

Downey police get OK to buy armored vehicle

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY - With several active shooter incidents still fresh in memory, the City Council approved on Tuesday the Downey Police Department’s purchase of a tactical armored vehicle – also known as a “BearCat” – for future use in high-stakes situations.

According to police, the BearCat vehicle would significantly reduce the risk to officers who are faced with heavily armed suspects.

Total cost of the purchase comes to a grand total of \$319,843.60, including tax and delivery of the unit itself (\$279,476.80), as well as purchase and installation of emergency lighting equipment, police radio, computer and in-car video system equipment (\$40,366.80).

DPD Captain Mark McDaniel – who was in attendance at Tuesday’s meeting – said that the police department was thankful to the city council for their continued support.

“As Chief Milligan stated, it’s a piece of equipment we hope we never use, but if we need to use it it’s going to save lives,” said McDaniel. “We can’t put a price tag on an officer’s life, we can’t put a price tag on a resident’s life. We put our officers in harm’s way; we have to, it’s important to provide them with the safe equipment to go home at night.”

No new training or special licensing is needed for operation of the vehicle.

The decision to purchase the equipment comes shortly after a string of violent attacks in Gilroy, California, El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio that has many throughout the nation on edge. However, McDaniel says that purchase of a BearCat has been in discussion for years.

“We understand that this is an expensive piece of equipment... it’s been a discussion we’ve had for many years to be honest,” said McDaniel. “But in the recent active shooters where we’ve seen throughout the country where rifles are being used, school shootings... time is of the essence in critical, tactical situations. This has been under discussion, but the timing is right to get that piece of equipment so we can save lives.”

DPD were also recently involved in a violent police chase that ended in a standoff and police shooting in Vernon back in May. The suspect in the chase – 24-year-old Dylan Andres Lindsey of Torrance – was the same suspect involved in the fatal shooting of Downey liquor store owner Gurpreet Singh three days prior.

Lindsey succumbed to injuries from what was believed to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound a week later.

According to police, officers were forced to wait over 30 minutes for the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Special Enforcement Team to arrive on scene, all while being exposed to great risk.

McDaniel says that possession of a BearCat vehicle would significantly improve local officers’ ability to respond in an effective manner.

“If you can put that vehicle – which can withstand a rifle round or a high-caliber handgun round – if you put it in an area where it can deflect or keep people safe, that’s a piece of equipment you want to utilize,” said McDaniel.



PHOTOS BY ALEX DOMINGUEZ

Congresswoman Sanchez – who gave her address laying from a couch due to a recent surgery – emphasized the importance of collecting an accurate census next year.

Sanchez urges participation in 2020 census

Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-38) touched on a variety of topics in her annual State of the Nation address hosted by Norwalk.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

NORWALK – Congresswoman Linda Sanchez emphasized the importance of the upcoming census to several local chambers of commerce and community elected officials during her State of the Nation event last week.

The yearly event was jointly organized by the chambers of commerce from the cities of Artesia, Cerritos, La Mirada, Lakewood, Montebello, Norwalk, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, and Whittier. It was held at the Double Tree Hotel in Norwalk.

Sanchez described those in attendance as “a phenomenal group.”

“We have nine of my chambers of commerce in one room together,” said Sanchez. “I really want to thank each and every single one of the individual chambers for coming together and working on this event, because I’m really proud of the communities I represent.”

The Congresswoman opened her address with Congress’s recent approval of a two-year bipartisan spending plan, which Sanchez called the “best news this year.”

“That is really good because it provides certainty for our state,

and for our municipalities,” said Sanchez. “The deal that they put together is a framework for future spending decisions, and it’s going to help avoid the high-stakes drama of government...”

The plan will carry on through next year’s presidential election.

Still, Sanchez cautioned that “just keeping the lights on isn’t quite enough,” moving on to one of the main points of her speech: the 2020 Census.

The Constitution mandates that a census be held every ten years to determine the number of congressional seats each state receives, based on current population.

Sanchez said it is “probably the issue that is most important right now.”

“This particular issue is something that everyone in this room should care about,” said Sanchez. “Clearly, in terms of representation, it’s important, but there are many other reasons why an accurate census is important.”

The census is also critical in determining federal resource distribution.

“The census determines funding for about 130 different federal programs; some of those programs include public health, education, and infrastructure,” said Sanchez. “If you are not accurate in counting the people in your state and you’re undercounting, you lose out on billions of dollars of federal



money.”

Sanchez went on to add that “we have to absolutely make sure that [California] has a full accounting so that we get our fair share of federal resources.”

Sanchez said that it is estimated that about 1.5 million Californians were not counted in the previous census, which was held in 2010.

“An undercount of 1.5 million means we basically could have two more additional congressional seats, but we don’t because of the undercount,” said Sanchez.

“In my district, in several of my communities – especially Bellflower, Hawaiian Gardens, Montebello, Norwalk, and South Whittier – they have census tracks that are considered hard to count. We need to make sure we’re doing everything to make sure that those communities are fully counted.”

participated in similar training off campus with local agencies in 2018 and 2019.

In October, the college will participate in the annual Great California Shake Out to practice disaster preparedness.

“Campus safety is our top priority,” said Felipe Lopez, vice president of business services, Cerritos College. “The College is enhancing its emergency responsiveness and security features to provide our students, staff, and faculty with the best learning and work environment to better serve our students.”

To receive Cerritos College campus safety alerts, opt in to the new system by texting the keyword “Cerritos” to 226787.

students and staff with direct access to campus police if users need to report a critical incident.

More emergency towers are being installed throughout the campus parking lots along Alondra Blvd., Studebaker Road, and 166th Street. The College is also enhancing interior building emergency phones for more visibility.

In 2016, the college facilitated a multiagency active shooter drill. The Cerritos College Campus Police Department, along with the L.A. County Sheriff’s Department’s Norwalk Station, L.A. County Fire Department, and local first-responder agencies practiced a real-world response to a potential campus threat.

The safety exercise included two simulated active shooter scenarios staged on campus. The Campus Police Department has

Norwalk restaurant grades

On and On Restaurant
13019 Rosecrans Ave.
Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

7 Eleven
10965 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

Taco Bell / Pizza Hut Express
11005 E Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

Chuck E Cheese’s
10949 E Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

VS Donuts Croissants
10959 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

ABC Donuts
10620 E Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

Taco Joe
13019 Rosecrans Ave. Ste 103
Date Inspected: 8/13/19
Grade: **A**

Un Ringconcito Argentino
10633 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/8/19
Grade: **A**

Ihop
12623 S Norwalk Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/8/19
Grade: **A**

McDonalds
10841 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/8/19
Grade: **A**

Sonoma Grill
13111 Sycamore Dr.
Date Inspected: 8/7/19
Grade: **A**

Subway
12301 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/7/19
Grade: **A**

Grill Town Korean Cuisine
12227 Norwalk Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/7/19
Grade: **A**

El Taco Loco
12341 E Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/7/19
Grade: **A**

Mariscos El Chilito Restaurant
12531 Alondra Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/5/19
Grade: **A**

Food 4 Less
10901 E Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 8/5/19
Grade: **A**

Food 4 Less (Meat)
10901 E Imperial Hwy.

Date Inspected: 8/5/19
Grade: **A**

DK’s
12549 Alondra Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/1/19
Grade: **A**

Ana’s Bionicos
10977 Rosecrans Ave.
Date Inspected: 8/1/19
Grade: **A**

Wingstop
11739 Rosecrans Ave
Date Inspected: 8/1/19
Grade: **A**

Tacos Y Mariscos Mi Pueblo
12001 Rosecrans Ave.
Date Inspected: 8/1/19
Grade: **A**

Jack in the Box
11353 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 8/1/19
Grade: **A**

Weekend at a Glance

Friday85°☁️

Saturday79°☁️

Sunday79°☁️



Aqua Carnival
Saturday - Norwalk Aquatic Center, 1:30-5:30 pm

In-water and out-of-water games, water slides, recreational swim, swim with a mermaid, food, and more. \$4 children/ seniors, \$5 adults



Taco Festival
Saturday - Fullerton Museum Center, 5 pm

Purchase different types of tacos from a variety of vendors. Admission is free and then pay for as many tacos as you can eat.



Rocket Fever
Saturday- Columbia Memorial Space Center, 10 am to 5 pm

A variety of rocket related activities including water rockets, stomp rockets, and straw rockets. Participate in a specialized rocket building classes for a small fee of \$7.



LA Zoo's Roaring Nights
Friday - Los Angeles Zoo, 6 pm to 10:30 pm

Enjoy live bands, DJs, pop-up zoo talks, animal close-ups, full service bars and food trucks. Admission to this adults-only (ages 21 and up) is \$16.50.



Summer Fest
Saturday- Citadel Outlets, 12 PM – 9 PM

With more than 200 multi-colored slinkies suspended in mid-air, life-sized board games and live music, The Citadel will transform into a neon-themed block party to celebrate family summer fun.



Neighborhood Block Party
Saturday- New River Park, 12 pm to 2 pm

Meet with Public Safety and Sheriffs Personnel and obtain important resource information and learn how to partner on efforts to create stronger, safer neighborhoods. Free BBQ lunch.

NORWALK HAPPENINGS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16

Smarty Pants Storytime, 10:30-11 am. Enjoy books, songs, rhymes, and movement while learning school readiness skills. Attendance is limited, and advance registration is required. For ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver. Alondra Library, 11949 E. Alondra Blvd.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17

Smart Gardening Workshop, 10 am. Learn the basics of backyard composting, water-wise gardening, worm composting, grass-cycling, and edible gardening. For ages 18 and up. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

Neighborhood Block Party, 12-2 pm. Meet with Public Safety and Sheriffs Personnel and obtain important resource information and learn how to partner on efforts to create stronger, safer neighborhoods. All attendees will receive a free barbeque lunch with games available for children. New River Park, 13500 Halcourt Ave.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21

Fairy Lights Jar, 4-5 pm. Bring the starry magic of the nighttime

sky, inside your bedroom. We will dcorate jars to create portable glow-in-the-dark fun. For ages 12-18. Alondra Library, 11949

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

Boards, Brushes and Beverages, 7 pm. Crafty fun for adults 21 and over. \$25 per person fee includes all materials, instruction, appetizers and soft drinks. Guests may bring alternative beverages from home. Norwalk Cultural Arts Center, 13200 Clarkdale Ave.

Smarty Pants Storytime, 10:30-11 am. Enjoy books, songs, rhymes, and movement while learning school readiness skills. Attendance is limited, and advance registration is required. For ages 2-5 with an adult caregiver. Alondra Library, 11949 E. Alondra Blvd.

MONDAY, AUGUST 26

Lit Wits Book Club: Mary Coin, 6:30 pm. Join us to read and discuss the novel, Mary Coin by Marisa Silver. For ages 18 and up. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28

Suncatcher, 4-5 pm. Join us for this fun program where we will make a dazzling ornament using glass pebbles and glue. Attendance is limited, and advance registration is required. Sign up at the customer service desk. For ages 8-12. Alondra Library, 11949 E. Alondra Blvd.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 29

Origami Lotus Flower Notebook, 2-3 pm. Join us as we create decorative mini-notebooks for notations, photos and more. For adults 18+. Alondra Library, 11949 E. Alondra Blvd.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31

Harbor Groove Band, 9 pm. Ring in September and the start of fall with live cumbia, Latin and R&B by the Harbor Groove Band. IV Lounge, 12500 Firestone Blvd.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Tea Time with OISS, 11 am. Practice your English speaking skills over tea with Cerritos

College's Office of International Student Services and hear from Cerritos College librarian Paula Pereira and her story as an ESL student. Cerritos College, 11110 Alondra Blvd.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Rain Barrel Distribution, 9-11 am. Learn about rainwater harvesting, water conservation tips, and benefits of a rain barrel. At the end of workshop, participants will have an opportunity to purchase rain barrels for \$20 each. City Hall, 12700 Norwalk Blvd.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Quartermania Fundraiser, 12-4 pm. Bring your quarters for bidding or purchase quarters from the vendors. Plus, enjoy shopping and lunch. \$10 admission. Norwalk Masonic Center, 12345 Rosecrans Ave.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Opening Reception: Southern Geometries, 5-9 pm. Opening reception for "Southern Geometries: Contemporary Non-Objective Art and the Latin American Diaspora" featuring artwork by Eduardo Aispuro, Marsia Alexander-Clarke, Linda

Arreola, Leonardo Bravo, Romina Del Castillo, Mariangeles Soto-Diaz and Sandra Vista. Cerritos College Art Gallery, 11111 Alondra Blvd.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Fall Fiesta, 5-10 pm. A three-day carnival (Sept. 27-30) with carnival games, rides, live music, food, and more. St. John of God Church, 13819 Pioneer Blvd.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Women's Personal Safety Workshop, 2-3:30 pm. In this 90-minute workshop, receive a basic introduction to hand-to-hand defenses and non-lethal weapons. If you've always wanted to take self-defense, this basic workshop is a good place to start. Out of Harm's Way, 12521 Alondra Blvd.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

Celebrity Waiter & Dance, 6 pm. Get waited on by local celebrities at this annual dance fundraiser in support of CAPC, which works on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. DoubleTree Hotel, 13111 Sycamore Dr.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

Harbor Groove Band, 9 pm. Dance to live music by the Harbor Groove Band, playing a diverse playlist of 70s, 80s, and 90s music, plus Latin and R&B. IV Lounge, 12500 Firestone Blvd.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

Diabolic Lounge, 6:30 pm. An all-ages concert with music from The Radiacs (UK), The Quaranteds, The Peabrians, Radarmen, Lost Boys and Salems Ghosts. American Legion Post 359, 11986 Front St.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

Diabolic Lounge, 6:30 pm. Live music by The Grim, Peabrians, and The Dead Ricardos. \$14 pre-sale, \$18 at the door. All ages show. American Legion Post 359, 11986 Front St.

Compiled by Eric Pierce. Email calendar listings to eric@thedowneypatriot.com

Good Samaritans honored for courage by district attorney

The citizens are credited with helping apprehend criminals and aiding in criminal prosecutions.

LONG BEACH - Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey on Wednesday honored four people for their courage in stepping up in the face of danger and helping to keep our community safe from violent crime.

Honorees included a man who witnessed a fatal shooting outside his San Pedro home and twice testified against the suspected killer; a Los Angeles mother who saw and tracked the man who sexually assaulted her 12-year-old daughter days earlier as he fled

by rail and bus; and two men who rescued a woman being beaten by her boyfriend outside their Signal Hill office.

District Attorney Lacey recognized the honorees at a Courageous Citizen Awards ceremony. It was hosted by the Rotary Club of Long Beach.

The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office presents these awards several times a year to people who have performed extraordinary acts of valor and selflessness in assisting in criminal prosecutions, aiding victims, preventing crimes or even capturing suspects.

Awards were presented to:
John Raski, 67, of San Pedro

On June 14, 2015, Mr. John Raski and his wife were reading in their bedroom when they heard loud noises outside their San Pedro home. Mr. Raski went to the window and saw a man chasing another man around a car. He then watched the defendant shoot at the victim, who later died from his wounds. Mr. Raski identified the suspect for authorities. He testified for the prosecution at two separate murder trials, after the first jury could not reach a unanimous verdict. His testimony was essential in getting justice for the victim and his family.

A jury convicted the defendant of first-degree murder on June 24. He is expected to be sentenced this month to a minimum of 25 years to life in prison. The case was

investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department.

Viridiana Chavez, 33, of Los Angeles

On May 31, 2018, Ms. Viridiana Chavez's 12-year-old daughter was sexually assaulted while walking to school in Los Angeles. Five days later, Ms. Chavez was walking her daughter to school when the girl saw her attacker. Ms. Chavez called 911 and followed the man onto a Metro Blue Line train toward Long Beach and then, when he got onto a bus, chased him on foot, all while keeping sheriff's deputies informed of his whereabouts. Her courageous actions and willingness to testify at trial helped take a violent offender off our streets.

The defendant was sentenced to 40 years in state prison after pleading no contest to two counts of forcible lewd act on a child under 14 years old and admitting one strike. He was ordered to register as a sex offender. The case was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

John Laguna, 45, of Santa Ana, and Rogelio Martinez-Reyes, 27, of Long Beach

Mr. John Laguna and Mr. Rogelio Martinez-Reyes were working in their Signal Hill office on March 9, 2018, when they saw a man assaulting his girlfriend in an alley. Mr. Martinez-Reyes yelled for the man to stop and ran after the fleeing suspect. Mr. Laguna stayed and comforted the injured

woman and called 911.

The men stopped the brutal attack, preventing further harm to the woman, and were ready to testify as witnesses for the prosecution, prompting a guilty plea in the domestic violence case.

The defendant pleaded guilty to one misdemeanor count of injuring a spouse, cohabitant, fiancé, boyfriend, girlfriend or child's parent. He was sentenced to three years of summary probation and was ordered to complete 52 weeks of domestic violence counseling and has a lifetime ban from owning a firearm. A 10-year protective order was issued for the victim. The case was investigated by the Signal Hill Police Department.



Most everyone used to have a friend in the car business. Someone you could trust to give you the straight scoop and a great deal. Now that most car dealerships are owned by mega corporations, it's harder to do business with the local dealer who will make your car buying experience a breeze. My Dad started selling cars in the Crenshaw district in the mid-50's and now we're managing a three- generation car business with 9 dealerships from South Bay to Laguna Beach. We have succeeded all these years by putting our customers first, and that is how we will continue to earn and keep your business. Plus, we support the local schools and charities in our neighborhoods because that's the right thing to do. Visit any of our 9 dealerships and be prepared to do business with a friend. It will be a surprisingly refreshing throw back to a simpler time.



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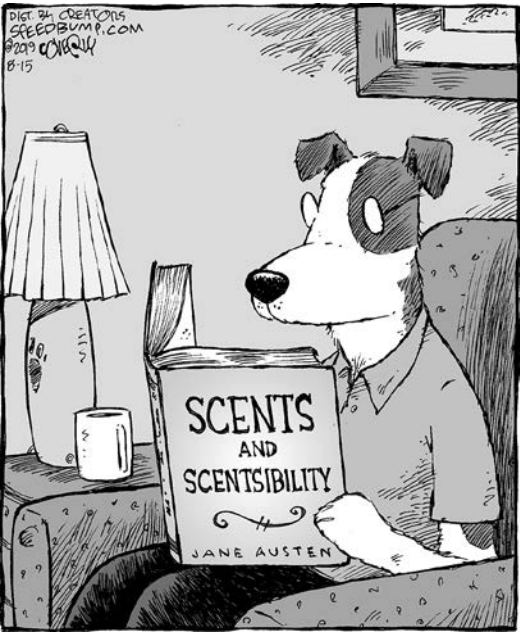
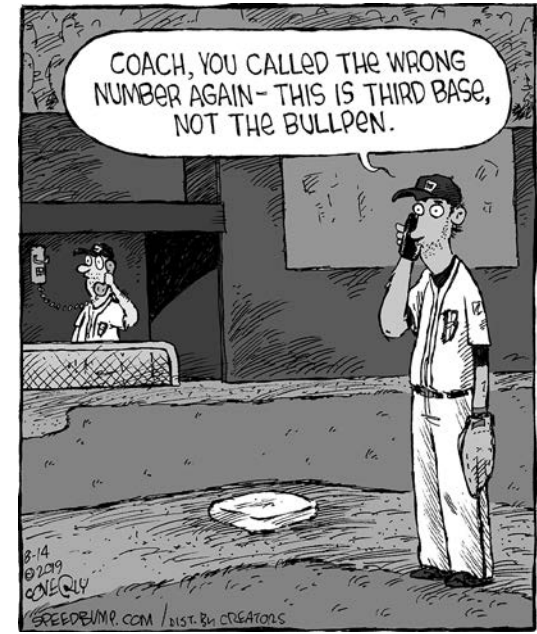
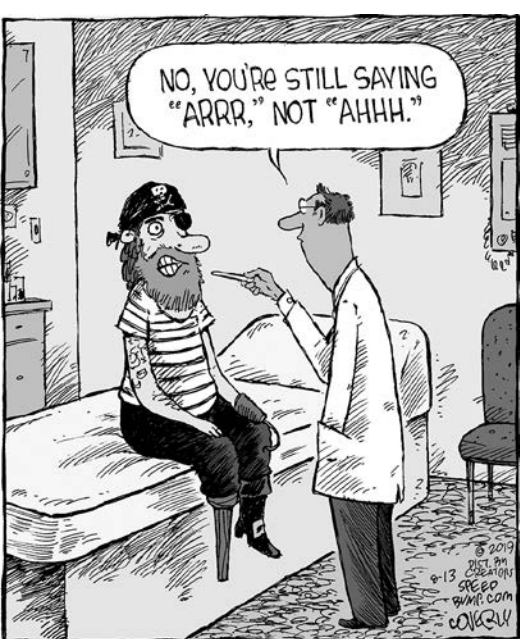
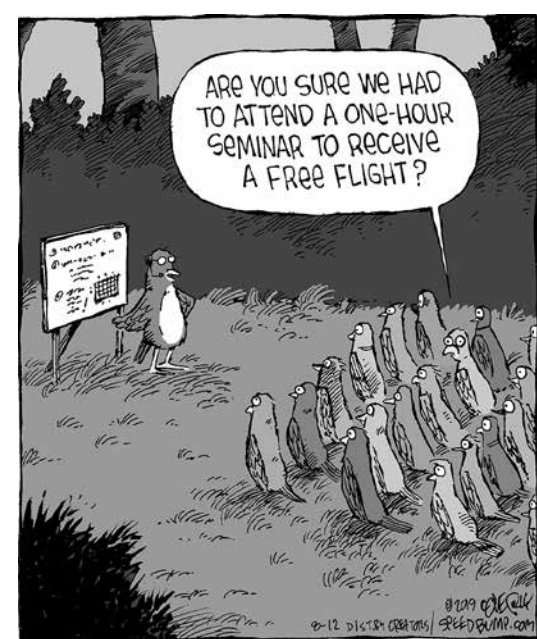


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SPEED BUMP

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On This Day...

August 16, 1777: During the American Revolutionary War, the Battle of Bennington took place. New England's minutemen routed the British regulars.

1954: Sports Illustrated was published for the first time. It was claimed that 250,000 subscriptions had been sold before the first issue came off of the presses.

1995: Voters in Bermuda rejected independence from Great Britain.

1999: In Russia, Vladimir V. Putin was confirmed as prime minister by the lower house of parliament.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

12:00 p.m. - Rotary - Doubletree Hotel

1st & 3rd 6:00 p.m. - Toastmasters Meetings - Registrar Recorder/County Clerks Office

1st & 3rd, 6:00 p.m. - City Council - Council Chambers

3rd, 5:45 p.m. - Housing Authority - Council Chambers

WEDNESDAYS

1st, 12:30 p.m. - Soroptimist International - Soroptimist Village

1st & 3rd, 7:00 p.m. - Lions Club - Bruce's Restaurant

2nd, 10:30 a.m. - Norwalk Woman's Club - Masonic Lodge

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

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)

VOWEL PLAY: Including one semivowel

by Mark McClain

ACROSS

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4 Send a text, say

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12 Oral canine

18 Hotshot pilots

20 Despicable one

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22 Italian cheese

23 Gershwin masterwork

26 Chunk of gold

27 Mr. Peanut wears one

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29 Kvetches

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34 Take a spill

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47 Zilch

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133 Timely benefit

134 Arch support

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9 Cohort

10 Feathered six-footer

11 Poor mark

12 Light cooking oil

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116 Ore deposit

118 Additional stipulations

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121 Sandwich shop

122 "Never mind" marking

124 Swipe from

125 *Game of Thrones* aier

126 "___hoot!"

127 Melted chocolate, e.g.

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127 Melted chocolate, e.g.

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species.

possessed by many males of the

(Across) are so called for the horns

RHINOCEROS BEETLES (57)

expression and nonverbal behavior.

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comprise numerous types of

RHETORICAL ARTS (37 Across)

grated for salads and soups. The

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(Across) has a smooth texture;

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ASAP 4701256
The Norwalk Patriot
8/16/19, 8/23/19, 8/30/19

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Demographic Change: Meet the new neighbors, same as the old neighbors

Part VI of VII

By Aron Ramirez
Contributor

The early years of Downey's demographic transformation were marked by uneasy race-relations. White residents who remained in the early 1990s were generally poorer than the white residents who left, and therefore felt stuck as the city changed before them. Some white residents overestimated the cultural differences between themselves and the middle-class Mexican Americans; this perceived difference undermined the existing peace.

But this scarcely discouraged Downey's middle-class Mexican Americans from expressing the assimilated civic identity. This was because they genuinely believed in several of its component actions. Unlike earlier years where the civic identity secured their place among the white majority, in the 1990s, Mexican Americans perpetuated the civic identity to steward the community through challenges to the middle-class quality of life.

One principal holdover was the emphasis on home-owning customs and practices that maximized property values. Middle-class Mexican Americans in the 1990s headed, created, and participated in "property-values"-minded programs. Ironically, this responded to the economic turmoil caused by the very housing bubble that first facilitated Downey's white flight in 1988. In this essay, I'll detail a number of programs Mexican Americans championed as part of their civic identity.

Demographic change in the 1990s coincided with tax problems in Downey. Unsustainable economic growth, the 1986 Tax Reform Act, Federal Reserve policy, and personal debt accumulation caused a national recession in 1990, a counter-boom of sorts to the housing market of 1988. Locally, this recession and the end of the Cold War spelled far fewer aerospace construction contracts at the Boeing plant in Downey. This revenue formed a significant portion of the city's collected taxes in earlier years, so by 1998, when Boeing shut the Downey plant down entirely, the city's tax base faced major problems. This, combined with fluctuating property values caused by the housing bubble, concerned homeowners in Downey.

The other threat to property values came in the form of gangs. White and Mexican American residents feared that overwhelming demographic turnover could lead to the infiltration of unwelcomed elements and urban-related vices like gang activity. Surprisingly, Mexican Americans and whites alike held these fears and responded in similar ways.

In the 1980s, some gangs trafficked in a lucrative illicit drug trade, while others formed in response to inter-ethnic tensions. Rhetoric like Ronald Reagan's "War on Drugs" initiative found support in communities like Downey where gang activity threatened residents' middle-class standard of living. The gang problem in Downey existed more in imagination than in reality. (More on this later.) Some gangs, though, sprouted from Downey and named themselves after the neighborhoods in which they formed; the Dog Patch Criminals, Brock Avenue Locos, and Margaret Street Locos are three such examples. Many Downey gangs grew from the central Downey working-class barrio, resulting from the lower levels of economic and social capital allocated to these streets.

High school teachers recalled certain students in the 1990s being involved with organized gangs and posing trouble for the administrators on campus. But many gang groups or members came from outside the city.

Community groups like Gangs out of Downey (GOOD) provided grassroots solutions to these threats. Phil Presicci and former school board member Betty Ferraro founded GOOD in 1989 to steer Downey youth from gang involvement. GOOD tapped Downey resident (and former Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder) Darrell Jackson to helm the program.

A grassroots organization, GOOD was a youth-group alternative to gangs. Through its early years, GOOD enjoyed moderate success steering dozens of youth—mostly low-income Mexican Americans from central and south Downey—from gang influences.

Widely publicized testimonies like that of Francine Perez stoked the community's support. Once an at-risk youth from south Downey, Perez nearly dropped out of school and joined gangs before Darrell Jackson invited her to GOOD. Through the programming of GOOD, especially the mentorship of Jackson, Perez remained in school, maintained a 3.0 grade point average, and joined the cross country team.

By 1993, the organization had attracted a large following. GOOD hosted a "Youth Program Day," with a food court, entertainment, youth sports registration, and a walk-a-thon to raise money for the group's functions. Turnout at the event helped attract corporate sponsorship from Downey-based organizations like Keep Downey Beautiful, the Police Department, and Downey City Services. Kaiser Permanente Hospital topped them all with a \$5,000 check; in later years, more companies donated larger sums to GOOD.

As the city demographics changed, Mexican Americans transitioned to leadership positions—with much of the same success. This stemmed from Mexican American desires as business owners, parents, and residents to keep streets safe. Safety was as good for business as it was for raising children. Latino/a/x-owned businesses like Lopez Insurance Co. publicized their financial contributions to GOOD to signal their literal investment in safety. Raul Lopez then became the first Mexican American to join GOOD leadership when he assumed the office of vice president in 1996. The next year, Lopez became president and continued the same levels of programming, fundraising, and success.

When asked about his intimate involvement with GOOD, Lopez cited concern for "a decent place for his wife, Arlene, and his five children to live." Lopez and other Mexican Americans genuinely cared for the program. Their support was but one way to uphold the quality of life that first attracted them to Downey and separated the middle-class suburb from nearby minority-majority cities. Their efforts worked, too: in 1996, Lieutenant Wheatly of the Downey Police Department announced that programs like GOOD caused a five-year hiatus in gang-related homicides.

(In truth, the community overestimated GOOD's role. Contemporary crime statistics by the FBI showed falling rates of serious crime throughout metropolitan Los Angeles and across the nation as a whole. When compared to cities like Long Beach or Los Angeles, both of which had much larger populations, Downey actually had slower rates of declining crime.)

During this period, middle-class Mexican Americans also participated in neighborhood improvement programs. One such program was the Neighborhood Preservation Program. Started in January 1997, the Preservation Program grew from the city's commitment to maintaining high property values through demographic change; resident participation ensured the

program's success. Orange County cities introduced similar initiatives in prior years.

The program created a city-paid position for a Community Outreach Officer (later Neighborhood Preservation Officer), who liaised relations between neighborhood residents and various city departments like Code Enforcement. The first budget provided \$71,000 for three neighborhoods—mostly in the apartment-dense fringes of south Downey—with the goal to peruse streets looking for signs of blight: "buildings in need of repair, litter-cluttered yards, cars that don't run parked on lawns, and other signs of gangs and crime."

On paper, the position resembled the usual powers assigned to code enforcement officers. In practice, the Neighborhood Preservation Officer became integral to the program's success.

The inaugural Preservation Officer, Cristina Garcia, epitomized the incoming middle-class Mexican American. (This Cristina Garcia is not the same as our current State Assemblymember.) Garcia was 24 years old at the time of appointment, but she had impressive credentials. In her few years after graduating from the University of California, San Diego with a degree in political science, Garcia interned at a public policy institute, worked as an administrative aide for the City of Beverly Hills, and participated in the federal AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America, the War-on-Poverty-era domestic version of Peace Corps. Garcia had also begun a graduate degree in public administration at the University of Southern California.

Her father, Ernie Garcia, was the city manager of neighboring Norwalk, but she omitted this from her application so she could earn the job by her own merit. The city lauded Garcia's qualifications and hired her over forty-one other candidates, including police officers and university professors. Her hire signaled the city council's recognition of the new demographic landscape.

Garcia represented the new Downeyite: an American-born college-educated Latino/a/x who, having tasted the middle-class life in some way, upheld a civic identity that promoted high property values through a culture of code enforcement and neighborhood improvement. The city banked on Garcia's ability to resemble and relate to the incoming middle-class Mexican Americans. The high property values would not come from forcible code enforcement by white homeowners and policymakers, but rather from the middle-class Mexican Americans themselves.

Residents from all neighborhoods enthusiastically participated in and ensured the program's success. In the first Neighborhood Preservation meeting, seventy residents from one neighborhood aired their concerns over issues like crime, traffic, and property maintenance. The most common complaints, though, came from Downey residents concerned by juveniles from Paramount.

Residents blamed Paramount youths for generating most threats to their property values, from litter in the park to graffiti on walls to a general family-unfriendly atmosphere. Garcia and other city officials promised to address all concerns from that meeting, and scheduled follow-up events, litter cleanups, and family-friendly programming to reclaim the spaces. City councilmembers were thrilled with the success and enthusiastic community reception of the Neighborhood Preservation Program.

Continued on page 7

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Demographic Change: Downey residents find they have more in common than previously assumed

Continued from page 6

The program also coincided with the maintenance of higher property values: throughout the 1990s, the median value of owner-occupied homes in Downey remained higher than the county median—and \$60,000 higher than in nearby suburbs. The newspaper lauded the program, Police Chief Caldwell praised Garcia, and councilmember Gary McCaughan’s only concern was that the program deserved more funding.

After just seventeen months, the fiscal conservatives of city council offered the Neighborhood Preservation Program a blank check to ensure its growth. The next year, the program expanded to include another salaried officer. Such was the allure of programs that stabilized property values.

Mexican Americans also participated in private programs that privileged home upkeep as a civic duty. Independent programs like Keep Downey Beautiful (KDB) incentivized home improvement by awarding recognition to homes from all parts of Downey. KDB grew out of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., a national program started in 1953 to prevent littering in urban and suburban streets. The association created several initiatives, from hazardous waste disposal to litter clean-up grants. In Downey, KDB hosted recycling drives and litter cleanups, but was known to most residents as the trustee of the Home Beautiful awards. Residents submitted pictures of their homes for yearly award consideration in a number of categories. Judges assessed homes on maintenance, overall appearance, use of landscaping, and “neighborhood impact.” Though principally

for immaculate single-family homes, KDB also recognized Most Improved and Rental Housing categories to encourage improvement even among those who were not middle-class homeowners. As if to lend implicit support for the property improvement competition, the city allowed KDB to host the awards show every year at city hall, which was itself a model for tasteful midcentury modern buildings.

Home Beautiful award winners, at the very minimum, complied with a strict municipal code. The municipal code of the 1990s shared most of the structures of the original 1956 code required by state law for incorporated cities. That municipal code reflected an apparently-timeless obsession with property values. The municipal code required meticulous attention, lest a homeowner deviate from the prescribed homogeneity. Landscaping requirements provide one such example. The city code forbade reasonably offensive appearances like broken windows or vegetation that promoted fire hazards. Some requirements, however, were more subjective. Technical charts filled the “Landscaping Requirements” section that mandated

Except in the R-1 and R-2 zones, the total number of trees required shall be as follows: One (1) tree for every five (5) parking spaces; and One (1) tree for every twenty (20) linear feet of street (include street side) frontage...Except in the R-1 and R-2 zones, the size of trees, at time of planting, shall be required in Table 9.5-4.

Or, that homeowners must provide:

[a] colorful landscape edge [that]

should be established at the base of buildings. Avoid asphalt edges at the base of structures as much as possible. Plant materials located in containers are appropriate...Planting masses on-site should assume a simple, non-uniform arrangement. The diversity of massing types should be great enough to provide interest, but kept to a level that evokes a relaxed natural feeling.

Compliance ensured the continuation of the manicured single-family ranch-style aesthetic. Conformity, not flexibility, was required. But these requirements were prohibitive on two levels: initial cost and cost of maintenance. For new developers, compliance with ordinances, especially fanciful tree and sightly vegetation requirements, could add significant costs.

By design, the middle-class Mexican Americans who moved to Downey needed to have the means to afford these costly requirements. The cost of maintenance similarly prohibited certain property owners. For front lawns, prohibitions included vegetation “out of conformity with neighboring community standards to such an extent as to result in, or contribute to, a diminution of property values,” such as “[l]awns with grass in excess of six inches (6”) in height.”

Maintenance was required almost weekly, lest a lawn grow more than a disorderly six inches. Thus, a family moving into Downey needed to allocate, on a weekly basis, either hours of their day or monetary pay to maintain their vegetation. Such costs added up to a significant yearly investment, and restricted homeowners to those of middle-class means.

Home Beautiful competitions thus embodied two key aspects

of the civic identity. For one, compliance with the municipal code preserved the ranch-style aesthetic popular in middle-class white suburbs and prevented Mexican Americans from introducing architectural styles like the Spanish mission style that are associated with Mexican culture. Second, Home Beautiful incentivized Mexican Americans to publicly privilege a “high-property-values” framework during the years of demographic transformation. Home Beautiful therefore not only helped to stabilize property values but also tied the new demographic to the civic identity.

Latino/a/x families like Irma and Marco Barrios enthusiastically participated in KDB competitions. By 2000, the Barrios family, like many other Mexican American families, were perennial winners. Even families from south Downey showed up on Most Improved lists, suggesting earnest efforts by working-to-lower-middle-class families to uphold the higher property values.

These programs were but some of the ways the incoming middle-class Mexican Americans perpetuated a “high-property-values” framework in the 1990s. To them, this component of the assimilated civic identity offered the proper remedy for fluctuating property values. But by perpetuating this framework, middle-class Mexican Americans unknowingly calcified a very specific definition of “Downey living,” one epitomized by programs like GOOD, the Neighborhood Preservation Program, and KDB, to name a few.

This was not inevitable. Home-owning practices and customs of minority-majority cities like Paramount or South Gate did not independently

threaten property values (and therefore the quality of life). To be sure, some attitudes like intolerance of gangs did, on their own, protect against damage to property and life. But “intolerance of gangs” as a proxy for “intolerance of Paramount,” as residents at Neighborhood Preservation meetings suggested, was altogether different. Similarly, Spanish-style mission homes did not independently pose threats to property values. (Consider how the opposition to such styles is along the lines of “it’s an ugly style” or “it’s not like classic Downey homes,” which are subjective assessments of valuation, as opposed to “it promotes a fire hazard.”)

But Spanish-style mission homes as metonyms for the home-owning practices and preferences in, say, Huntington Park (where the style is more common), were what posed the threat to Downey property values. This has less to do with the buildings themselves, and more to do with how ideas about the built environment suggested what constituted “good” suburban

living. It was about “keeping South Gate” (or any southeast Los Angeles suburb) out of Downey.


Which is to say that by perpetuating many components of the “high-property-values” framework of white-majority Downey, middle-class Mexican Americans were perpetuating the racial ideology that first informed ideas of “good” and “bad” home-owning practices. This was not a conscious association, but it had far-reaching implications, some of which are still a part of the way Downeyites think about their homes today.

There is a more immediate example of this. In the 1990s, undocumented immigrants from Mexico and Central America fled economic and natural disasters and trekked north. Some made their homes in Downey. Their presence ignited very public clashes between Mexican Americans’ ethnic and class identities. I look forward to concluding the series with that story next week.

In Memory of

Alan Perkins

June 16, 1954 - December 24, 2018



Alan Perkins passed away on December 24th, 2018. Alan is at home with his Lord and Savior. He was a member at Calvary Community Church for many years. Calvary Community Church in Norwalk, will be hosting an memorial service for Alan Perkins at 14626 Pioneer Blvd, Norwalk, CA 90650 with friends and family. The service will be at 10:30am Sunday August 18, 2019. It will be followed with light refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Rio Hondo College enrolls first class in Homeland Security degree program

WHITTIER – Rio Hondo College will be expanding presentation of its core and elective classes for its groundbreaking Associate of Science and Certificate of Achievement program in Homeland Security.

The program, approved in 2018 by the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, builds on Rio Hondo College’s nationally recognized public safety programs.

Classes offered this fall in the interdisciplinary degree program include Introduction to Homeland Security, Hazard Mitigation in Emergency Management and Cybersecurity: Policy and Practice.

“Homeland security expertise has never been in such high demand as it is today – a fact sadly reinforced by frequent violent incidents across our country,” Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Dr. Arturo Reyes said. “This degree program will help prepare students and a new generation of public safety officials who understand the issues, tactics and options necessary for ensuring our safety.”

The program was designed by Rio Hondo College faculty with deep knowledge of public safety needs in collaboration with experts in law enforcement, fire services and homeland security. Besides the core classes in homeland security and emergency management, the program incorporates courses in fire technology, wildland fire technology, administration of justice and geographic information services.

Rio Hondo College’s program is the only one in the region that offers dual emphasis on Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

As part of the program, Rio Hondo College has established a Regional Training Center on par with the College’s Police Academy, Fire Academy and Wildland Fire Academy, creating a fundamental framework for responding to threats posed daily by manmade and natural risks and hazards.

“Our newest public safety program in Homeland Security represents Rio Hondo College’s ongoing efforts to ensure our graduates receive cutting-edge instruction in high-demand career fields where they can make a real impact on our communities,” said Dr. Ygnacio “Nash” Flores, the coordinator for the Homeland Security Program. “Safety and security are concerns for everyone. We teach our students to understand their role in preparing for and responding to a wide range of emergencies and disasters.”

The Rio Hondo College Homeland Security Degree is the latest in a long line of public safety careers to offer not only an opportunity for a rewarding career at a living wage, but a chance to serve the community. Rio Hondo College’s commitment to Homeland Security is demonstrated by its efforts to have Homeland Security approved as a new Academic Discipline by the California Community College Board of Governors later this year

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All My Cars

Shared Stories

By Anthony Kingsley Contributor

I bought my first car shortly after I arrived in New York. It was a used green and white 1960 Plymouth Savoy with hood fins at the back. But the hood had some paint damage so I got a \$29.95 Earl Scheib paint job and made it all white.

The Savoy was similar to the Plymouth Fury that was featured in the movie “Christine” except that the Fury had smaller fins. I drove it until it was rear-ended by a truck on the Brooklyn Queens Expressway. This car was the cause of my first lawsuit in the United States.

I was planning on moving so I did not get another car. The metro went anywhere I wanted to go.

When I came to California and got a job, I bought a used Oldsmobile for \$300. As they say – you get what you pay for.

My next car was a used green 1968 Ford Torino with a big V8 engine. A nice car but it gave me some problems. I wrote to Ford and they said sorry but it is out of warranty. I said I would never buy a Ford again.

Next came a used blue 1955 Chevy Nova – a nice little car. Then came a used green 1966 Chevy Nova which was totaled on the Long Beach Freeway. Next, a friend of a friend sold me a red Buick Century that lasted a long time.

Then came my first new car – a black Chevy Monza, a nice car but with no air-conditioning. The nice thing about this car was that the rear seat folded down and made a complete flatbed up to the back of the front seat. I took my father in it to Palm Springs where it was 125 degrees when we got there. The old man had never felt heat like that before. We lay in the shade in the park to recuperate. I sold it to the person I had bought the

Buick from.

Next came a new stick-shift white Chevy Camaro with air-conditioning. I drove that for 168,000 miles before it died. We had a lot of fun together. That was some car.

A new white Chevy Cavalier was up next. It got totaled while parked in a strip mall by a woman who put her foot on the accelerator instead of the brake. She refused to provide her insurance information. So, of course, another lawsuit was filed.

It turned out that she did have insurance. I won a judgment but the insurance company refused to pay and they filed for a new trial. I won that also.

Next came a new silver Nissan Versa. That got totaled at night by a hit and run driver on Rosecrans Avenue in Bellflower. The police report said it was my fault because I had crossed Rosecrans in front of a speeding truck with no lights. No injuries.

Then I broke my promise of 40 years earlier. I bought a new white Ford Fiesta. It is a nice little car. It had a fluid leak shortly after I got it but that was fixed under warranty.

I drove it to Arlington, Texas and another trip to Chicago via Route 66. I also drove it to Las Vegas and Bullhead City, Arizona several times.

After the warranty had expired, a light came up on my instrument panel. No advice in my owner’s manual so I took to the internet. The solution was to turn the key to the accessories position, put your foot on the brake and the accelerator at the same time and hold them down for thirty seconds. Bingo – that fixed it.

So far so good.

Anthony Kingsley is a member of the writing class offered through the Cerritos College Adult Education Program. It is held off-campus at the Norwalk Senior Center.

Miles of Smiles

Shared Stories

By Maria L. Garcia Contributor

Who would ever think that one can experience a life changing moment by merely sitting on a couch?

Watching the 2018 movie, “Pope Francis Man of His Word,” gave me such an experience. It was at the movie’s end when Pope Francis declares his true confession: “I pray every day for two things : To smile and to have a sense of humor.”

Smile — it can cost from nothing to millions of dollars. Either way, it’s a win-win fashion statement if one chooses to wear it.

I got a recent email from Darlene, daughter of Phillip Lucas, our very first friend whom I met together with his wife, Lumen, in 1982 as a new immigrant. She had attached two photos of her dad marking his death at age 105. Interestingly, one picture was labeled “Dad’s Classic Smile” and the other, “Dad’s Million Dollar Smile” Though Phillip’s smile was worth its weight in gold, it must not have cost him a single dime.

School pictures require payment with the pro photographer making profit out of the student’s free smile, with just a click. So much so with investors who set up photo booths at events for guests to pose, smile and stare at the dot within five second countdowns.

The unfading enigmatic smile of Mona Lisa is classic. Currently costs \$837 million in insurance value though, in reality, this Leonardo da Vinci masterpiece is un-insurable as it is irreplaceable. Mona Lisa is the inescapable Renaissance painting on the course outline I had taught for 12 years. Not until 1985 did I see the painting before my very eyes at the Louvre Museum in Paris.

In 1958, transcending into the world of music, was the popular song, “A Certain Smile.” Lifetime Grammy Achievement awardee, Johnny Mathis, became a household name with many impersonators imitating his Certain Smile. I was one lucky fan who made it to his sold out concert at the Araneta Coliseum in Manila, Philippines in 1960.

“Suddenly you know why your heart sings — when a certain face leads an unsuspecting heart on a merry chase.” Six years later, the lyrics resonated in my nostalgic mind when I met the boy in college whom I eventually married.

Icon singer Nat King Cole, of over a hundred songs, popular for his song, “Smile:” “that even through fear and sorrow when you smile, you’ll find that life is still worthwhile.”

I, too, was one of hundreds of fans who would not miss Nat King Cole for the world when he performed live at the same venue in Manila in 1961.

A smile can be attractive, infectious...or non infectious to one’s health. Studies show a smile can lower one’s blood pressure, lessen pain, strengthen one’s immune system, and relieve stress. Even the dentist uses images of healthy teeth through a smile to advertise a dental product.

With apologies to those who have lost their teeth for one reason or another, my best friend, Victoria from Virginia battling with cancer, had lost her tooth from chemo treatment; nonetheless, she smiles and bears it. She says, “My smile has generated virtues of love and compassion from others who attend to me during my 48-hour infusion and more.”

Myself, while pregnant with my youngest child, partially dislodged my front tooth from a fall on the driveway after the rain. Pushing back the displaced tooth, I managed smiling with it for several years until the doctor prescribed a root canal to save it. To this date, I can smile with it, unconscious of its history.

My mom smiled through 11 years of confinement in a rehabilitation hospital at Laguna Honda in San Francisco from 1987 to 1999. Her massive stroke resulted in aphasia, but smiles and laughter became her signature form of

communication.

I would drive or fly from LA to visit Mom. In one of those visits, unaware that I had a smile on my face as I walked eagerly through rows of beds in Mom’s ward, a voice from one of the patients, called out: “Your smile erases a multitude of sins!” I was astounded and puzzled by the remark but it was like finding a treasure in a smile.

What children would do at school to earn a smiley sticker as a reward. The yellow emoticon in the 80’s has evolved into a myriad of emojis displaying reactions on FB, in texting, posting positivity or negativity.

Smiles have existed through generations way back in the time of King David. In Psalm 39:13, “Turn Your gaze away from me, that I may smile again Before I depart and am no more.” David asks God to look away from his sin and forgive him, for strength that he may be prepared for the next life.

Mindful of King David’s pearls of wisdom, I too plead for God’s mercy that I may have miles of smiles before I sleep.

Maria L. Garcia is a member of the writing class offered through the Cerritos College Adult Education Program. It is held off-campus at the Norwalk Senior Center.

Boarding School

Shared Stories

By Helen Hampton Contributor

In 1934, when I was 10 years old, I had my tonsils taken out. After I came home from the hospital, I had a hemorrhage and almost died.

It caused a heart murmur as I lost so much blood. I was so sick that I missed a full year of school.

My mother thought I would need a good school to get caught up with my studies. She decided that I should go to a private school. I began attending a convent boarding school called Mount Merc in Waterville, Maine. It was taught by Ursuline nuns. I would board there Monday through Friday and

return home each weekend.

Life in a convent was quite an experience for a child of 11. The sleeping quarters consisted of a long line of beds, head to head, in the middle of a large dorm room. The room had sleeping alcoves along the walls, with drapes that could be drawn for privacy. I had one of these private rooms with the bedspread and curtains of my choice. It was quite nice.

We ate our meals at long tables in a large dining hall. The nuns would walk up and down to see that everyone ate all their food.

We wore black stockings, black dresses with white hard collars and cuffs that needed to be scrubbed every week with Bon Ami. A big black bow tie completed the costume.

If anyone in the dorm came down with a cold, every child was

given a dose of castor oil. There was only one bathroom at the end of the dorm. Needless to say, it was a very disturbing situation when we had to stand in a long line waiting for our turn to use the bathroom. Everyone was hopping up and down in great distress. But I guess we must have managed to live through it.

We had great fun on our time off from our studies. There were many activities to fill our spare time. We roller-skated in the fall and spring, and we ice-skated in the winter. We put on plays, and I had many singing parts in our musicals.

I boarded at Mount Merc for three years. By then I was caught up with my studies, so I was able to go to public school for my remaining school years.

Helen Hampton is a member of the writing class offered through the Cerritos College Adult Education Program. It is held off-campus at the Norwalk Senior Center.

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The Mariachi Divas performed at last week’s National Night Out in Norwalk. Photo courtesy City of Norwalk

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