey remembers the collection of rattlesnake rattlers in the desk that my father made. He also remembers the smell of tobacco as my father filled his pipe.

My father eventually moved from the farm to live near my brother Eddie in Boulder, Colorado, and he passed away at Boulder Community Hospital around Christmas time in 1980.

When I was little I used to feel that city kids were so lucky to live in town. But as I look back over time, I can see that farm life with my mother and father offered me more than I thought.

Cerritos Library
hosting authors

CERRITOS – Author Anjali Mitter Duva will discuss her book "Faint Promise of Rain" at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 11 in the Cerritos Library Skyline Room.

The book is historical fiction set in 16th century Rajasthan, India, in the world of Hindu temple dancers just at the start of the Mughal era.

Duva's talk will be accompanied by a colorful slide presentation and discussion of the history of kathak, one of the many classical dance forms of India, and how this history relates to that of India.

She will include a reading and a short demonstration of the dance. Copies of her book will be available for purchase.

Author Stanton Swafford, who operated undercover as an intelligence officer in Southeast Asia, will discuss his international spy thriller "China Sea" at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12 in the Cerritos Library Skyline Room.

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Frontier High sophomore works from ground up to become top in class



Lisbeth Lozano enrolled at Frontier High School as a second-semester sophomore with zero credits, having lived in Guatemala for the previous three years. She is now No. 1 in her class and on track to graduate early, earning her an Award of Merit from the Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees on March 8. She is pictured with Principal Margie Moriarty.

WHITTIER – Although Lisbeth Lozano enrolled at Frontier High School in January 2015 as a second-semester sophomore with zero credits, her desire to graduate early was anything but hindered.

Lozano had not attended school for three years leading up to her enrollment at Frontier, having moved from Riverside to her family’s home country of Guatemala. Despite the odds against her, the Aztec worked her way to the top of her class, earning a 3.89 GPA and completing 136 credits in one calendar year — more credits than any on-track student would complete in two years.

“My family, teachers and staff helped me overcome any difficulties I had when I first started classes last year, and they were the ones who encouraged me to try my hardest to catch up and go beyond,” Lozano said. “They showed me that if I have enough passion and dedication, anything is possible.”

For her devotion to rising above unprecedented challenges, Lozano received an Award of Merit from the Board of Trustees on March 8.

Lozano now attends 11th- and 12th-grade classes and is on her way to early graduation, something she heard has only happened once before at Frontier.

“When I first started classes, my computer teacher told me about a student who started out with only a few credits and was able to graduate early,” Lozano said. “I figured, why couldn’t I do that starting off with zero?”

Lozano is well on her way to accomplishing this extraordinary feat by taking on extended school days, summer school and extra projects to make up for her absent credits.

In addition to her academic commitments, she is an active member

at Frontier’s Associated Student Body (ASB) and attributes her growing confidence to her involvement in the group.

She also serves as the president of the school’s S Club, an organization sponsored by the Whittier chapter of Soroptimist International that mentors young women on volunteerism. Lozano was nominated to receive the group’s Lois Neece Overcomers Award, which recognizes high school students who overcome adversity to accomplish major feats.

“It makes me so proud to see her complete an unbelievable amount of credits in the short amount of time she did and place No. 1 in her class,” Principal Margie Moriarty said. “Although she faced many obstacles toward achieving educational success, I have no doubt that her dedication will launch her to an early graduation and successful future.”

Lozano plans to attend Rio Hondo College and has already taken entrance exams for admittance. She hopes to transfer to a four-year university and ultimately earn a master’s degree in counseling so she can become a school counselor and mentor teens.

“I am so amazed by students like Lizbeth, and I cannot express strongly enough the deep gratitude I have for our teachers and staff who help students like this determined young lady get ahead,” Superintendent Sandra Thorstenson said. “This is yet another example of how our collaborative culture produces successful and talented students who are prepared to take on every opportunity in store for them.”

Somerset named a model continuation school

BELLFLOWER – A quartet of leadership, academic, career technical education and service programs has earned Bellflower Unified’s Somerset High School recognition as a 2016 Model Continuation High School by the California Department of Education (CDE).

The three-year designation comes during Somerset’s first period of eligibility since its last win in 2013.

This year, the honor went to just 37 of California’s 460 continuation schools, which serve students who lag in high school credits or require flexible school schedules due to employment outside of school, family needs or other circumstances.

Somerset is being celebrated for adding an Associated Student Body government program, Leo and Key service clubs, a SkillsUSA career technical competition program and a Model United Nations program. Somerset is the first continuation school in California to run a Key Club or a Model UN program.

“We wanted to provide our students with an opportunity to see their potential for leadership, for service and for competing head to head with students from any school in the region,” Principal Mark Kailiponi said. “Too often, students arrive here discouraged, blind to their potential. We hope to open their eyes and show them they have no limits.”

Already, the efforts are bearing fruit.

The student government recently hosted a leadership conference for

200 students from area continuation schools. Service club membership at the 280-student school has swelled to 25 apiece, and about the same number of students participate in student government.

About 125 students are taking career tech courses related to the SkillsUSA competition; two of 12 competing students advanced from the group’s regional contest to the state finals. Lastly, a student delegate from Somerset won special recognition in February during the 24th annual Model UN Conference held at Laguna Hills High School.

“Our students are competing with kids in comprehensive high schools, with kids in Advanced Placement programs. They are realizing they are just as good as these other guys, that they can accomplish anything with enough hard work,” Kailiponi said.

The latest recognition carries on a tradition for Somerset, which has been designated a model school six times.

“Somerset’s well-deserved honor is a testament to Bellflower Unified’s promise that all our students will receive every opportunity to succeed, especially those who may face greater challenges,” Superintendent Dr. Brian Jacobs said.

The Model Continuation High School program is a partnership between the CDE and the California Continuation Education Association (CCEA). Somerset and the other winners will receive their awards at the 2016 CCEA State Conference, scheduled April 29-May 1 in Riverside.

The Norwalk Patriot

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The Norwalk Patriot is published weekly by The Downey Patriot, Inc.
Controlled Distribution, 22,000 copies are printed.
Distributed by CIPS Marketing Group, Inc., Los Angeles, CA.

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The Norwalk Patriot

Friday, Sept. 20, 2013 Vol. 7 No. 33 12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

SHARED STORIES: THE TIES THAT BIND

An Inflatable Idea

Shared Stories is a weekly column featuring articles from a writing class at the Norwalk Senior Center. Yolanda is a lifelong Norwalk resident who likes to see everyone with a smile on their face. In this piece she explores with dramatic flair the feelings of two young girls who find a Frederick's of Hollywood catalogue. The names have been changed to protect the innocent. Created by Carol Kearns

By Yolanda Adde

NORWALK – While walking home from my junior high school one day I saw a Frederick's of Hollywood catalogue lying on the sidewalk. I was excited to find it, but there were several pedestrians on the street and I felt embarrassed to have them see me look at this sexy publication. Luckily there was no one I knew, but I still slowed my pace until they passed before I turned back to pick up the forbidden catalogue.

Children my age were: "Too old for toys and too young for boys." It was the era of liberated women burning their bras. I didn't think "training bras" counted. Still, Frederick's merchandise defined sexy; just what an awkward, almost blossoming, teenage girl wanted to get her hands on. I could hardly believe that I now owned the coveted catalogue.

I did what came naturally. I ran to my best friend's house to share my miraculous find. Had I been in a backstreet I'd have come in first place. It seemed that I reached Carla's front door in a few minutes. I tucked the catalogue into my skirt's waistband and stood with my arms across my waist.

It was difficult to contain my excitement. I was relieved when Carla opened the door instead of her mother. We had a puzzled look on her face when she asked, "Are you alright? You look kinda weird."

"Carla you won't believe what I just found on the street!"

"You found money?"

"No. Something even better. Let's hurry up to your room. Just then her mother called out from the kitchen, "Carla who is at the door?"

"It's just Jane, Mom. We are going to do our homework. Please tell Jimmy to leave us alone."

The kitchen phone rang and her mother picked it up. Carla and I ran up the stairs as if we were being chased by wild dogs.

Carla quickly locked her bedroom door behind us. Her eyes were wide like Betty Boop; she demanded to see what I had found. "Not so fast!" I said. "First close your eyes." I pulled the shiny catalogue from my skirt and held the front cover that had a picture of a Marilyn Monroe look-a-like model wearing a pink and black sequined outfit.

When Carla opened her eyes, her jaw dropped. She let out a loud "WOW!" We both jumped up and down giggling before we fell on her bed.

"Carla, Carla, shhhhhhh, listen." I whispered. The best part is that there's an order form attached inside the pages where we can send a way for a sexy... something."

After the twelfth or thirteenth time pointing over the pages we decided to pull our babysitting money and our allowances to buy a "Self Bra." We'd be co-owners of a brasserie that'd lift and squeeze what little we had on our chest. The ad said that this bra was revolutionary. It came with a magical straw, which allowed a woman to inflate as much femininity as she desired into this wonder undergarment, thus giving her a cleavage that could rival any over-the-screen sex goddess.

"We will look like movie stars," I promised.

"Yes, yes!" Carla yelled. I smiled as I noticed that she was even more far-etched than I was. We were exhilarated at the potential promises this bra would "help" for us.

We stood up on the bed bouncing and laughing, throwing pillows in to the air. After a few minutes we felt tired, exhausted with joy, talking quietly.

"I just thought of a plan, Carla. We will flip a coin to see who'd get to wear it to the Sock Hop next month."

"I can be one of us if it's not going to be a wolf. I will not be a plain-lane. Can you imagine the look on Mira's face when she sees the new glamorous Me wearing my secret weapon?"

"Mira's is such a stuck-up witch with a capital 'B' since she got all the boys' attention after padding her 'training bra'."

"Carla if we want to look more grown-up we will have to practice walking differently."

"Like how?" she asked me.

"I got up from the bed. 'With shoulders swaying, like this,' I said as I demonstrated my best Marilyn Monroe 'The Shirl'."

"Oh lane, you can already walk like Marilyn, but I bet that you will do it even better when you are wearing the Self Bra."

"I really have to go home now," I finally said. "The catalogue will be safer here. You don't have a rug-rat sister to share your room with. Do you want to put the catalogue under your mattress?"

"Ha! No, that's where I leave my 'G' rated diary for my mom to snoop through. I will put it in the big dictionary on top of the bookcase. Not even my brother will look there."

"By the way, where is that cute brother of yours?"

"Cute? Oh yuck! You have got to be kidding me, lane."

"My brother is not so bad. He is tall and a bit mature."

"My brother is funny, has peach fuzz on his face..."

CERRITOS LIBRARY INVESTS IN TECH FOR TEENS

Rachel Tagawa and Nathaniel Va use an iMac inside the Cerritos Library's new teen technology center. The facility officially opens Saturday.

• Cerritos preps for opening of new 2,500-sq-ft teen tech studio at city library.

By Christian Brown
Staff Writer

CERRITOS – In an effort to expand educational and creative resources for teenage patrons, the Cerritos Library on Saturday will unveil a new, 2,500-sq-ft, teen studio, featuring 18 Apple iMac work stations, three 65-inch interactive touch screens, and more than 7,000 books and documents.

City council members on Monday lauded the new state-of-the-art facility as the next generation of technology for the next generation of learners.

"This is not just a library for books, but for learning," said Councilwoman Carol Chen, who initially proposed the concept of a teen studio. "It's not just for reading, it's a whole learning experience with the newest and latest technology — we want to nurture that in our kids."

Filled with everything from classic literature and graphic novels to popular books and non-fiction, the teen studio is just as much a library as it is a computerized classroom with space for both group and individual study.

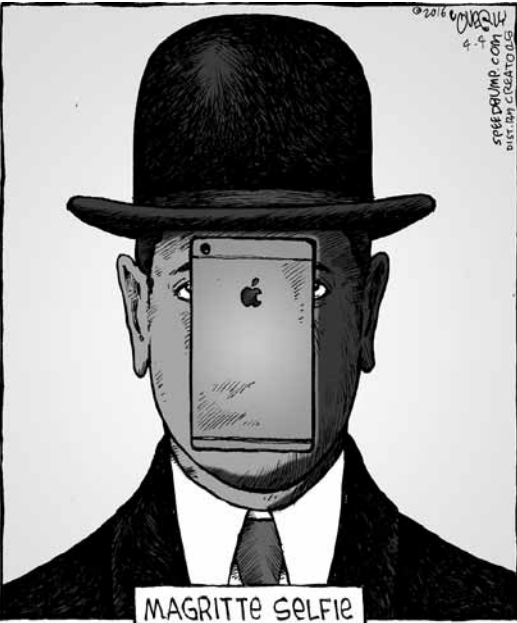
In addition to new iMac computers, the studio center also boasts a 49-inch computer touch screen that allows up to four people to work on projects, take

with the modern devices," said Cerritos High senior Alexa Flores. "The time of the room is very calming and relaxing. It's a better, more open place to do research."

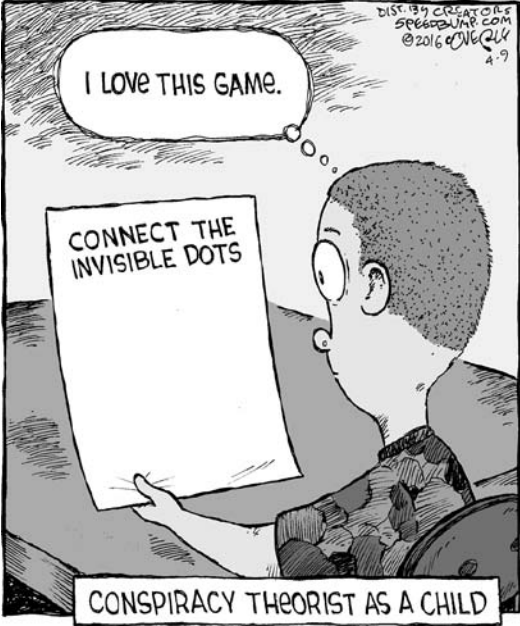
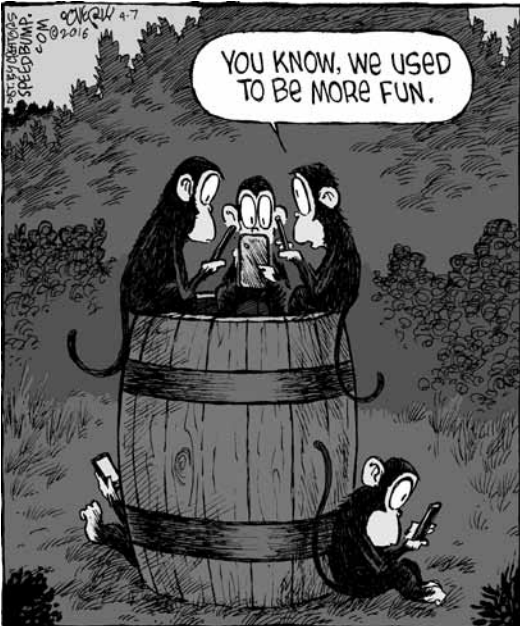
Similarly, junior Rima Anjari practices on one of Cerritos Library's three new 65-inch touch screen monitors.

At a cost of more than \$200,000, the teen studio, which is approximately 70 people, will be a teen library cardholders between 13 and 18 years old. The library is located at 12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

9 a.m. - Book Sale - Norwalk Library

MONDAYS

1st, 6:00 p.m. - Public Safety meetings - Council Chambers

TUESDAYS

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

1:00 p.m. - Adult color club "Color Us Happy" - Norwalk Library
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...

April 8, 1513: Explorer Juan Ponce de Leon claimed Florida for Spain.
1973: Artist Pablo Picasso died at age 91.
1994: Rock singer-musician Kurt Cobain of Nirvana was found dead in Seattle at age 27 of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.
Birthdays: Rapper Biz Markie (52), voice actor Shawn Fonteno (48), boxer Gennady Golovkin (34) and pitcher Felix Hernandez (30).

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)

WATER LOG: As your pencil flows along

by Gail Grabowski

ACROSS

1 Cotton shirt fabric
5 Paid promos
8 Cantina fare
14 Honolulu-born leader
19 Overcharge
20 Take a load off
21 Cracker shape of a sort
22 Low point
23 Puritanical nature
26 Break down slowly
27 Skye topper
28 Retro "Awesome!"
29 Vote out
31 Grp. awarding merit badges
32 Vigilant
34 Thick bankrolls
37 Brief cybermessages
39 Run rings around
41 Aussie bird
42 Homeland, affectionately
45 Land parcel
46 Be intolerant of opposition
51 Disrespectful
52 Land-parcel measures
54 County near London
55 At any time
56 Genesis setting
57 Fridge foray
58 Part of a Dracula costume
59 Loud sound
60 Film's orchestral music
62 Polished off
63 Finance deg.
65 Teeth expert's deg.
66 Literary narration method
73 _ la la

74 Chum
75 Play a part
76 Place a hex on
77 Caravan stop
79 Needing a rubdown
80 Sound of 113 Across
81 Keycard receiver
85 Ratio phrase
86 Undue speed
88 French impressionist
89 Give in, so to speak
90 Giving the remote a workout
93 Film with a posse
94 Sioux City citizens
95 Hulk director Lee
96 Erin Brockovich's former employer
98 Social group
101 Liverpooldian, for one
102 Microsoft cofounder
103 French article
104 "Ya got me"
108 Evoking the shivers
110 Prof.'s helpers
113 Iron's output
115 Prudent part of portfolios
119 My Cousin Vinny star
120 Free-for-alls
121 Summer clock setting in Md.
122 ¿Cómo _ usted?
123 Unwelcome weather
124 Good to go
125 Nine-character signal
126 Accident-probing agcy.

DOWN

1 Whispered call
2 Kappa preceder
3 Bread spread
4 Alias abbr.
5 Daisylike flowers
6 Widen, as pupils

7 OR order
8 _ kwon do
9 "What's more . . ."
10 Less
11 Solemn assent
12 Colleen
13 Apart from this
14 Pairs of punches
15 Watering hole
16 Southwestern building material
17 Central spot
18 Fields of expertise
24 Clumsy
25 Showed fear
30 When the evening news may be on
33 Proof of permission
35 Pop singer Tori
36 Pair
38 Dad of Henry Ford II
39 Raison d'_
40 Gunk
42 Just hoping for a profit
43 Fail to keep
44 He preceded JFK
46 Succinct
47 "Beauty is truth" poet
48 Get away from
49 Geeks
50 Lock of hair
52 Appetite arouser
53 Christmas song
58 Twain's pauper
59 Game fish
61 Spending limits
63 Cursor mover
64 Fireworks display
66 Unemotional
67 Compactor contents
68 Dreadlocks wearer
69 Symbol of Arizona

70 Yellowish brown
71 Cupcake covering
72 Folger's alternative
78 Greek column style
79 Trade org.
80 Wave rider's phrase
82 Seminarian's hurdle
83 Done
84 School segment
86 Chopped down
87 Emulating
88 Series starter

91 Lacking a max
92 Wide partner
93 Possible barn nestling
96 It's southwest of San Antonio
97 Top-tier groups
98 Points of a crescent
99 Chip giant
100 Oscar winner
101 Witherspoon

101 Filet's lack
105 Alma mater of 44 Down
106 Christmas song
107 No longer valid
109 Prior nights
111 Colony crawlers
112 Rough guess
114 Virtuoso
116 "Zip-a-__-Doo-Dah"
117 Ending like -arian
118 What boys will be

Reach Stan Newman at P.O. Box 69, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, or at www.StanXwords.com

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70	Yellowish brown	91	Lacking a max	101	Filet's lack
71	Cupcake covering	92	Wide partner	105	Alma mater of 44 Down
72	Folger's alternative	93	Possible barn nestling	106	Christmas song
78	Greek column style	96	It's southwest of San Antonio	107	No longer valid
79	Trade org.	97	Top-tier groups	109	Prior nights
80	Wave rider's phrase	98	Points of a crescent	111	Colony crawlers
82	Seminarian's hurdle	99	Chip giant	112	Rough guess
83	Done	100	Oscar winner	114	Virtuoso
84	School segment		Witherspoon	116	"Zip-a-__-Doo-Dah"
86	Chopped down			117	Ending like -arian
87	Emulating			118	What boys will be
88	Series starter				

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largest island of Scotland's Inner Hebrides.

PIMA cotton (1 Across) is named for the Pima Indians, who helped raise the cotton on USDA expert-mental farms in Arizona. Boxes of Nabisco's ANIMAL crackers (21 Across) have had a string since their introduction in 1902, so they could be hung on Christ- mas trees. SKYE (27 Across) is the

Social workers charged in death of 8-year-old

LOS ANGELES – Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced Thursday that four social workers were charged with child abuse and falsifying public records in the death of 8-year-old Gabriel Fernandez three years ago.

“Social workers play a vital role in society. We entrust them to protect our children from harm,” Lacey said. “When their negligence is so great as to become criminal, young lives are put at risk.

“By minimizing the significance of the physical, mental and emotional injuries that Gabriel suffered, these social workers allowed a vulnerable boy to remain at home and continue to be abused,” Lacey added.

“We believe these social workers were criminally negligent and performed their legal duties with willful disregard for Gabriel’s well-being,” District Attorney Lacey said. “They should be held responsible for their actions.”

A complaint for an arrest warrant filed on March 28 charges social workers Stefanie Rodriguez and Patricia Clement, and their respective supervisors, Kevin Bom and Gregory Merritt, each with one felony count of child abuse and one felony count of falsifying public records.

The four were scheduled to be arraigned sometime after 8:30 a.m. Thursday at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center. Prosecutors will ask that bail be set at \$155,000 for each defendant.

Rodriguez, Clement, Bom and Merritt worked for the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and had a legal duty to protect Gabriel from the time the DCFS case was opened on Oct. 31, 2012, until he was declared dead on May 24, 2013. He died from multiple injuries, including a fractured skull, broken ribs and burns over his body, prosecutors said.

Rodriguez and Clement are accused of falsifying reports that should have documented signs of Gabriel’s escalating physical abuse and the family’s lapsed participation in DCFS efforts to provide help to maintain the family.

Prosecutors allege that Bom and Merritt knew or should have known that they were approving false reports that conflicted with the evidence of Gabriel’s deteriorating physical well-being as contained in the child’s case file, allowing him to remain at home until his death.

If convicted, each defendant faces up to 10 years in state prison.

Man charged with murder after body found in trunk

BALDWIN PARK – A 37-year-old man was charged Wednesday with fatally shooting a man whose body was found in a trunk.

Andy Yalau Chen of Baldwin Park has been charged with two felony counts of murder and cultivating marijuana.

The felony complaint included a special allegation that the defendant personally and intentionally discharged a handgun, which caused great bodily injury and death.

Chen is currently being held on \$5 million bail.

Deputy District Attorney Theodore Swanson, who is assigned to the case, said on March 21 a Monterey Park resident called authorities to report a foul odor coming from a parked vehicle near her home.

When police arrived at the location, they found an unlocked car, the prosecutor said. When the officer opened the trunk, they discovered the body of Chinese national Min Gu. The victim had been shot several times, the prosecutor added.

Authorities began an investigation into the homicide and learned that the defendant had reportedly been one of the last people in contact with Gu while he was still alive, according to the prosecutor.

Law enforcement obtained a warrant to search Chen’s home and when they went to the location, it appeared it may have been the scene of the murder, the prosecutor added. Additionally, law enforcement discovered Chen was growing marijuana in the house.

If convicted as charged, Chen faces a maximum possible sentence of 53 years to life in state prison.

Arrest made in cold case murder of elderly man

LOS ANGELES – A man has been charged with capital murder for killing an 80-year-old man who was brutally attacked during a home invasion and was gravely injured until his death five years later.

Harry Leon Neely was arrested March 9 in Memphis, Tenn.

Neely was charged with one count each of murder and first-degree burglary, person present. Prosecutors also filed a special circumstance allegation that the murder was carried out during the commission of a robbery.

On Aug. 13, 2005, Harvey Sumpter was found bound and gagged in his South Los Angeles home and appeared to be the victim of a home invasion robbery, prosecutors said.

Sumpter was badly injured and was in a vegetative state until he died on Feb. 19, 2010. He died from blunt force trauma to his head, prosecutors added.

Prosecutors will determine at a later date whether to seek the death penalty.

Man pleads not guilty to prank 911 calls

TORRANCE – One of two men charged with making a number of fake 911 calls over a seven-month period entered a not guilty plea Monday.

Deputy District Attorney Alexander Bott said Michael Randy Sumolang of Torrance pleaded not guilty to one felony count of conspiracy to commit the crime of false report of an emergency.

Co-defendant Corey Ennis Jackson of Gardena, pleaded not guilty to the same charge on March 14. Both men are scheduled to return to court on May 3 to set a date for a preliminary hearing.

According to prosecutors, between July 1, 2015, and Feb. 21, Jackson and Sumolang called 911 on at least nine occasions to report fictitious crimes ranging from a domestic violence murder to the shooting of two people in Gardena.

In a 911 call from Feb. 21, Sumolang claimed to be suicidal with a gun in his mouth and threatened to crash into a California Highway Patrol vehicle.

If convicted as charged, the defendants each face a possible maximum sentence of three years in state prison to be served in county jail.

COMMENTARY: A final interview with Marcel Rodarte

By Raul Samaniego Contributor

NORWALK – Occam’s Razor suggests that when two items are in competition as the solution to an issue, the simplest one tends to be the correct answer.

So, what is the answer to Norwalk Councilman Marcel Rodarte’s sudden announcement that, yes, he will be departing the local scene to take on a bigger local scene, as the Executive Director of the California Contract Cities Association?

Is it that he is departing the people of Norwalk in pursuit of greener pastures (as in the color of money)?

Is it the right time to advance a career which according to Rodarte, “will not be making more money than his two positions (Councilmember and Homeland Security)?”

Maybe it is both.

Back when I was a “suit” I took a position here in the Norwalk area to be near family matters.

Sitting down with the five year councilmember before Tuesday’s Council Chamber official announcement, we spoke about accomplishments and goals for the 40-something year-old official.

As usual, nothing was off the table or out of bounds. Darn it! I like this guy.

We addressed the timing of his early departure, leaving an unfinished job and perceptions of the situation.

My questions were directed at a possible double dipping into pension or retirement plans.

Primarily, I got from the interview with Rodarte that the opportunity came about indirectly/ directly from Rodarte’s networking with a member of the California Contract Cities Association Board who had shared the board’s desire to find a new executive director.

Normally this would come through the potential process of hiring a recruiting firm, affectionately known as “Head Hunters.”

Ah, it’s not who you are, but who you know.

I hate legal terms. Like Quid pro quo. A better term might be, you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours.

Regarding his conversation with the board member, Rodarte said, “Well, how about if I were to offer to resign my position on the Council, because I understand the conflicts and all that stuff, and save you some money on the executive search, would you consider me as your executive director?”

“I wasn’t sure how I would be perceived. Everybody loved the idea.”

“It was one of those things that just felt right. This is something that I could continue advocating on behalf of the city of Norwalk.”

“I wasn’t sure how I was going to



be received.”

Rodarte shared that he submitted his resignation to Homeland Security as of Tuesday and will be serving out the rest of his vacation time.

“This (his council duties) will be my full time focus,” he assured.

He was with the federal government “As a whole, about 23 years.”

Those agencies were, “The Department of the Navy, the Department of the Air Force, the Department of Defense and then, Homeland Security.”

Thank you for your service Mr. Rodarte.

Regarding any retirement benefits that Rodarte may be entitled to, he shared, “As far as any retirement [benefits] I may be entitled to here, even though I’ve been in just over five years, I’m vested.”

“I spoke with Ernie (Hernandez, Deputy City Manager), I don’t meet the minimal age requirements because I’m not 50.”

“As far as medical benefits or anything like that, I will not take anything of that with me.”

“It will be essentially, I served my five years and I’m moving on to something else.”

Mr. Rodarte claims he’s not interested in any of those things for he “retired from the Air Force and has a deferred retirement from Homeland.”

The remainder of our conversation covered the same items as our previous interviews; Public Safety, Homelessness and the pursuit of the high speed rail project for Norwalk.

It was a good conversation.

By the way, I had him write down the idea of bringing back the “Beach Bus” for the summer. I asked him to say “an anonymous source suggested it.”

I am not his biggest critic. The people of Norwalk will be and are.

After the council meeting, Norwalk resident Roberta Ruiz asked Rodarte a question,

“Do you feel that your obligations [to Norwalk] were fulfilled?”

First, according to Rodarte, “It’s not like a promotion. The amount of money that I make a year and all that stuff is not really a factor. It’s about the same amount of money I make with this (city council) and my full time job.”

“The whole reason I got involved was not to take pictures up front, but it was to help Norwalk... to make this place better.”

“I’ve accomplished a ton of stuff in the time I’ve been here and I think this is an opportunity that I won’t have again.”

Before the scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, I spoke with fellow council member Leonard Shryock and asked him what he thought of Rodarte’s early departure.

“Well, I think his departure hurts our team, and opens up a lot of scenarios that maybe we haven’t thought about,” he responded.

“But I do wish him well and I hope he is very successful. I know that he will be.”

Mr. Rodarte, I mean Marcel, I may ask the weird questions, but everyone asks the same old, same old.

Please keep the open door, ear and mouth policies you had with me. I will see and keep my eyes and ears open also.

Good luck in your new endeavors.

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