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Dr. Richard Winkelmann is board certified in Dermatology & MOHs Surgery. He completed his MOHs Surgery and Dermatologic Oncology fellowship at the University of North Texas Health Sciences. Dr. Winkelmann was formerly a professional jazz musician before heading to medical school.

Dr. Sasha Maher is board certified in Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery. She completed her ENT residency at Loma Linda University. Dr. Maher has relocated her practice to AppleCare and continues to serve the Downey community. Dr. Maher loves to travel and spend time with her family.



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Healthcare nonprofit discriminates against people with rare diseases

BY RANDALL RUTTA

FDA officials approved a record number of rare disease treatments last year. One groundbreaking medicine treats an inherited bone condition that causes intense pain and immobility. Another treats Fabry disease, a genetic condition that can lead to kidney failure or stroke.

Breakthroughs like these offer hope to 30 million Americans living with rare diseases. But there's still a long way to go. Scientists estimate there are 7,000 rare diseases, each of which afflicts fewer than 200,000 people. The majority of these ailments -- 95 percent -- lack a single approved treatment.

Unfortunately, one prominent healthcare nonprofit could undermine research into rare diseases.

The group, the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER), analyzes the "cost-effectiveness" of many new FDA-approved drugs, including treatments for rare diseases. Because it relies on flawed assumptions, ICER mostly concludes that rare disease treatments aren't worth the price.

ICER hopes that health insurers will use its findings to decide which medicines to cover. If the group's message -- rare disease treatments aren't worth it -- wins the day, drug companies may well stop researching and developing rare disease treatments. And

millions of Americans would lose access to life-changing therapies.

ICER analyzes drugs' cost-effectiveness using a metric called a "quality adjusted life year." A QALY quantifies the cost of providing a patient with 12 additional months of perfect health.

Imagine a healthy woman has an incurable -- but dormant -- genetic disease that will kill her almost instantly once it's activated. If a treatment could delay activation by one year and it costs \$30,000, then ICER would say the treatment costs \$30,000 per QALY.

This metric effectively discriminates against the elderly, persons with chronic conditions and other sicknesses, and people living with disabilities. ICER's position is that these individuals aren't in perfect health to begin with. So, the group doesn't count an additional 12 months of life expectancy as a full QALY.

For example, our hypothetical treatment for a genetic disease might still extend a 90-year-old infirm patient's life by one year, but ICER might count the gain as only 0.5 QALY, due to the perceived lower quality of his/her life. As a result, that same \$30,000 treatment would cost \$60,000 on a QALY-adjusted basis -- potentially blocking access and affordability for patients.

Rare disease drugs are expensive for a reason. It can take over a decade and \$2.6 billion to bring a new medicine to patients. Few experimental compounds even make it out of the lab.

Pharmaceutical companies have to charge enough to earn back their development costs. For common conditions that afflict millions of patients, companies might only need to charge a few dollars per pill to recoup their development costs.

By contrast, rare diseases affect just 200,000 people at most. So companies need to generate far more revenue per patient just to break even. Rare disease treatments also tend to be fragile, large-molecule drugs that require numerous manufacturing, shipping, and storage precautions -- further inflating costs.

ICER largely disregards these differences. The group evaluates rare disease drugs using roughly the same cost-effectiveness thresholds it uses for traditional, mass market medicines. Given this rigged scale, it's no wonder that rare disease treatments score poorly.

Scientists are developing more than 560 medicines to treat rare diseases. That research will likely come to a halt -- causing patients to lose access to lifesaving drugs -- if insurers fail to recognize the faults in ICER's reasoning.

Randall Rutta, the former president and CEO of Easterseals, is board chairman of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease.

A plan to allow Canada to import drugs will go nowhere

BY FROMA HARROP

Heavens, no. We don't want the U.S. government to negotiate drug prices for Americans. That would be socialism, conservatives keep saying. So let's have the Canadian government do it for us.

President Donald Trump's latest plan for reducing the outrageous prices Americans pay for their prescriptions is to let states import cheaper drugs from Canada. Past proposals to tie U.S. drug prices to other countries' prices have gone nowhere. And nowhere is where this one will go.

Big Pharma doesn't want to lose its captive market of American suckers. Do you really think that Alex Azar, Trump's secretary of health and human services and a former top executive at Eli Lilly and Co., is going to let the American consumer off the hook?

Azar has said that "this administration does not believe in ... setting prices for drugs by government fiat." How does he think Canada does it? He knows, of course, that nearly every advanced country demands reasonable drug prices, but drugmakers charge whatever they can get out of desperate Americans.

Thus, we have the pathetic spectacle of our diabetics taking buses to Canada to buy insulin for \$30 a vial -- a tenth (!) of the \$300 they pay at home. The much-advertised drug Humira, for treating psoriatic arthritis, costs an average \$822 in Switzerland and \$2,669 here.

By the way, insulin is excluded from Trump's Canada proposal. So is Humira, because it is a biologic.

In any event, Canada says it will not become the supplier of drugs for the United States. Canada's population is one-ninth ours, and its drug supply is limited. A huge boost in demand would drive up prices for Canadians.

We have to keep asking why Canada should be doing the job of the U.S. government. And so much for the great deal-maker in chief.

Some Americans may believe that drugmakers are going to sell more product to Canada so Americans can pay less for their wares. People believe a lot of things. As long as the GOP controls most of Washington, enormous profits will flow Big Pharma's way.

For example, the Medicare drug benefit, written by Republican lawmakers, forbids Medicare from negotiating drug prices. The private insurers managing the drug benefits do put some brakes on what's charged, but they don't have the bargaining power of Medicare with its nearly 60 million beneficiaries.

The Department of Veterans Affairs does directly negotiate drug prices. If Medicare Part D were to pay prices similar to what the VA pays, Medicare would have saved \$14 billion in 2016 alone, according to an analysis published in JAMA Internal Medicine.

Candidate Trump vowed to negotiate on Medicare drug prices. Whether he was ever serious about it we have no idea.

The Democratic-run House just passed legislation that would let Medicare bargain for better prices. It has zero chance of getting through the Republican-controlled Senate.

Why doesn't the almighty Trump use his famous powers of intimidation to whip Republican lawmakers into getting behind some plan to stop the drug industry's extortion racket? It comes down to "our price or your life."

Instead, Trump is blubbing about "freeloading" foreigners taking advantage of the American people. Or, as Azar put it, "The American senior and the American patient have been too long been asked to overpay for drugs to subsidize the socialist systems of Europe."

Don't you love his use of the passive tense? Americans haven't been "asked" anything. They've been forced by Azar's industry. Furthermore, if he and Trump object to other countries enjoying better deals, why are they backing a plan that would let Canada share its lower prices with Americans?

Because it's not going to happen.

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

What arguments about 'Star Wars' say about democracy

BY ANNALEE NEWITZ

Like a lot of Americans, I have formative memories of my first exposure to George Lucas's epic tale of space Rebels defeating a planet-destroying Empire. I got so excited as a little kid in 1977 about seeing "Star Wars: A New Hope" that I threw up outside the theater.

Years later, I was thoroughly disoriented when I found out on the news that Star Wars was no longer a movie; it was a nuclear missile defense system described by Ronald Reagan as the most futuristic arsenal ever built. Officially called the Strategic Defense Initiative, the Star Wars weapons system never came to fruition. But it forever changed the way an entire generation thought about the "Star Wars" movies.

Mr. Lucas's series about interstellar superweapons became a way of talking about American power in the world. When "Star Wars: A New Hope" was released, the Vietnam War had just ended in traumatic ambiguity, Richard Nixon had resigned under the threat of impeachment, and the old American dreams didn't fit our changed reality.

"Star Wars" became a new national mythos; it rebooted America's revolutionary origin story and liberty-or-death values using the tropes of science fiction. Now, however, the movies no longer strike the same chord. Just as America's political system is falling into disarray again, our cultural mythmaking machine is faltering as well.

When I say "faltering," I don't mean economically. The "Star Wars" franchise is among Disney's most lucrative properties. But each new installment has escalated conflicts between fans over

everything from character arcs to the diversity of its cast. Filmmakers are torn between catering to the base, with its rabid nostalgia for the 1970s and '80s movies, and striking out into new territory that feels more relevant to the 21st century. The cinematic results are uneven at best.

"The Rise of Skywalker," released last week, is a muddled and aimless homage to previous films in the series. Its countless callbacks to the older films feel like an effort to "make 'Star Wars' great again," though it does manage to deliver a few liberal-sounding messages. Call it the Joe Biden of "Star Wars" movies.

To continue the analogy, you might say that "The Last Jedi," "The Force Awakens," and "Rogue One" are in the Barack Obama tradition. They gave fans truly diverse casts and grappled in a relatively nuanced way with the class and race conflicts that have hovered at the margins of every "Star Wars" story.

They also made fans of the early movies livid. Some used social media to demand that Disney stop with the politically correct storytelling, while others launched racist attacks on the Vietnamese-American actress Kelly Tran, who plays the engineer Rose Tico in two of the films.

I'm not the only one who has noticed this obvious parallel to American electoral politics. JJ Abrams, who directed "The Phantom Menace" and "The Rise of Skywalker," noted in a recent interview that the vicious polarization within Star Wars fandom is not a phenomenon restricted to "Star Wars." As he put it, "This is about everything."

And a recent study by Morten Bay, a University of Southern California digital media researcher, revealed that over 50 percent of the venom directed on Twitter at Rian Johnson, director of "The Last Jedi," came from the same sources as Russian election meddling.

Using the analytical tools that other technologists deployed to uncover Russian influence during the 2016 election, Mr. Bay found that "bots, trolls/sock puppets or political activists" were using the "Star Wars" debate "to propagate political messages supporting extreme right-wing causes and the discrimination of gender, race or sexuality" and that "a number of these users appear to be Russian trolls." So it seems that it was political operatives, not fans, who were denigrating the movie and fomenting some of the virulent racism and misogyny against its cast.

Using "Star Wars" as the vehicle was a canny move by the trolls. Fans, like the American electorate, are polarized and angry. Online and in real life, they scream at one another about how Luke Skywalker would really behave decades after finding out that his dad was Darth Vader.

Often these fights begin with someone asserting that the latest "Star Wars" movie ruined their childhood. That's not wrong. An attack on "Star Wars" is an attack on what many adults of George Lucas's generation were taught as children: that the most important good guys are generally white men, and the biggest threat on earth is a superweapon.

The problem is that nobody agrees anymore on what the good guys look like, nor what this century's global threat really is. Fights over "Star Wars" cut to the core of American identity -- all the way down to our childhood selves -- because they aren't just squabbles over whether Rey's Force powers are realistic. They're about who we



are as a nation, and how we will survive as a people in the future.

There are hints of a new hope for the franchise in works set outside the movies' central plotline. Delilah S. Dawson's recent "Star Wars" tie-in novel "Phasma" reveals that the First Order wrecked the environment on Captain Phasma's home planet, leaving our battered protagonist no choice but to join the bad guys. In the new Disney Plus television series "The Mandalorian," the hero comes from a marginalized group whose planet was strip-mined by Imperials seeking the precious metal beskar. These stories gesture at a revitalized "Star Wars" mythology that might speak to people who fear rising seas more than superweapons.

Maybe the unresolved outrage set off by "The Last Jedi" and "The Rise of Skywalker" is a sign that this franchise needs to make way for a new set of stories. Americans' trust in government is being ripped apart by scandal and a looming impeachment trial. We desperately need a new American mythology to fit the 21st century realities of a majority-minority nation dealing with planet-wide threats like climate change.

The process of revitalizing American democracy doesn't begin and end at the voting booth. We also have to tell better stories about ourselves.

Annalee Newitz is the author of "The Future of Another Timeline."

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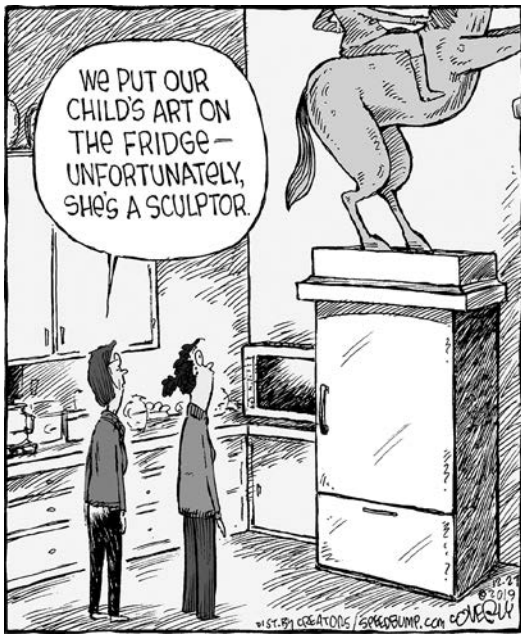
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

On This Day...

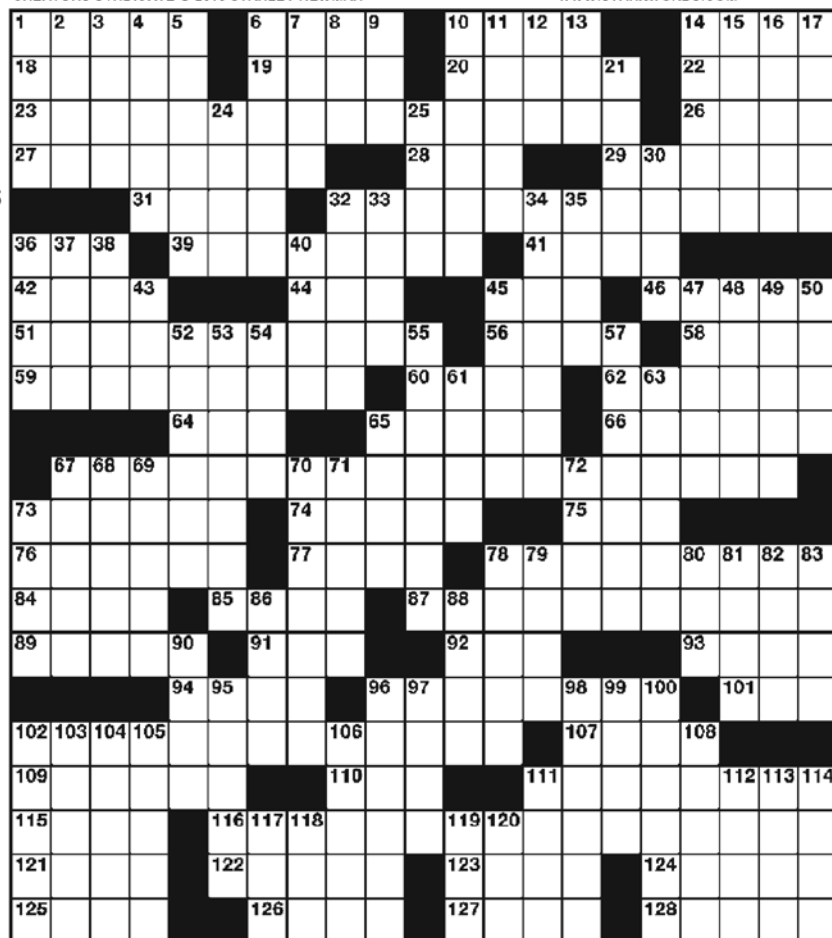
- Dec. 27, 1831: Charles Darwin set out on a voyage to the Pacific aboard the HMS Beagle. Darwin's discoveries during the voyage helped him form the basis of his theories on evolution.
- 1904: James Barrie's play "Peter Pan" premiered in London.
- 1947: The children's television program "Howdy Doody," hosted by Bob Smith, made its debut on NBC.
- 2000: Mario Lemieux (Pittsburgh Penguins) returned to the National Hockey League (NHL) as a player after over 3 years of retirement. He was the first owner-player in the modern era of pro sports. Lemieux had purchased the Pittsburgh Penguins during his retirement from playing.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
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by David W. Cromer

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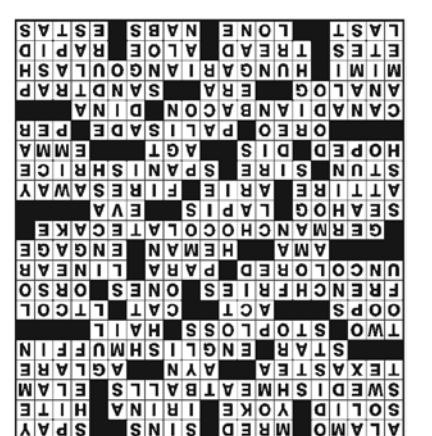


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Russian pairs skater IRINA Rodnina (20 Across) won three consecutive Winter Olympics gold medals from 1972 to 1980. The ancient civilization of EIAM (26 Across), located in what is now southwest Iran, was just east of Mesopotamia. TONGA (47 Down) is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



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Short Story

The Joys & Sadness of Halloween

By Yolanda Reyna

With Halloween just past, I started thinking about the joys and sadness that I carry with me about the holiday.

Times were tough growing up in my home and I don't recall Halloween ever being a big-to-do in my family. Unlike today with most families decorating their homes with ghoulish and scary decorations and going out and buying bags and bags of assorted special treats to give out to all the wonderful, cute and adorable trick-or-treaters: Little girls dressed up as princesses or young boys dressed as their favorite cartoon characters or one of their favorite heroes.

Parents often make their children's uniquely sewn

costumes or go out and buy a special costume for them. But Halloween was a holiday that was something my siblings and I didn't have fond memories of.

Our parents didn't buy treats to hand out to children, and they didn't buy Halloween costumes for us. They barely had enough funds to provide for their own children. We looked forward to receiving treats rather than giving them out.

We were frightened in our home, yes, but not from any ghoulish scary decorations. Pumpkins carved in our home were something that was unknown to us. The only thing my siblings and I carved were our names on our dressers and inside our closets walls. Carving our names was something we often got used to, maybe from being bored or being sent to our rooms after being punished. Most of the time we were frightened with the disfunction and the turmoil that went on in our home.

For instance, the arguing of our parents back and forth with each other, doors being slammed, blatant swearing amongst themselves. Wondering if our father would ever return home after storming out from a heated argument with our mother, or lying awake late at night worrying about our mother being out gallivanting around with our aunt [her sister].

But all of this was standard in our home, and it didn't faze us but it did frighten us at times. This is the sadness that I carry with me.

The joys? Hmm, I do recall this particular year on Halloween night. It was in the mid 70s and my siblings and I were teenagers. It was a night when our mother was out and our father hadn't been home for months.

Being that our parents weren't home, our brother, Ricky, got creative, he was the eldest amongst the six siblings. He had an idea. He said, "We're going trick-or-treating!"

He was a prankster and a joker. Believing that we were actually going out to get candy was something we didn't think was much of a joke though... his idea was going through our parents closet and gathering some of their clothing. When our father did storm out of the home, most times he didn't have time to pack anything. Therefore, his clothing was still laying around the house. Shirts, shoes and pants. Our mother, well she had house dresses, aprons, shoes and fake jewelry. She also had makeup too. We gathered pillow cases, grocery bags, shoes, pants, dresses. We all got to work creating our very own unique costumes.

My sisters and I put on our

mother's house dresses, jewelry and painted our faces. Ricky got so creative he came up with this idea that he could create a pot belly man from stuffing a pillow underneath the T-shirt that my brother, Gilbert put on also adding an empty beer can in his hand.

Our brothers made fake mustaches with our mothers makeup. Our brother, Louie, grabbed a bed sheet and cut two holes on it to create a ghost costume. We used pillow cases and grocery bags for trick-or-treat bags to gather our candy. Being able to go out trick-or-treating with my siblings was so much fun!

We laughed so much and returning home with so much candy was a joy. We may not have dressed up as our favorite cartoon characters or any type of favorite hero but we sure looked up to our brother Ricky as being our favorite hero.

The joys and sadness of Halloween are something I will always carry with me.

Yolanda Reyna 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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Swearing Around Mom

By Yolanda Reyna

When my siblings and I got angry with each other as kids we called each other the worst unimaginable names, and the act of holding back was just not in us when it came to name calling.

When the words spurted out of our mouths, these are the names that we used as a form of letting frustration out: Pig! Dog! "You're a pig!" "So? You're a dog!"

That was it, that was the best name-calling we had. If our mother heard us, oh, she'd get angry with us, scold us, and punish us. Most of the time if she heard us, especially if she was cooking, she'd storm out of the kitchen with her greased-stained worn-out apron, in her irate manner towering over us, with one hand on her hip and the other hand with her index finger protruding up in the air and say, "Go to your room!"

And because all six kids

shared one room, we all had to go to that one room, then privately, the name calling would continue, "You're a dog!" So, "You're a pig!"

Our parents didn't resort to name-calling but they did swear. There were two cuss words that often came out of their mouths: hell and damn.

"Go to hell!" they'd maliciously say to each other during their heated arguments while stomping in different directions. If our father sneezed too many times in a row, he'd get extremely aggravated and yell out, "Damn it!" while blowing his bugle horn [his nose].

But one word that was absolutely forbidden in our home growing up was the word "stupid." I think that word was said once in our home and it was never said again because our mother absolutely did not like it.

Another word that was never used in our home growing up was the four-letter "F" word and I never knew of the word. As a matter of fact, as I got much older, I had never heard the word and it wasn't until I met

Continued on page 8

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NORWALK HAPPENINGS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

Game and Activity Day, 2-4 pm. Drop in for board games, card games, puzzles, and play. We'll have activities for children and family members of all ages. Best suited for ages 4 and up. Alondra Library, 11949 Alondra Blvd.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Las Posadas, 6-9 pm. A traditional cultural celebration featuring a candlelight procession, caroling of holiday songs, performances by mariachis and ballet folkloricos, and more. City Hall lawn, 12700 Norwalk Blvd.

2020 Pokémon Premier Challenge, 12-8pm. Entry Fee: \$5 cash/credit card. Please have your team sheet filled and ready to turn in at time of registration. This tournament will use the VGC 2020 Sword & Shield Standard Format. Unrated Gaming, 15617 Studebaker Rd. Suite #3.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

Juanita's Tour, 10 am. Juanita's Foods will be at Northgate Market offering samples of their products. There will also be a radio remote starting at 1:30 p.m. Northgate Market, 11660 Firestone Blvd.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

Legal Research Class: Estate Probate and Trusts, 1:30 pm. Learn about the legal process that happens when someone dies, including how probate court works, and resources available to help. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

Chinese Calligraphy Class, 2 pm. Learn about Chinese culture in an exciting way through Chinese calligraphy in this one-hour class. You will learn how to write twenty-four Chinese characters and take home your work. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Meeting on Civic Center Redevelopment, 9-10 am. The City of Norwalk is exploring redevelopment options for its Civic Center and Civic Center Lawn and want your feedback. Held at Los Alisos Middle School, 14800 Jersey Ave.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

Harbor Groove Band, 9 pm. Live music by Harbor Groove Band, L.A.'s ultimate dance and show band. IV Lounge, 12500 Firestone Blvd.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

Drawing with Oil Colors, 12 pm. Learn about oil color art techniques and complete your own work of art. All materials will be provided. Advance registration is required. Please call the library or visit the Information Desk to sign up. Norwalk Library 12350 Imperial Hwy.

Paint Class & a Glass, 7 pm. The night will feature a predetermined painting, simple enough for first-time painters or with suggestions and instructions for those with a higher experience level. Norwalk Cultural Arts Center, 13200 Clarkdale Ave.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

20th Anniversary Services, 9 am. Pastor Jerry Scheidbach will be preaching at this special service to mark the 20th anniversary of Liberty Baptist Church of Norwalk, 12029 Pine St.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21

Comedy Fire, 9-11 pm. Darren Carter "The Party Starter" headlines this new comedy series. Kevin Lahaie also will perform. Torch Room Lounge, 10632 Imperial Hwy.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

Origami Lotus Flower Notebook, 4-5 pm. Join us as we create decorative mini-notebooks for notations, photos, mementos,

and more. All materials will be provided. For ages 12-18. Alondra Library, 11949 Alondra Blvd.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

Resume Tutorial Workshop, 3 pm. Would you like to learn how to write a great resume? This class will provide guidance and examples of writing a powerful, compelling resume. Please bring a paper copy of your resume to exchange with other attendees. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

Lit Wits Book Club, 6:30 pm. Join us to read and discuss 11/22/63 by Stephen King. High-school teacher Jake Epping travels back in time to prevent the assassination of John F. Kennedy, a mission for which he must befriend troubled loner Lee Harvey Oswald. New members welcomed. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

DIY Comic Book, 4-5 pm. Be a writer and illustrator of your own comic book. We have all the materials for this cool project. For ages 12-18. Alondra Library, 11949 Alondra Blvd.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

Rhythmic L.A. 2020 Rhythmic Gymnastics Invitational, 8:30 am - 9:30 pm. Rhythmic Academy of Los Angeles welcomes the Rhythmic community, families and friends to the Rhythmic LA 2020 Rhythmic Gymnastics Grand Championships. Featuring top Rhythmic Gymnastics programs throughout the United States and many elite clubs around the with over 400 gymnasts participating, making it one of the largest and most prestigious Rhythmic Gymnastics Regional tournaments in the United States. Guest admission is \$25 for adults and only \$15 for children and seniors. Cerritos College gymnasium, 11110 Alondra Blvd.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

Relay for Life Silent Auction, 5-7 pm. Place your bid on a selection of unique donated items. Free entry if you donate an item worth \$10 or more. Proceeds will be donated to the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex, 13000 Clarkdale Ave.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Painting in Pajamas, 5 pm. Come enjoy an evening with your favorite little painter while enjoying a delicious pizza dinner. There will be an instructor who will provide step by step instruction on painting a beautiful masterpiece on canvas that both you and your little one can enjoy and take home. Norwalk Cultural Arts Center, 13200 Clarkdale Ave.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Sneaker Giveaway, 12 pm. The first 50 guests will receive

sneakers. For those who miss out on the sneaker giveaway, however, there will be a stickers giveaway & discounted shoe services. Norwalk Park, 12201 Sproul St.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Seven Steps to Boost Metabolism, 10 am. Discover which foods and beverages cause you to store weight and which help you lose it. Coast Plaza Hospital, 13100 Studebaker Rd.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15

Electronic Waste Collection, 9 am to 2 pm. Safely dispose of unwanted electronic waste and expired medications, as well as up to five boxes of documents for shredding. City Hall, 12700 Norwalk Blvd.

Spiritual Block Party, 10 am to 10 pm. A wellness festival with three focus areas: movement, meditation and nourishment. Featuring vendors, dance, music, vegan food trucks, and more. Free

and open to the public. Sanatan Dharma Temple and Community Cultural Center, 15311 Pioneer Blvd.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

25-Year Anniversary, 7 pm. Rockabilly band Three Bad Jacks celebrates its 25-year anniversary. With special guests The Knockout Kings, No Que No, The Ripkatz and Los Paka Lolos. \$15 cover. American Legion Post 359, 11986 Front St.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Diabolic Lounge, 7 pm to 1:30 am. Live music by The Psychlocks, The Peabrains, Uptown Psychos, Johnny Dahmer, The Syndicates, Six Silver Bullets and Lost Boys. \$15 presale, \$20 at the door. American Legion Post 359, 11986 Front St.

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

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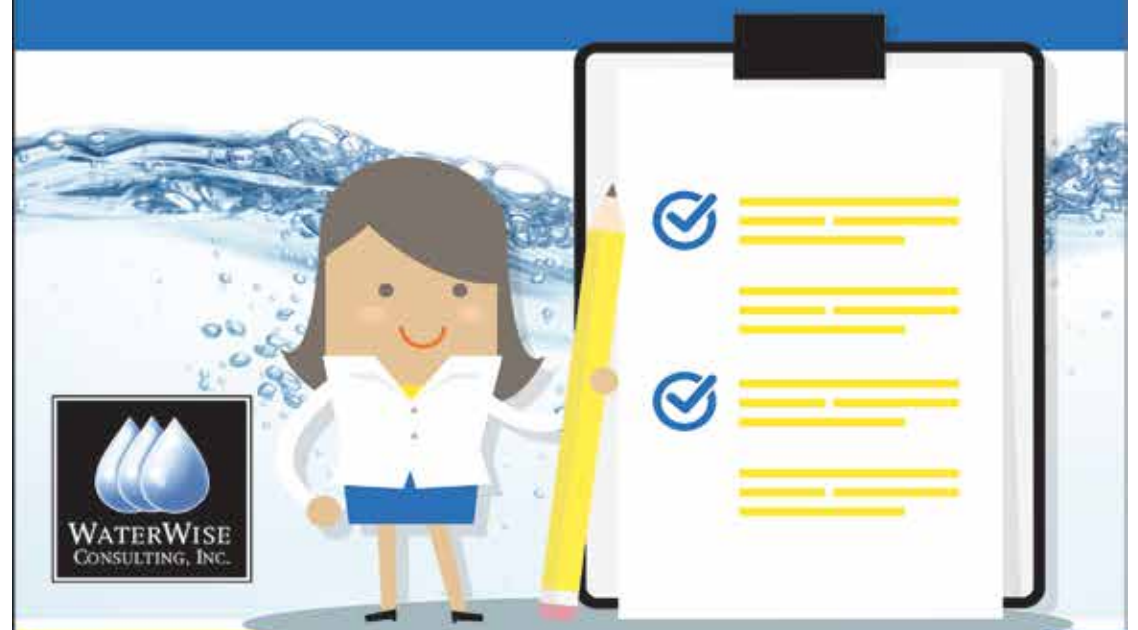
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Swearing Around Mom

Continued from page 6

my ex-husband Robert that I started hearing it, and that was his favorite word.

"F" this, "F" that. "F" you, b---", he'd say to me in our heated arguments. My children will always say the "F" word but I always ask them not to say it, especially in my presence.

Unfortunately, I have on occasion said it. I know, I'm guilty and I shouldn't say it, but it's only out of frustration that I'll say it. For instance, if I bang my baby toe on something, it just comes flying out of my mouth.

Once I did say the "F" word to Robert during our divorce. "You mother---." Trust me, he deserved it.

Name-calling and swearing seem so much more vulgar these days. The "B" word and the four-letter "F" word were words that were never used in our home growing up and our parents did not call each vulgar names although they did swear on many occasions.

Times have changed since my siblings and I were growing up. Name-calling and swearing was so much more innocent back then.

Yolanda Reyna 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.

Hundreds pay tribute to Whittier's Danny Martin

A group bicycle ride honoring late Whittier resident Danny Martin will become an annual tradition, organizers said.

By Eric Pierce
Editor

WHITTIER - Even in death, Danny Martin is bringing joy to Whittier.

Hundreds of people attended a memorial bicycle ride in East Whittier on Sunday afternoon, paying tribute to a man whose colorful tricycle and friendly waves were a fixture on Whittier Boulevard.

Martin was killed last week when he was struck by a vehicle while riding his tricycle on

Whittier Boulevard near Jordan Road. He was 61.

Sunday's bicycle ride originated at the collision site, where a makeshift memorial of candles and flowers honors Martin's memory.

The bicycle ride was organized by Vince McLeod IV, a friend of Martin's for more than two decades.

"It was really cool to see 250 people there," McLeod said. "It's unfortunate that it took him passing for us to honor him like this. This guy did so much and he never got anything in return when he was alive. But he was so humble I'm not sure he would have accepted any kind of award anyway."

The bicycle ride will become an annual tradition, McLeod said, with the first official ride



tentatively scheduled for April. McLeod said he will soon begin the process of obtaining permits, and proceeds from the ride will go towards a public memorial for Martin.

Martin was involved in a motorcycle crash in 1981 that left him partially paralyzed and unable to drive. He dedicated his life to Jesus Christ after the crash, thankful for his life and intent on

bringing happiness to the world.

He became a fixture in Whittier, riding his tricycle and waving to passing motorists.

"For someone who could have gone the opposite way, Danny celebrated that he lived," McLeod said. "He chose to take the positive road. That's something you don't always see today."

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