

Congress members question Delta about fuel spill

Congress members are demanding answers after a Delta Airlines Boeing dumped fuel over residential areas two weeks ago.

NORWALK - Norwalk's Congressional representative, Linda Sanchez, has joined other congress members in questioning Delta Airlines about its fuel spill over southeast Los Angeles County earlier this month.

Sanchez, along with Congresswomen Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40), Maxine Waters (CA-43), and Nanette Diaz Barragan, have sent a letter to Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Steve Dickson asking numerous questions about the January 14 Delta Airlines jet fuel dump in and around their districts, and the circumstances and procedures surrounding that fuel dump.

The text of the letter is presented here:

Dear Administrator Dickson:

We write with deep concern regarding the January 14, 2020 release of jet fuel by Delta flight 89 over our communities in Los Angeles. While we are grateful that flight 89 made a safe landing at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), we are troubled that this jet fuel was dumped over populated areas, including at least six elementary schools. The impact of this fuel dump on our communities and children has yet to be fully realized. We ask for your assistance in answering fundamental questions regarding the protocol that a pilot and air traffic control must follow in order to dump fuel in anticipation of an emergency landing.

We request that your agency respond to the following questions by January 31, 2020. We also request that your agency keep us apprised of any developments that arise out of the investigation into the January 14, 2020 fuel dump by

Delta flight 89.

1. What are the scenarios when a pilot would be expected or justified in dumping fuel?

2. What are the scenarios when a pilot would be expected or justified to dump fuel over a populated area?

3. What are the procedures and regulations for controllers and for pilots regarding dumping fuel? Please include fuel dumping procedures for flight crews, technical information regarding altitude at which fuel dumping should occur, and any information regarding lasting effects of fuel dispersed over a given area.

4. Were those procedures and regulations followed by both the controllers and the pilots regarding the January 14 fuel dump by Delta flight 89?

5. Is there a required or preferred area in the vicinity of LAX for the dumping of fuel in anticipation of an emergency landing?

a. If yes, how are these areas determined?

b. What type of consideration is given to any population density within the areas identified for use for fuel dumping?

6. If an aircraft dumps fuel over a populated area during an emergency, is the pilot required to inform air traffic control?

7. In a situation where air traffic control knows that a fuel dump will occur over a populated area, is air traffic control required to warn the communities that may be impacted in order to allow them to take cover?

a. If yes, why were the communities not warned in this case?

b. Under current law, is FAA authorized to require notification of fuel dumps to communities that could be affected?

8. It is our understanding that the flight crew on flight 89, after



declaring an emergency, was asked if they needed to dump fuel before returning to LAX. The flight crew indicated at that time that they did not need to dump fuel. We now know that during the approach to LAX, the flight crew decided to initiate a fuel dump.

a. Why did the flight crew decide to dump fuel on approach to LAX despite initially declining to dump fuel when asked by air traffic control?

9. If an aircraft dumps fuel over a populated area during an emergency, is that air carrier required to contact any of the communities affected by the release?

a. What action, if any, is the air carrier expected to take to clean up the fuel and assist the affected communities following the fuel dump?

10. What was the flight path of flight 89 during the time period when the fuel was being dumped? Please include the cities and communities above which the fuel was dumped and the approximate altitudes of the plane for various locations along the flight path.

11. What are the lasting health and environmental impacts of the dumping and dispersal of fuel under the conditions in which this fuel dump occurred?

a. What actions can local communities and public health

and environmental officials take to minimize these impacts?

12. Are airlines required to file and/or disclose the chemical composition of the jet fuel used in domestic flights?

a. Please provide the safety data sheet (or equivalent disclosure of chemical composition) for the fuel used on board Delta flight 89, including any additives.

b. If any components of the fuel used by Delta are propriety, please provide a list of substances and/or chemicals approved for use as jet fuel additives, as well as any substances and/or chemicals specifically banned from use as jet fuel additives.

13. What is the standard FAA procedure and timeline for investigating an incident such as the January 14, 2020 Delta flight 89 fuel dump?

We appreciate your prompt response to this incident which has affected the health and safety of our communities.

Sincerely,

LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD
Member of Congress
MAXINE WATERS
Member of Congress
NANETTE DIAZ BARRAGAN
Member of Congress
LINDA T. SANCHEZ
Member of Congress

Downey cuts public comment time at city council meetings

The City Council votes to roll back the time allotted for public comment from 5 minutes to 3.

By Alex Dominguez
Staff Writer

DOWNEY - The Downey City Council on Tuesday voted to decrease public comment time by two minutes.

Council meeting attendees will now have three minutes to speak during non-agenda, consent calendar, public hearings, and administrative report periods each, as opposed to the five minutes speakers were previously allotted.

This is the second change to occur to Downey's public comment policy in less than a year, as the council decided last year to give all speakers one opportunity to speak for the entire consent agenda, as opposed to each item that may be pulled for discussion.

The changes are widely believed to be in direct reaction to Armando Herman, whose rants during council meetings are often profane and include racial and homophobic slurs.

This behavior was no different on Tuesday, with Herman antagonizing and butting heads with both Mayor Blanca Pacheco and City Attorney Yvette M. Abich Garcia multiple times throughout

the night, resulting in several warnings but no ejections.

There were a handful of people in attendance Tuesday who spoke against the time cut, describing it as a "slippery slope" and insinuating that it was an infringement on First Amendment rights and freedom of speech.

Herman's role in the issue is not commonly spoken about candidly or openly by members of the council, especially while in a meeting setting.

However, that changed when Councilmember Sean Ashton - who ultimately voted in opposition of the change - addressed Herman from his seat, suggesting that Herman "abused" his right to speak.

"I'm okay with people coming here and talking; I want to hear it because I don't know everything...I think having these moments help," said Ashton. "I feel bad because we have one person abusing that privilege to waste time."

Councilman Alex Saab, who also voted against the time reduction, said he needed to "veer on the side of giving residents more time, than less," and in response to Ashton's comments, warned against "bending over 113,00 residents for one person."

"As painful as it is sometimes to hear certain



Armando Herman speaks at a Downey City Council meeting.

people say certain things that we all cringe, the fact is we have to balance the right of the residents' right to free speech versus efficiency," said Saab. "I don't think that limiting or reducing the time is going to make that much difference in efficiency."

"I think what's happening is those who support it may be thinking - and understandably so, at times - thinking that this is going to change the type or content of the speech, when in fact it's going to make no difference."

Mayor Pacheco, Mayor Pro Tem Claudia Frometa, and Councilman Rick Rodriguez all voted in favor of reducing public comment time.

Frometa disagreed that the council would be encroaching on residents' right to speak.

"I don't think we are limiting [residents]; I think we are being reasonable in our approach," said Frometa. "I think that we continue to support freedom of speech, and we want to continue to serve our residents by inviting them to be a part of the process."

Frometa added that the council could allot more time to a speaker if needed.

"It is at the discretion of the council. We can give more time depending on the item," said Frometa. "We have that liberty."

Norwalk restaurant grades

Taco Bell / Pizza Hut Express
11005 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 1/15/20
Grade: **A**

Hole in One Donut Plus
11702 Imperial Hwy
Date Inspected: 1/15/20
Grade: **A**

Domino's
10948 Imperial Hwy.
Inspected: 1/15/20
Grade: **A**

KFC
10905 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 1/15/20
Grade: **A**

Del Taco
10644 Alondra Blvd.
Date Inspected: 1/3/20
Grade: **A**

Church's Chicken
15816 s Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/26/19
Grade: **A**

7 Eleven
14835 S Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/20/19
Grade: **A**

McDonalds
11053 Rosecrans Ave.
Date Inspected: 12/17/19
Grade: **A**

Subway
10995 Rosecrans Ave.
Date Inspected: 12/17/19
Grade: **A**

Pizza Hut
11006
Date Inspected: 12/17/19
Grade: **A**

Subway
15925 Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/17/19
Grade: **A**

Randy's Donuts
10989 Rosecrans Ave.
Date Inspected: 12/17/19
Grade: **A**

Target
10600 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/16/19
Grade: **A**

Target Cafe
10600 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/16/19
Grade: **A**

Starbucks (Target)
10600 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/16/19
Grade: **A**

Home Style Donuts
12840 Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/16/19
Grade: **A**

Spoon Me Latin Delights
14431 Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/16/19
Grade: **A**

Extra Fresh Drinking Water
14507 Pioneer Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/13/19
Grade: **A**

Del Taco
10644 Alondra Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/13/19
Grade: **B**

Circle K
11405 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/12/19
Grade: **A**

Keystone Lounge
11459 Imperial Hwy.
Date Inspected: 12/12/19
Grade: **A**

Zury's Raspados
11405 Firestone Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/11/19
Grade: **A**

Tutti Frutti
12417 Norwalk Blvd.
Date Inspected: 12/11/19
Grade: **A**

Weekend at a Glance

Friday 80°

Saturday 82°

Sunday 70°

THINGS TO DO



Painting in Pajamas

Saturday - Norwalk Cultural Arts Center, 5 pm

Enjoy a memorable evening painting with your child, and you can do so in your comfiest pajamas. Fee is \$14 per person and includes instruction, painting materials and pizza.



Cheer & Dance Showcase

Saturday - Downey High, 10 am to 2 pm

Hosted by Downey High cheer, watch as cheer, dance, pep, and flag teams from around Southern California perform.



Journey Tribute

Saturday - Whittier Community Theatre, 7 pm

DSB, described as "the world's greatest tribute" to the music of Journey, performs live. Tickets start at \$25.



Monster Mash Exhibit

Saturday - SugarMynt Gallery in South Pasadena, 7-10 pm

Opening reception for Monster Mash, a classic Hollywood monster exhibition celebrating Frankenstein, Dracula, The Mummy, and other classics.



Engine Fest

Saturday - Camino Center Sports Park in San Juan Capistrano, 7:30-2

The 17th annual Engine Fest car show, featuring more than 400 hot rods, muscle cars, classics, vintage autos, imports, trucks, motorcycles, and "new car row." Plus food, vendors, disc dogs exhibition, and more.

TWEET OF THE WEEK

Last night was relatively quiet in the areas patrolled by Norwalk deputies. If you see anything suspicious, please do not hesitate to call Norwalk Station 562-863-8711. @NorwalkLASD



Twitter.com/DowneyPatriot

Bright Flame and Little Cinder

Short Stories

By Sharon Benson Smith
Contributor

My daughter, Tracy, was about seven or eight years old, and I thought we should do something special together.

One of the mothers on her Little League team suggested we join Indian Maidens. The purpose of the program was to promote mother-daughter bonding and to expand our friendship base. I thought it was a great idea, and Tracy was excited about it, so we signed up and committed to meeting with the group on a weekly basis.

Our first meeting assignment was to select our Indian names. One of the mothers brought a list of possible names. After considerable thought, I came up with the names of Bright Flame and Little Cinder, and Tracy liked them too. She was the cutest Little Cinder.

Next, we had to select our group colors, a costume pattern, the fabric, etc. We chose the color of rust and

soft suede-like material.

We met at one of the homes which alternated each week with the mother-daughter hosts providing a snack and a beverage for the tribe.

For the first several meetings we concentrated on getting our costumes and all the accessories completed. The pattern was short-sleeved and had a fringed hem ending mid-calf for the moms. It was "topped off" with a head band and a feather.

The girls had their assignments of stringing the colorful, beaded necklace we wore. The costumes were completely handmade except for the moccasins, and were worn to each meeting.

Later meetings included planning fun tribal activities and weekend getaways. Our first weekend outing was in Big Bear when it had snowed and the girls had a great time making a snowman, having snowball fights, and sliding on makeshift sleds of

cardboard. We slept on bunks in the cabin, kept a fire going in the fireplace, told stories, and we ate all our meals together after saying grace.

As Halloween approached, the tribe decided we would enter the costume contest at the local YWCA in competition with other tribes in the Whittier area. I decided we would go as flappers. So, I got busy with the project at hand.

I had a white dress so all I had to do was add the rows of fringe. Tracy's dress, however, was another story. I had to make it from scratch, and I am not a seamstress by any stretch of the imagination. I'm sure I consulted my seamstress sister, Donna.

I made matching hats and a fringed shawl. I bought white stockings, white shoes, and silver necklaces; voila, we were ready for Halloween. As usual, my mother was invited to come along.

When we arrived at the gym, Mom was asked to be a judge, as one of the volunteers couldn't make it. Mom was happy and willing to help out. They pinned a badge on her blouse, designating her a judge, and the contest was under way.

Lo and behold, Bright Flame and Little Cinder were in the finals. When it came time for Mom to vote, she had to recuse herself saying, "Oh no, it wouldn't be fair because "those flappers are mine." I'll never forget those words, and writing them now, over 45 years later, once again reminds me of how much I miss her in my life. Mom didn't vote, but "her flappers" won the contest.

Speaking of a judge brings

Flip Wilson to mind. He was a black comedian having his own variety show, and made guest appearances on Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In. In addition to his famous "here come da judge" line, he always included a cameo part on "Geraldine."

He was dressed like a sexy female, wore a wig, sauntered with hands on hips, then changed his voice and chose his words accordingly. Other catch phrases attributed to his comedic side are: "the devil made me do it" and "what you see is what you get."

He was so hilarious that we eagerly looked forward to his weekly show. That memory never ceases to bring me a smile, and I think we need more comedy in our lives.

Flip Wilson was a great comedian. My mom was a great mother, and both were taken from this world way too young and much too soon.

Years later, when she was sixteen, Tracy worked at the Show Off Dress Shop in Puente Hills. The manager asked the salesgirls to wear costumes on Halloween, and Tracy wore my flapper outfit from our Indian Maiden days.

It had me thinking, and not for the first time, that time really does fly. Those were wonderful and memorable days of mother-daughter bonding and for making new friends.

Every now and then, Tracy and I recall the good times we had during the period of Bright Flame and Little Cinder. We also often recall mom/Grandma B and how proud she was to be asked to be a judge then having to recuse herself from voting saying, "Oh no, it wouldn't be fair because "those flappers are mine."

Sharon Benson Smith 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.

My adventures in Holland

By Maria Zeeman
Contributor

This year I am 50 years in the USA. I came originally on vacation with my two young daughters but I liked the weather and the people so much that I tried to get a job. I got one easily and it paid twice as much as I was making in Montreal, Canada. So I decided to stay.

Today I had to celebrate my decision and decided to take a trip to my parents' home land in Holland. I also have a wonderful son who decided to come with me for the first week. I stayed 2 1/2 weeks.

I appreciated that very much because of some health problems I just recovered from. We had a wonderful flight with the Dutch airline KLM. The stewards were very nice. The flight was smooth and the food was excellent.

Letty, my sister, picked us up by train. Parking is so difficult and the trains are perfect. It stopped in Castricum, where Letty lives, and about 10 minutes' walk from her house, but her car was parked at the station.

She lives in a nice small village close by the ocean. It was rainy weather. My son, Guillermo, wanted to explore the surroundings and took her bike and raincoat and explored the beautiful city and pastures. She has a big Catholic church on the corner which rings their bells often which was very nice.

The next day he went to Amsterdam to visit his many nephews and nieces. He had such a good time that he only came back the next day.

We went to the beach. It was deserted because of the weather, but very nice and clean. Letty and he had a long walk. I sat in a restaurant looking out drinking my favorite wine.

Letty's oldest son, Gert, was going to celebrate his 60th birthday. He lives in a different province, about 45 minutes away by car from Letty's. We drove in Letty's car which is a small car and still has a stick shift. The roads are very narrow in comparison with ours and I wondered many times if we would hit any walking, bicycling people or cars. They have few traffic lights, mostly round squares to go around.

I was so glad I never had to drive. Besides, the trains are so convenient and go all day that

most travel via train, bike or just walk. They do all their shopping and more via bike. I used to ride a bike too here in California but only for pleasure and not anymore.

Gert's 60th party was great. There were more than 60 people, mostly family and friends. He invited his exes and some other people that I hadn't seen for a long time. That was so nice.

All the cousins were present and Gmo had a blast. We danced and danced. They showed photos and short videos from their life and more. I even saw some from us and my late parents. It all was perfect.

The next day Gert took us to Arnhem where a cruise was waiting to take Letty and I on the River Rein through Holland and past Germany to Keulen. This is a beautiful, small place where they had all Christmas decoration and souvenirs and more. They also had a nice tram that took us all thru the town.

It's a very picturesque town on the Rein with a giant bridge. We saw a beautiful giant Church. Inside sooo high with beautiful altars and statues and colored windows. Then we went to a chocolate factory and walked over the giant big bridge over the Rein. Our cruise had anchored on the other side. It was a very long walk, but the view was so pretty, that we endured it.

We had the whole day in Keulen and went back during the night. It was a calm way back. All the food and snacks and more were included. They even had a good piano player that sang as well. The cabin was also very good with a covered balcony. It rained a lot, but not hard, with some sun in between. It was all picturesque, beautiful and fun. All help and passengers (195) were very friendly.

Back home we spent a day in Amsterdam, souvenir-hunting. But I had only one small suitcase and one bag so I couldn't take too much with me. I had to bring some Dutch cheese, cookies and chocolate with me by request of my family at home. Then we visited my nieces and their family at two homes near Amsterdam and then went back to Letty's.

We still had to go play bridge with her friends, swim with exercises and bio dancing in between. I loved it all. Letty is two years younger than me, but she still plays tennis, exercises every day 40 minutes, once a week does that bio dancing exercises and plays bridge a lot. In spite or because she had polio as a small child, she has fought to be as normal or better than anyone else even though her left leg is thinner, shorter and weaker. She also eats very healthy and is thinner than me. I always have admired her and still do.

I sincerely hope that we will still make the next family reunion in 2021 in the Laurentians province of Quebec in Canada.

Maria Zeeman 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 best way to protect yourself from coronavirus is to wash your hands

By Elisabeth Rosenthal

Americans are watching with alarm as a new coronavirus spreads in China and cases pop up in the United States. They are barraged with information about what kinds of masks are best to prevent viral spread. Students are handing out masks in Seattle. Masks have run out in Brazos County, Tex.

Hang on.

I've worked as an emergency room physician. And as a New York Times correspondent in China, I covered the SARS outbreak in 2002 and 2003 during which a novel coronavirus first detected in Guangdong sickened more than 8,000 people and killed more than 800. My two children attended elementary school in Beijing throughout the outbreak.

Here are my main takeaways from that experience for ordinary people on the ground:

1. Wash your hands frequently.

2. Don't go to the office when you are sick. Don't send your kids to school or day care when they are ill, either.

Notice I didn't say anything about masks. Having a mask with you as a precaution makes sense if you are in the midst of an outbreak, as I was when out reporting in the field during those months. But wearing it constantly is another matter. I donned a mask when visiting hospitals where SARS patients had been housed. I wore it in the markets where wild animals that were the suspected source of the outbreak were being butchered, blood droplets flying. I wore it in crowded enclosed spaces that I couldn't avoid, like airplanes and trains, as I traveled to cities involved in the outbreak, like Guangzhou and Hong Kong. You never know if the guy coughing and sneezing two rows ahead of you is ill or just has an allergy.

But outdoors, infections don't spread well through the air. Those photos of people walking down streets in China wearing masks are dramatic but uninformed. And remember if a mask has, perchance, intercepted viruses that would have otherwise ended up in your body, then the mask is contaminated. So, in theory, to be protected maybe you should use a new one for each outing.

The simple masks are better than nothing, but not all that

effective, since they don't seal well. For anyone tempted to go out and buy the gold standard, N95 respirators, note that they are uncomfortable. Breathing is more work. It's hard to talk to people. On one long flight at the height of the outbreak, on which my few fellow passengers were mostly epidemiologists trying to solve the SARS puzzle, many of us (including me) wore our masks for the first couple of hours on the flight. Then the food and beverage carts came.

Though viruses spread through droplets in the air, a bigger worry to me was always transmission via what doctors call "fomites," infected items. A virus gets on a surface — a shoe or a doorknob or a tissue, for example. You touch the surface and then next touch your face or rub your nose. It's a great way to acquire illness. So after walking in the animal markets, I removed my shoes carefully and did not take them into the hotel room. And of course I washed my hands immediately.

Remember, by all indications SARS, which killed about 10 percent of those infected, was a deadlier virus than the new coronavirus circulating now. So keep things in perspective.

Faced with SARS, many foreigners chose to leave Beijing or at least to send their children back to the United States. Our family stayed, kids included. We wanted them with us and didn't want them to miss school, especially during what would be their final year in China. But equally important in making the decision was that the risk of getting SARS on an airplane or in the airport seemed greater than being smart and careful while staying put in Beijing.

And we were: I stopped taking my kids to indoor playgrounds or crowded malls or delicious but densely packed neighborhood Beijing restaurants. Out of an abundance of caution we canceled a family vacation to Cambodia — though my fear was less about catching SARS on the flight than that one of the kids would have a fever from an ear infection upon our return at a border screening, and would be stuck in a prolonged quarantine in China. We instead took a vacation within China, where we carried masks with us but didn't use them except on a short domestic flight.

In time, during the SARS outbreak, the government shut down theaters and schools in Beijing, as it is doing now in many Chinese cities because these viruses are more easily transmitted in such crowded places.

But there was also a lot of irrational behavior: Entering a village on the way to a hike near the Great Wall, our car was stopped by locals who had set up a roadblock to check the temperature of all passengers. They used an oral thermometer that was only minimally cleaned after each use. What a great way to spread a virus.

The International School of Beijing, where my children were students, was one of the few in the capital — perhaps the only one — that stayed open throughout the SARS outbreak, though the classes were emptier, since so many kids had departed to their home countries. It was a studied but brave move, since a parent at the school had gotten SARS at the very beginning of the outbreak on a flight back from Hong Kong. She recovered fine, but it was close to home and families were scared.

The school instituted a bunch of simple precautionary policies: a stern note to parents reminding them not to send a child to school who was sick and warning them that students would be screened for fevers with ear thermometers at the school door. There was no sharing of food at lunch. The teacher led the kids in frequent hand washing throughout the day at classroom sinks, while singing a prolonged "hand washing song" to ensure they did more than a cursory pass under the faucet with water only.

If a family left Beijing and came back, the child would have to stay at home for an extended period before returning to class to make sure they hadn't caught SARS elsewhere.

With those precautions in place, I observed something of a public health miracle: Not only did no child get SARS, but it seemed no student was sick with anything at all for months on end. No stomach bugs. No common colds. Attendance was more or less perfect.

The World Health Organization declared the SARS outbreak contained in July 2003. But, oh, that those habits persisted. The best first-line defenses against SARS or the new coronavirus or most any virus at all are the ones that Grandma and common sense taught us, after all.

Elisabeth Rosenthal, a former New York Times correspondent, is the editor in chief of Kaiser Health News and the author of "An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back."

GOP senators' professed anger phony as can be

By Jeff Robbins

Rep. Adam Schiff, lead House manager of the impeachment case against President Donald Trump, delivered a tour de force last week, painfully, crushingly detailing the president's obvious guilt and decimating his defenses. It's fair to say, however, that this did not go over all that agreeably with Senate Republicans who, determined to sidestep the evidence of Trump's abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, opted for phony professions of outrage at being called to account.

Leading the charge was Sen. Susan Collins, whose depressing forfeiture of a once-meaningful reputation for independence has led former admirers to shake their heads at what fear of a Republican primary can do to a person's conscience. Collins claimed to be appalled at Congressman Jerry Nadler's use of the phrase "cover-up" to describe conduct by Senate Republicans that can't easily be described otherwise.

Trump's "defense" of the mountain of evidence against him is the patently false assertion that none of it is "first-hand." But Republicans have not merely looked the other way at Trump's blanket order that the documents reflecting his conduct be withheld and the aides to whom he gave orders be gagged; presented with a simple request that the documents be turned over and the aides be required

to tell the truth, they made the request impossible. For his part, the president does not hide the fact that he is hiding the facts.

"We're doing very well," Trump boasted about the impeachment proceedings last week. "(H)onestly, we have all the material. They don't have the material."

Collins is upset about the phrase "cover-up." Too bad. That is precisely what it is, and her objection to a phrase that fits the GOP's conduct like a glove makes her look ridiculous. Evidently, in the United States Senate, which Collins claims to revere, it is now permissible to block the truth and impermissible to speak it.

But it wasn't only the apt use of "cover-up" that Collins and colleagues find offensive. It was Schiff's reference to a CBS News report that said Republican senators had been warned, "Vote against the president and your head will be on a pike." "That's not true," shouted Collins, and Alaska Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski complained, "That's where he lost me." Whether the White House used the word "pike" or "spear," there is no doubt that the message has been delivered — forcefully and repeatedly: If Republicans stand up to Trump, they will sleep with the fishes, politically speaking. "I talk to Republicans all the time, quietly, individually," said Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown on Friday. "(M)any of them tell me that Trump's a liar ... but they're all afraid of him." Republicans'

professions of outrage at reports that they are afraid of Trump are, quite simply, as phony as a \$3 bill.

Indeed, "phony" is the word that rushes to mind when listening to Trump's defenses, and one hardly knows which among them is the most laughable. One potential prize winner: Trump's contention that he had not demanded a quid pro quo from Ukraine. Knowing that he was guilty of the demand, he uttered the words "no quid pro quo" in a conversation in which he expressly confirmed that he was demanding a quid pro quo. This bit of idiocy would not survive scrutiny by fifth graders. "In other words," observes Brown University constitutional scholar Corey Brettschneider, "if the president is robbing a bank and says, 'I am not robbing a bank,' we should believe him."

Despite the hokum and the fraud served up by the White House's smoke-blowing machine, polls show that most Americans get what is going on here. Two surveys released before Schiff buried Trump found that 51% want Trump removed right now. Republican senators will no doubt succeed in preventing that. They are unlikely, however, to prevent a verdict from being rendered against them by history.

Jeff Robbins, a former assistant United States attorney and United States delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, was chief counsel for the minority of the United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

Bloomberg is showing Democrats a good time

By Froma Harrop

Democrats could use some cheering up now that their conventional politicians are locked in fierce ideological battle. The moderate Democratic majority fears that an aggressive left could saddle them with a zombie candidate sure to lose to President Donald Trump. That person could also cost them control of the House by hurting down-ballot Democrats in hard-won swing districts.

Oh, happy day, then, that former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg is tapping his vast fortune to make defeating Trump central to his mission. Bloomberg is vying for the Democratic nomination, and his candidacy is gaining strength. But he's now focused on getting under Trump's skin.

Watching Bloomberg troll Trump should be a mood lifter for

Democrats, independents and many Republicans desperate to end Trump's reign of incompetence and all-around nastiness. Where do we start?

How about Bloomberg's brilliant decision to buy an ad during "Fox & Friends," Trump's premier safe space? Trump blew his top. He went on a not-entirely-coherent tirade, something about Bloomberg playing the other Democrats for "clowns" and how, in the end, he will "consider himself to be the biggest clown of them all."

After Trump bought a one-minute ad to air during the Super Bowl, Bloomberg purchased his own \$10 million minute. It will undoubtedly call the president corrupt, a danger to national security, an environmental Neanderthal, a killer of the people's health care, a failure in business, mentally unstable or some combination of the above.

That move unleashed another attack tweet from Trump, which Bloomberg met with mockery: "Glad to see you're watching our ads."

Of course, Bloomberg has bought airtime in West Palm Beach, Florida. That way, Trump won't miss his ads while at Mar-a-Lago.

Dropping \$1 billion on the 2020 campaign would hardly make a dent in Bloomberg's net worth of around \$60 billion. The founder of a financial services empire, Bloomberg has recruited thousands of highly professional staffers focused on data. And they're everywhere. Bloomberg has 80 staffers in North Carolina and 60 in Arizona alone.

Bloomberg is not blessed with the arresting speaking style of Trump or Bernie Sanders. Then again, he got himself elected mayor three times in a city of waving arms and yelling. And he did so running first as a Republican, then as an independent and finally as a Democrat. You can call that wide appeal.

Bloomberg is now framing economic inequality as one of the great challenges of our age. He's been a tiger on global warming, having served as United Nations special envoy for climate action. And he's for giving all Americans the option of signing up for government-run health coverage. Good progressive stuff.

While other candidates are focused on a sliver of very liberal voters in Iowa and New Hampshire, Bloomberg is going to Rust Belt Ohio and soybean Minnesota. He's been campaigning in Texas with Judge Judy at his side, thus reaching the regular folks who watch daytime television. He's advertising in Pennsylvania, Utah, Oklahoma and Idaho.

A late entry into the campaign, Bloomberg is placing his bets on the Super Tuesday vote on March 3. That's when 40 percent of the convention delegates will be chosen. But he plans to keep spending whoever the Democrats nominate.

Do I like the idea of a rich person inserting so much money into an election? I do not. I am grateful, however, that unlike another prominent rich New Yorker, Bloomberg is on the side of good. And he has single-handedly canceled Trump's money advantage.

To borrow from my Republican friends in 2016, this will be a Flight 93 election. It is absolutely essential for the survival of the republic we love that Trump be shown the gangplank from the ship of state.

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

Gas tax

Dear Editor:

Thank you to the intelligent, clueless, blind people who voted for the extra road and bridges gas tax.

So how do you like driving on your smooth, bumpless, pothole-less road? Can you actually see your extra gas tax money at work? Sure you can.

And by the way, I have a nice bridge for you to buy. Just send me your money. Trust me!

**Larry Arellano
Norwalk**

Peace Prize for Kobe

Dear Editor:

The sadness over the death of eight people plus Kobe Bryant has somewhat mitigated because of the accolades he has received posthumously.

If justice was to prevail, Kobe should be nominated and awarded a Nobel Peace Prize to recognize all he did for humanity.

**Jorge Montero
Downey**

The Norwalk Patriot STAFF

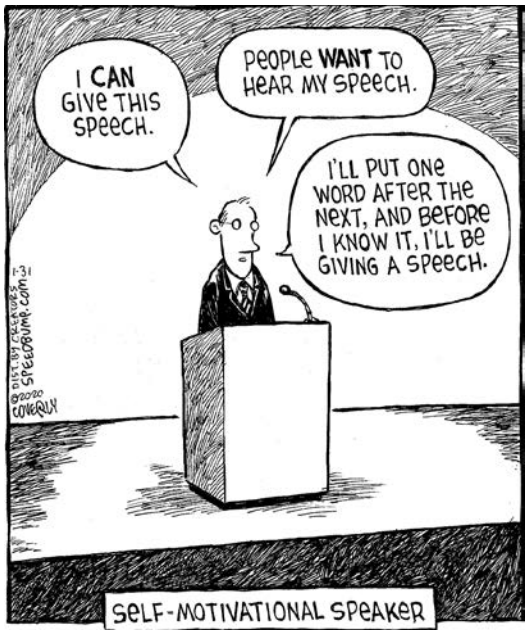
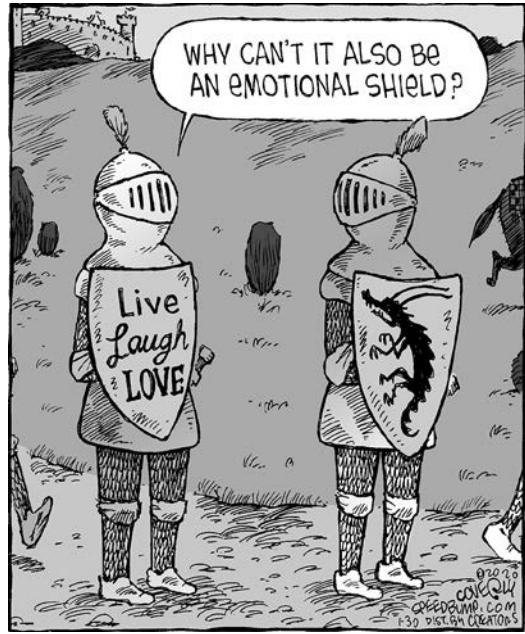
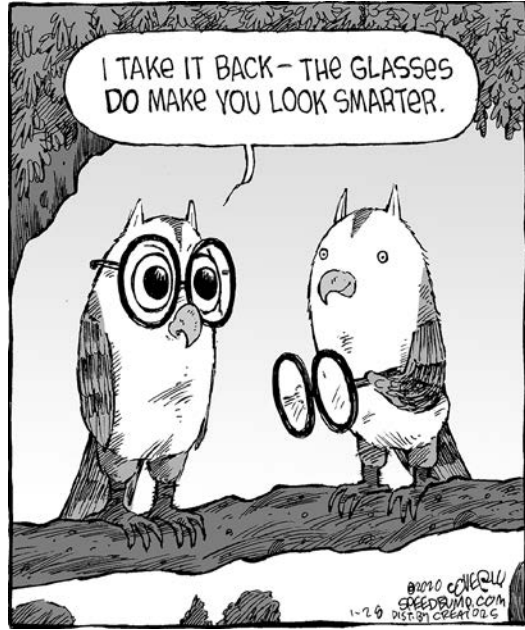
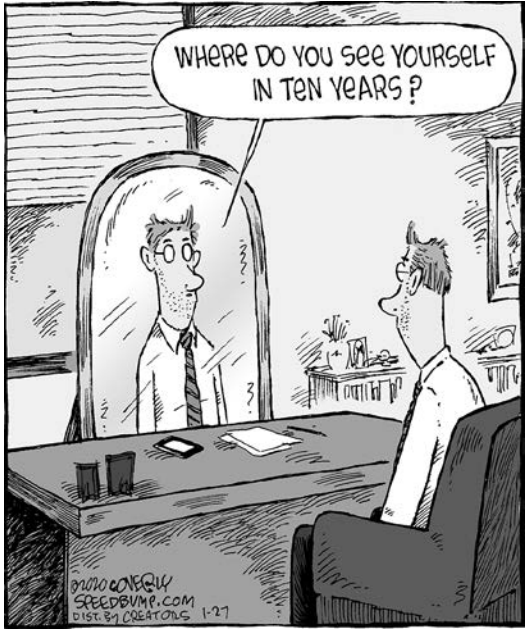
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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...

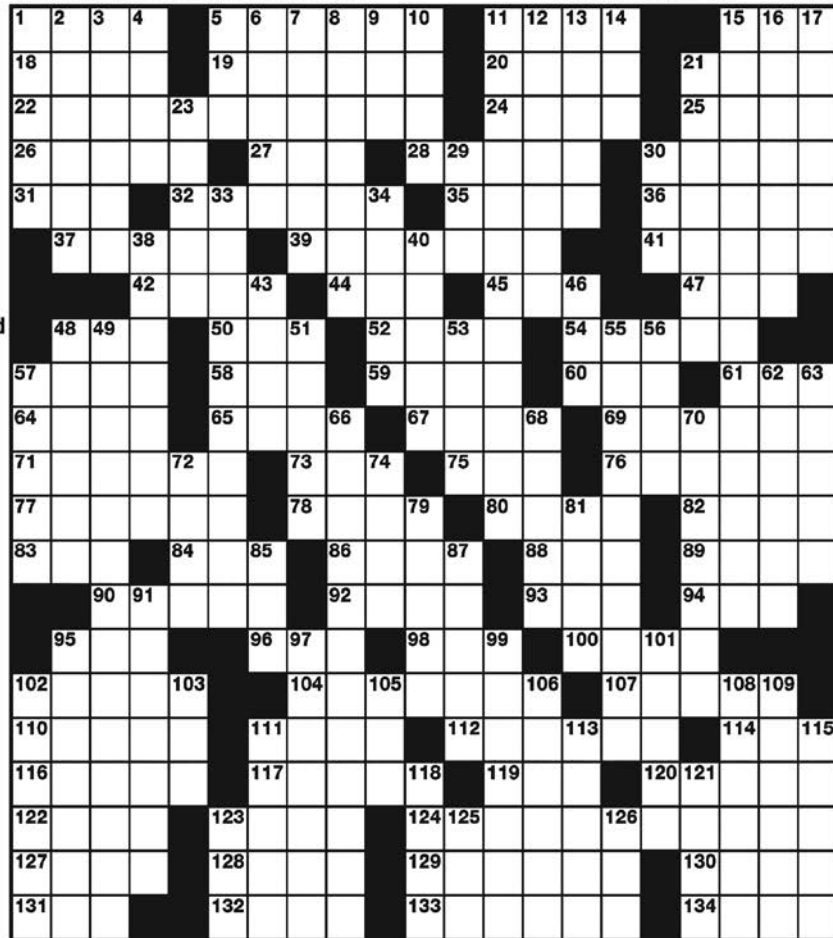
Jan. 31, 1865: The House of Representatives passed a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery.
1919: Jackie Robinson, who made history in 1947 by becoming the first black baseball player in the major leagues, was born.
1949: The first TV daytime soap opera, "These Are My Children," was broadcast by the NBC station in Chicago.
1950: President Harry S. Truman announced that he had ordered development of the hydrogen bomb.
1990: McDonald's Corp. opened its first fast-food restaurant in Moscow.

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
STEERING COMMITTEE: Film guys with a shared past
by Fred Piscop

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You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at his e-mail address: StanXwords@aol.com. Or write him at P.O. Box 69, Massapequa Park, NY 11762. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you'd like a reply.



NORWALK HAPPENINGS

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.

Smarty Pants Storytime, 10:30 - 11 am. Let's get ready for school! Enjoy books, songs, rhymes, and movement while learning school readiness skills and having fun. Advance registration is required. For ages 2 - 5 with an adult caregiver. Alondra Library, 11949 Alondra Blvd.

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.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Become a Zinester, 4-5 pm. Create a personal zine, a do-it-yourself mini-magazine reflective of you. We'll supply the materials. You supply the inspiration. For ages 12-18. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Legal Research Class: Divorce & Separation 1:30 - 2:15 pm. Learn about the legal process for separation and divorce, including what to expect in court, and resources available to help. For Adults 18+. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Highway.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Pet First Aid Class 1 - 2 pm. Do you know how to help your pets during an emergency? Pets are part of our family and being prepared creates confidence and eliminates stress. The Emma Zen Foundation will teach you all about pet first aid. For Adults 18+. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Highway.

Coffee with a Cop, 6-7:30 pm. Share coffee and conversation with the dedicated men and women who patrol our streets. Panera Bread, 12531 Imperial Hwy

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.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Mother and Son Dance: To the Moon and Back, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Mother, aunts or grandmothers; share a memorable evening with the special boy in your life. You'll enjoy dancing, finger foods, games and crafts. Any adult child combination is welcome. Tickets must be purchased in advance at www.norwalk.org/city-hall/departments/recreation-park-services

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10

Heart String Art, 4-5 pm. This retro craft requires very few materials to form a beautiful heart-shaped design. Great project for beginners and fun to create. Just in time for Valentine's Day For ages 12-18. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Hwy.

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.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Street Foods of Hong Kong 12 - 1 pm. Join us for a cooking demonstration by Chef Phoebe Chow. You'll learn about the street foods in Hong Kong and best of all, you'll get to sample the food! For Adults 18+. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Highway.

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.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Lit Wits Book Club: I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika Sanchez 6:30 - 7:30 pm. Perfect Mexican daughters never abandon their family. But Julia is not your perfect Mexican daughter. That was Olga's role. A tragic accident leaves Olga dead and Julia left behind to reassemble the shattered pieces of her family. For Adults 18+. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Highway

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Jewelry Making Class 4:30 - 5:30 pm. Learn about the subject of beading and create your own personalized piece of jewelry! Advance registration is required. Please visit or call the library to sign up: 562.868.0775. For Adults 18+. Norwalk Library, 12350 Imperial Highway.

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 Peabrain, 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.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Quartermania, 11 am to 3 pm. Support Norwalk Woman's Club scholarships while you shop, and bid on items for 1, 2, or 3 quarters. Join us for a fast-paced and fun afternoon where everyone is a winner! \$20 ticket price includes lunch. Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex

Email calendar listings to eric@thedowneypatriot.com.

Norwalk gets 'F' for anti-smoking efforts

NORWALK - Norwalk has been issued a failing grade by the American Lung Association for its efforts — or lack thereof — to curb tobacco use in the community.

The lung association graded every California city as part of its "State of Tobacco Control" annual report, released Wednesday.

Norwalk received an "F" grade along with other local cities, including Downey, Whittier and La Mirada.

Huntington Park, which has extensive regulations on the books that limit where cigarettes can be smoked within city limits, received an "A."

"The purpose of the [report] is to increase public knowledge about local laws that protect residents from the deadly toll of tobacco and to encourage local leadership to take action where improvement is needed," the association wrote in the report.

"Local elected officials can, and should, take steps to protect residents from tobacco and secondhand smoke."

Tobacco remains the nation's leading cause of preventable death and disease, killing an estimated 480,000 people each year, according to the report.

SEAACA drops prices

DOWNEY - SEAACA is dropping the price of pet adoptions to only \$14 for a one-day adoption event Feb. 8.

The discounted price applies to cats ages 8 weeks and older, and dogs ages 1 year and older.

The \$14 adoption fee includes spay/neuter, microchip, first set of vaccinations, and flea treatment.

SEAACA will be open Feb. 8 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Enrollment opens for dual language program

SOUTH WHITTIER - South Whittier School District's Dual Language Immersion Program is now open for enrollment for their 2020-2021 school year.

South Whittier implemented a Dual Language Immersion Program that began in the 2019-20 school year. The district offers a kindergarten class at Howard J. McKibben Elementary and a kindergarten and transitional Kindergarten class at Los Altos.

"The opening of our Dual Immersion program has already positively impacted our district," Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, Martha Mestanza-Rojas, stated.

"Our original plan was to open two Kindergarten classes for the 2019-2020 school year, however, the demand and interest were so great there was a need to open an additional Kindergarten class and a Transitional Kindergarten class at Los Altos."

The Dual Language Immersion Program consists of classes that are a 90/10 two-way immersion program. Each class has the same number of native English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students. The teachers are all highly qualified and state certified to teach in two languages.

This 90/10 program model has been shown to have a strong impact on student success. Students tend to achieve higher levels of literacy in both languages and higher levels of academic achievement than those in an English-only instruction model. The model also closes the achievement gap faster and students achieve higher levels of oral language and literacy in the targeted language.

To enroll please visit: <https://enrollment.swhittier.k12.ca.us>

Downey man gets 10 years for robberies

DOWNEY - A Downey man was sentenced this week to 120 months in federal prison for committing four armed robberies of GameStop video game stores in Los Angeles and Orange counties that resulted in the theft of more than \$132,000 in merchandise and cash.

Frederick Lopez Jr., 28, was sentenced by United States District Judge Stephen V. Wilson, who also ordered him to pay \$132,300 in restitution.

Lopez pleaded guilty in August 2019.

Between August 2018 and October 2018, Lopez robbed GameStop stores in Lynwood, Rowland Heights, West Covina and Brea. Lopez entered the stores at night, sometimes accompanied by another suspect, pulled a handgun from his waistband and used it to threaten store employees.

Lopez then would order GameStop employees to load game consoles and video games into store bags.

During the West Covina robbery on October 24, 2018, Lopez and his co-conspirator ordered the GameStop store clerks into the store's back room, demanded their cell phones and destroyed the store's telephone. Lopez then ordered one of the store's clerks to help carry stolen items out to a nearby minivan. Lopez used a .40-caliber handgun during this robbery.

In total, Lopez stole \$131,000 in merchandise and \$1,300 in cash during the four robberies. Lopez was arrested in March 2019.

"The serious nature of [Lopez's] offenses can hardly be overstated," prosecutors wrote in their sentencing memorandum. "Armed robberies such as these, where firearms are brandished at victims, also leave lasting substantial stress and trauma that victims remember for years, some for their entire lives."

The Norwalk Patriot



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Trying to make sense of Kobe Bryant's death

The loss of Los Angeles' sports icon is being felt internationally, including locally, where so many grew up idolizing him.

By William Odis Martin
Contributor

On Sunday morning, a little bit of greatness personified was snatched away from humanity in a fiery crash in the foggy hills of Calabasas.

Kobe Bean Bryant, 41, and his beautiful 13-year-old daughter, Gianna Marie, were among the nine people who tragically perished after the helicopter they occupied crashed minutes before 10 a.m.

It felt like the sun was even too sad to shine on LA that entire Sunday as Lakernation mourned its fallen star.

Kobe was an inspirational storyteller first and foremost. He encouraged future generations to pursue their passions and do what they love.

He made us all better by letting his undying drive to dominate the competition soak into the fabric of Los Angeles.

He made LA great again by showing us what being the best looks like. The City of Angels was divided in the early 90s, plagued by race wars, police brutality, and gang violence. It was Black versus White, Bloods versus Crips, but no colors were more important than the Purple and Gold once he took the floor.

Kobe was unafraid to be the outsider with a

competitive edge. "The Black Mamba", his on-court persona, was unafraid of speaking openly about being fueled by equal parts passion and anger. He was intolerant of laziness which is why he had a reputation of rubbing some of his teammates the wrong way, including "The Diesel," Shaquille O'Neal.

O'Neal is having a particularly difficult time, understandably, after the news of his "little brother's passing." He shared an emotional statement on TNT as he was reflecting on the situation.

All of the adjectives and descriptors that flood my mind whenever I think of Kobe supersedes the scope of sports.

Just a few: tenacious, talented, intelligent, explosive, high-flying, relentless, remorseless, entrepreneurial, forward thinking, life force, and a competitive leader. All qualities of an ideal superhero, and he was to many of us.

I loved that he was unashamed to be himself or to express his desires and manifest them into reality. It was this polarizing characteristic which allowed us all to taste what it felt like to be a champion.

He led his teammates, his family and the world by example and showed an entire generation how to harvest its talents with a strict regimen coupled with an unmatched commitment to excellence.

His long list of accolades includes: five NBA championships, two Olympic gold medals, two NBA Finals MVPs, 18 All Star appearances, one league MVP and an Academy Award.

Over his two decades of dedication to the Lakers, he sacrificed his body with his win or die



PHOTO COURTESY LA LAKERS

Kobe Bryant and his daughter, Gianna, were among nine people killed in a helicopter crash Sunday in Calabasas.

patented "Mamba Mentality" playing through injuries and illnesses.

Lakernation has flooded Figueroa and the surrounding streets of Staples Center, affectionately nicknamed the "House that Kobe Built," to pay their respects ever since the news broke (prematurely) by TMZ.

NBA players paid their respects by taking 8-second and 24-second violations to honor The Mamba. The NFL's Pro Bowl was dominated by Kobe coverage and football fans chanted his name to show their love for the Champion. The Grammy's were held in the Staples Center later

that night and it was as if the air was taken away from the entire event in wake of the tragic news.

Everyone is so affected by this major untimely loss. The only other event that could possibly compare was the assassination of President JFK, except this is an international tragedy.

We must remember in this time of deep sadness, he would want us all to continue to push ourselves, to continue to "put one foot in front of the other" and keep doing what we love because nothing should come in between us and our destiny if we pursue our passions with tenacity.

Kobe's death felt at Boys & Girls Club of Whittier

WHITTIER - The void left by the death of Kobe Bryant is being felt globally, including here in Whittier.

At the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier, staff members and children mourned not only a basketball player, but a role model with whom they shared an intimate connection.

In 2017, Bryant, launched the Mamba League, a youth basketball program for kids ages 8-10. Created in partnership with Nike, the Mamba League was unlike other youth sports programs that emphasized competition. Instead, the Mamba League aimed "to inspire girls and boys to learn basketball fundamentals and to build self-assuredness through an active, healthy lifestyle."

"This is more than just a competition," Bryant said in a press release at the program's launch. "The league is about empowering players and coaches and seeing kids increase their self-confidence as young leaders both on and off the court."

Bryant, the father of four girls, later said he was proud that nearly half of the league's roster was comprised of girls.

Bryant and Nike chose four underserved L.A. County communities to launch Mamba League: Nickerson Gardens in Watts, Monterey Park, Venice, and Whittier.

Oscar Hernandez, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Whittier, said the Mamba League was a popular program at his facility,

with about 80-100 students participating. Each elementary school from the Whittier City School District fielded a team of about 8-10 players.

Although Bryant never visited the Whittier Boys & Girls Club, kids got to meet him after advancing to a championship tournament.

"It was very exciting," Hernandez said. "Very seldom do kids get a chance to meet a superstar like him."

According to Hernandez, Whittier was the underdog in the championship game and trailed early. Bryant gathered the team at halftime for a pep talk.

"That was a special moment for the kids," said Hernandez. "They were really inspired by Kobe's words and his message of never giving up. They went on to win that game thanks to Kobe."

Hernandez said staff members at the Boys & Girls Club were struggling to cope with Bryant's passing but they remained thankful for his impact.

"Like everybody else, we were very fortunate to be part of Kobe's legacy and what he was able to create," said Hernandez. "He made so many dreams possible for kids. He gave a lot of opportunities to our kids. He's going to be missed."

Eric Pierce, editor



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