

Cerritos College grads get their degrees

■ Cerritos College hosts a drive-thru ceremony for graduates; one student walked away with 12 degrees and certificates.

NORWALK – Cerritos College celebrated the Class of 2021 with both virtual and drive-thru commencement ceremonies on May 27 and 28.

The college hosted its first ever “car-mencement” drive-thru celebration for graduates. Graduates traveled along a celebration route through a Blue Carpet Zone, received a diploma, and took pictures with friends and family. The college presented 4,500 associate degrees and skills certificates.

San Diego native Elizabeth Silva is an extraordinary graduate, having earned 12 degrees and certificates in three years. She earned all of her units online from her hometown virtually at the Norwalk-based campus.

Elizabeth’s degrees and certificates include both associate degrees and certificates in business administration, human resources management, international business, business management, retail management, and entrepreneurship, respectively.

Elizabeth knew education could change her life, but being a single parent of three, she delayed her education to support her family. When the college offered more online classes during the pandemic, Elizabeth was able to pursue the courses she wanted to earn more degrees and certificates. With the strong support from college counselors, her online education ran smoothly.

With a dozen new credentials, Elizabeth plans to transfer to a four-year university next year and one day start her own non-profit organization for homeless women and children.

“I am excited to have these 12 degrees and certificates under my belt and a good education. Having all-round business knowledge is important to achieve my goal,” said Elizabeth.

She will stay involved as a Falcon parent as her daughter attends Cerritos College Online, the college’s fully online degree and certificate program.

Simon Guerrero was a normal young man, but he engaged in criminal activities. In 2019, after being referred to the college’s Court2College (C2C) program by Judge Joseph Porras of the Norwalk Superior Court, Simon turned his life around.

The campus’ C2C program is a unique college and career bridge partnership with the L.A. County Department of Health Services Office of Diversion and Reentry, Norwalk Superior Courthouse and the L.A. County Department of Probation to re-direct first-time nonviolent felony offenders into college as a condition of their probation.

While he originally attended Cerritos College only to avoid prison time, Simon continued his studies on campus after his probation period. He earned an Automotive Mechanical Repair Manufacturer Specialist Certificate and passed the ASE Certification for Auto Electrical Specialists.

He volunteered at an auto repair shop to complete the requirements for an A.A. Degree in Automotive Technology. Today, Simon owns his own auto repair shop called L.A. Auto Service inc. in East Los Angeles.

He is the first in his family to earn a college degree and a certificate.

Norwalk gets first look at redeveloped Entertainment District

■ Norwalk’s Civic Center is poised to get a drastic makeover; residents are urged to provide feedback.

NORWALK – Los Angeles developer Primestor presented to the Norwalk City Council a plan Tuesday to redevelop the Civic Center to enhance Norwalk’s Entertainment District, which includes the Civic Center, AMC Theater, DoubleTree Hotel and surrounding restaurants and businesses.

The redevelopment of the 10 acres of city-owned property along Imperial Highway at Norwalk Boulevard, dubbed “The Walk,” will include enhanced open space, shops, restaurants and housing.

The intent of the project is to create a community-driven destination that meets the needs of residents, attracts additional economic development, promotes local hiring, and creates high-quality development in the center

of Norwalk.

Following the presentation, the council gave direction to Primestor to work closely with the community to solicit feedback on the redevelopment proposal. The community engagement efforts will commence immediately and include virtual meetings, door-to-door canvassing, online surveys, social media advertisement, and a project-specific website, among other efforts.

The City Council initially adopted the Economic Development Opportunities Plan on October 2, 2018 to identify areas within the city to promote economic development.

On February 5, 2019, the city entered into an exclusive negotiating agreement with Primestor Development, Inc. to undertake a feasibility study for the development of the area and explore viable opportunities to revitalize the 10-acre Civic Center lawn, surface parking lot and City Hall site.



In December 2019, the developer commenced their public input campaign by engaging in several outreach efforts but stopped in late 2020 due to the pandemic.

This development will further the city’s Strategic Plan Goal 3 (Norwalk 2021 Strategic Plan), to increase the number of business and associated jobs in the community. The 2021 Strategic Plan is available at www.norwalk.org/city-hall/departments/city-administration/2021-strategic-plan.

Additional information on Norwalk’s Economic Development Projects can be found at norwalkecondev.org.

Residents interested in obtaining more information can email publicaffairs@norwalkca.gov or call (562) 929-5319.

Norwalk girls wrestling is on the rise

■ The team qualified for its first ever CIF-SS team dual after winning the league championship.

By John M. Sherrard Contributor

NORWALK – Norwalk High School Girls Wrestling coach Bryan DeVries recently talked about the past year with his team. He summed it up in three little words, which said it all for 2020-21.

“What a season,” DeVries said. “These girls fought hard all season to fight through the negative stereotypes of being a female wrestler from peers.”

“We have created a family atmosphere. We look out for one another.”

It began last season with a program first – all five girls that were eligible, went to CIF. That increased to nine in 2021, with four freshmen, two sophomores, one junior and two seniors.

The season ended with a CIF-SS dual team invite, but the Lancers lost to Foothill, 69-12, which had five more weight classes.

“These high school girls are paving the way for future generations of female wrestlers,” DeVries added. “History was made this year with our first league championship.”

Both coach DeVries and assistant coach Frank Soto



Casey Altero, left, and Aryssa Eslava, right, who led the Norwalk High School girls wrestling team to victories in their final match, stand with teammates, from left, Ruby Hubbard, Celeste Ortega, Zitlali Sarmiento, Anahy Aguilar, Mia Farr and Liyah Salazar. (Photo by Keith Durlinger)

have led the way for the Lancer program, along with fourth grader and daughter Lylah DeVries.

Little Lylah has attended all of the meets and is affectionately known as Little coach.

“They have fought for equality for (themselves) and for the sport

of women’s wrestling,” DeVries said. “Oftentimes, basketball or football gets all the attention because they are a “TV Sport” and popular.

“At times our girls have felt disrespected by the lack of acknowledgement of our current

accomplishments. They continue to walk tall and wrestle for one another. We are a wrestling family and they have truly embodied a woman warrior mentality, while building confidence, self-discipline, a good work ethic,

Continued on page 2

Alvarez can stay in office despite criminal past, city says

By Alex Dominguez Staff Writer

DOWNEY – Councilwoman Catherine Alvarez can continue in her role on City Council despite her criminal history, including a conviction for welfare fraud, the city attorney said.

Concerns over Alvarez’s eligibility to sit with the city’s leadership rose earlier this year when the councilwoman’s criminal history was made public.

Alvarez is known to have convictions of welfare fraud, perjury, and stealing from the Michael’s craft store at the Downey Landing.

As such, the city hired an outside law firm to investigate and advise the council on the matter. At the council meeting on last week, City Attorney Yvette Abich Garcia gave the results of that investigation.

“After reviewing the matter, the city’s outside attorneys have concluded that Councilmember Alvarez may continue to serve on the Downey City Council,” said Garcia.

Alvarez was elected to the City Council last November.



Weekend at a Glance

Friday 77° ☁️

Saturday 77° ☁️

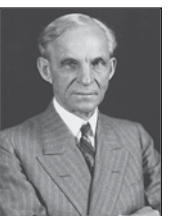
Sunday 73° ☁️

ON THIS DAY JUNE 4

1647: The English army seized King Charles I as part of the English Civil War.

1876: The United States’ first express train arrived in San Francisco, 83 hours and 39 minutes after leaving New York City.

1896: Henry Ford made a successful pre-dawn test run of his horseless carriage, called a quadricycle, through the streets of Detroit.



1912: Massachusetts became the first state to adopt a minimum wage law.

1919: Congress approved the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing citizens the right to vote regardless of their gender, and sent it to the states for ratification.

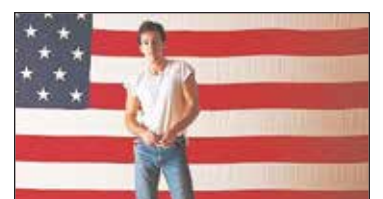
1939: The MS St. Louis, a ship carrying 963 Jewish refugees, was denied permission to land in Florida, in the United States, after already being turned away from Cuba. Forced to return to Europe, more than 200 of its passengers later died in Nazi concentration camps.

1942: The Battle of Midway began during World War II.

1954: Vietnam was granted independence from France.

1975: Gov. Jerry Brown signed the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act into law, giving farmworkers collective bargaining rights.

1984: The album “Born in the U.S.A.” by Bruce Springsteen was released.



1985: The Supreme Court struck down an Alabama law providing for a daily minute of silence in public schools.

1989: Chinese army troops stormed Tiananmen Square in Beijing to crush the pro-democracy movement; hundreds - possibly thousands - of people died.

2009: President Barack Obama addressed the Muslims of the world in a speech in Cairo, saying America has a common cause with Islam and never will be at war with the faith.

Birthdays

Fashion designer **Mossimo Giannulli** (58), “Party of Five” actor **Scott Wolf** (53), “ER” actor **Noah Wyle** (50), retired Angels outfielder **Darin Erstad** (47), actress **Angelina Jolie** (46), actor and comedian **Russell Brand** (46), model **Bar Refaeli** (36), and dancer and actress **Mackenzie Ziegler** (17).

Norwalk girls make school history by qualifying for team duals

Continued from page 1

self-resiliency, and mental toughness.”

Leading up to the historic CIF qualification was a crazy series of ups and downs in this unusual year.

After the season was salvaged and the usual winter start was delayed until February, the CIF-SS finally allowed schools to start practicing.

However, heavy COVID restrictions were put in place and teams had to start a conditioning program outdoors only.

In late March, actual practice was allowed, but still outdoors.

April 13 was moving day – actual practice inside the gymnasium.

It was followed the next day with the announcement all the athletes were waiting to hear.

“On April 14, the (Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District) officially announced we could have a season,” DeVries said.

Nine days later (April 23), after months of delays, Norwalk finally had its first dual.

The Lancers won both duals against Mayfair and Bellflower for the 2-0 Suburban League start, but then it happened – a positive test resulted in one of the male wrestlers in the program and everything came to a halt.

That happened just as the Lancers were preparing for their final dual (May 15) in league against La Mirada and were on the verge of the historic first title.

The district shut down the entire program (boys and girls).

“Our wrestlers’ spirits were down to say the least,” said DeVries, of the disappointment. We can’t go undefeated in league, we’re quarantined at home for 10 days, and can’t make history.”

La Mirada was informed that Norwalk would have to forfeit and eventually have to share a league title.

Then intra-district rival La Mirada did the unexpected.

“Their coach, who only had five wrestlers, knew we were going to

beat them based on our numbers and strength, felt it wasn’t right for us to have this moment taken from us,” explained DeVries. “To everyone’s surprise, they forfeited. That gave us the 3-0 record in league and claim to our first ever league title.” Or, so they thought.

Meanwhile, Norwalk applied for an At-Large berth (May 15) in the CIF team duals, since it would take place after the mandatory 10-day shut down.

Three days later (May 18), Norwalk was notified that it would not be league champions since there weren’t enough teams.

The Lancers still consider themselves as league champions for their first-ever accomplishments.

A day later, the team was informed it’s At-Large bid was accepted.

“This was the first time in school history that the girls wrestling qualified for team duals,” DeVries said. “Their spirits were instantly lifted and they began home workouts.”

The team resumed practice two days later and was informed that the positive COVID result was actually a false positive.

Five days later, Norwalk faced Foothill in the CIF team dual.

“The girls wrestled hard and every match was close,” DeVries said. “Foothill had a full team and we gave up 30 team points in forfeits, as they had 14 weight classes and we only had nine.”

CIF-SS Dual Results – Foothill 69, Norwalk 12

101 Lbs – Ruby Hubbard, freshman – L by pin

DeVries: It was her first year wrestling and wrestled hard. She has shown great improvement. She was taken down and pinned by foothill in the first round at the 1:26 minute mark.

106 Lbs – Forfeit

111 Lbs – Forfeit

116 Lbs – Liyah Salazar, junior – L by pin

DeVries: She is a third-year

wrestler and wrestled a four-year wrestler and captain for Foothill. Liyah scored an early takedown (1-0) with a beautiful outside single. She stayed in control attempting to turn foothill to get back points. Liyah was winning 2-0 after round 1. In round 2 the Foothill wrestler chose the bottom and gets the 1-point escape on a standup and Liyah trips over herself to regain balance. The Foothill wrestler shoots and capitalizes on the stumble, immediately putting Liyah to her back and getting the pin at the 3:26 mark.

121 Lbs – Zitlali Sarmiento, sophomore – L by Dec, 3-0

DeVries: She is a second-year wrestler, set up a very nice Hi-C. The two wrestlers scrambled, and she was not able to secure the takedown. After round 1, the score was tied, 0-0. In round 2 the Foothill wrestler started with the one-point escape, then got a 2 point takedown, but was unable to put Zitlali on her back. Down, 3-0, Zitlali chose the bottom in round 3, but was unable to secure the escape.

126 Lbs – Aryssa Eslava, senior – W by pin

DeVries: Our first win came from Eslava. A second-year wrestler, Aryssa has grown from a shy, timid first year wrestler into a strong, confident, woman warrior. The match starts and Aryssa’s takedown attempt is countered by Foothill. Foothill goes up 2-0. Then the experienced foothill girl throws in a strong leg ride and power half, to get a 3 point near fall (5-0). She continues to fight and refuses to be pinned. She survives the 1st round. In round 2, the Foothill wrestler reverses Aryssa for two points (7-0) and throws in another leg ride. Again Foothill goes for the power half and gets 2-point near fall (9-0). Aryssa continues to fight and her opponent gets too high on the back position and Aryssa Tripods up, forcing foothill to become off balance and abandon the leg ride. Aryssa swims over the off balanced Foothill wrestler and reverses her. She puts her in a half Nelson and in a pinning combination. Aryssa pins her opponent. Fights the entire



Norwalk High School girls wrestling team head coach Bryan DeVries, right, and assistant coach Frank Soto. (Photo by Keith Durlflinger)

match and her resilience pays off huge for Norwalk’s first ever CIF team duals win.

131 Lbs – Casey Otero, freshman – W by pin

DeVries: Our second win came from Otero and thanks to facing teams without her weights and most recently the FALSE COVID shutdown, Casey was entering CIF with no matches. CIF was her first Match outside of practice. Since stepping foot on the mat, and thanks to a background in ju-jitsu, Casey has been picking up wrestling very quickly.

This was a back and forth match and Casey attempts a takedown and the Foothill wrestler counters. Her opponent gets the takedown and is up 2-0. Casey, with a half nelson, rolls through, earning a 2-point reversal for the 2-2 tie. Foothill builds a base and goes for the switch and gets a 2 point reversal (4-2). Casey then continues to fight and gets a 1- point escape (4-3) through a stand-up. The 2nd round starts and Casey throws in a half nelson and grabs the near ankle to flip her opponent over. She then gets the pin in her first match and first-ever pin. Great job Casey.

137 Lbs – Celeste Ortega, freshman – L by pin

DeVries: She is in her first year and wrestled a very tough opponent. Foothill got the takedown, (0-2), but Celeste fought hard to get the escape, (1-2). Foothill gets a takedown and again Celeste fights to get the escape, (2-4). Foothill

gets one more takedown as the period ends. Round 1 ends with Celeste losing 6-2. Foothill chooses neutral and gets another takedown and pins Celeste at the 3:03 mark.

143 Lbs – Forfeit

150 Lbs – Forfeit

160 Lbs – Miriah Negrette, sophomore – L by pin

DeVries: Negrette is also in her first year and wrestled a tough foothill opponent, who immediately engaged Miriah in a standing Hawkeye. She took her down and pinned her at the 1:01 mark. Miriah joined us late as she was waiting to get her physical.

170 Lbs – Anahy Aguilar, senior – L by pin

DeVries: Aguilar, a 4 year wrestler, immediately locked up with her opponent and was caught in a head and arm throw. She landed directly on her shoulder and attempted to fight off the pin. She lost via pin in the first round and fractured her shoulder in the process. She continued to fight with the fracture. She is one of the toughest individuals I have ever met. I wish she could have had that final match back, but her fighting even through that pain is very inspiring.

189 Lbs – Forfeit

Heavy weight – Mia Farr, freshman – L by pin

DeVries: Farr, a first year wrestler, had a great season up until CIF. It was her only loss was against a state qualifier from Downey in her first match. Round

1 starts and Mia attempts a snap down, but the Foothill wrestler lands out of bounds. No points and reset back to the middle of mat. Mia then sets up the over/under throw from standing position. She doesn’t quite get the torque needed and foothill lands on top of her for a takedown and then pins her.

What they said:

Bryan DeVries, coach: “We recruited four new wrestlers this year. I tell the girls constantly that I’m very proud of them. They’re really pioneers of the sport, at least here at Norwalk. They’re helping pave the way for future wrestlers.”

“We work really hard to make sure it’s a family culture.”

“They don’t want to wrestle hard for themselves, but wrestle for the team. Even when one loses, they’re still there cheering on their teammates.”

“They really have embraced the wrestling family that we’re trying to preach here.”

Aryssa Eslava, 126 Lbs: “Throughout the season, I only wrestled two or three times and up until CIF I did not get a win, and the day of CIF I was very satisfied with my win. The girl that I wrestled was dominating most of the match, but when she took her second shot I put her to her back and got the win.”

Casey Otero, 131 Lbs: “I think the team did really well and tried their best. I’ve never wrestled before and I’ve done Ju-jitsu ... for two years and it’s pretty similar.”

Mia Farr, Heavyweight: “We did alright this year and went to CIF for the first time as a team and are league champions this year. I won four matches and lost one match against a girl from Downey. At this weight class you can wrestle anybody.”

“I enjoy the team atmosphere and it’s like a family and it’s really a challenge.”

Zitlali Sarmiento, 121 Lbs. “I like it all and the adrenaline and love raising my hand (winning). I just love winning and hate losing. I like the atmosphere and everybody is always hyping everyone up.”

“My favorite match was wrestling a boy at Mayfair. I didn’t win and it was a good memory and learned a lot from that to stay more aggressive.”

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Relocate Marilyn Monroe

By Froma Harrop

Palm Springs, California, has a world-class art museum. And the museum building is itself a world-class example of midcentury modern architecture.

Thus, it was understandable that a group of Palm Springs residents would object to placing a kitschy 26-foot statue of Marilyn Monroe right in the museum sightlines. The “artwork” reproduces the famous scene in “The Seven Year Itch” in which Marilyn walks over a sidewalk grate and the rising air lifts her skirt way high. She’s seen bending over as she unsuccessfully tries to hold down her skirt.

If all goes according to the plan, which was somehow approved by the city council, Marilyn’s rear end would face the urbane museum’s front door. As fashion designer Trina Turk put it, “The view as you exit is of Marilyn mooning the museum.”

Turk is co-founder of the Committee to Relocate Marilyn. Her group says it would be cool with putting the statue somewhere else in the city, even a nearby park.

Don’t get me wrong. “The Seven Year Itch” is a great movie. In addition to putting Marilyn’s voluptuous body on generous display, it showcases her considerable talents as a comedienne.

But childish renditions of pop culture figures really don’t enhance an upscale thoroughfare leading to a grown-up cultural institution. Also, the scene depicted in the statue was filmed on a New York City sidewalk whose vibe couldn’t be more different from the desert oasis of Palm Springs.

Commercially named “Forever Marilyn,” the statue is the work of John Seward Johnson II, an heir to the Johnson & Johnson fortune.

In 2003, then-Washington Post art critic Blake Gopnik called a Corcoran Gallery exhibit of Johnson’s works “the most mind-numbing, head-spinning, belly-flipping experience you’re likely to come across.” In sum, he said, “This show is really, really bad.”

Gopnik suspected that the powers at the Corcoran may have harbored

impure motives in featuring this artist. “They might have noticed,” he wrote, “that not a single other American museum has ever seen fit to give Johnson a show — despite the prospect of pleasing an art-loving millionaire and potential benefactor.”

“Forever Marilyn” has been around. It’s been displayed in Chicago, Stamford, Connecticut, and elsewhere — and not to universal applause. How is it that Palm Springs gets stuck with it?

It’s true that Marilyn spent some time in Palm Springs, as had other Hollywood stars. But she lived in 43 homes, and this one was rented.

Predictably, one feminist Marilyn critic, Elizabeth Armstrong, has declared the statue misogynistic — that is, hating of women. She also accused its creator of promoting upskirting (taking a photo of a person’s genital area without their knowledge). That would be a misdemeanor in California.

And it insulted Marilyn the thespian, whom Armstrong said “wanted to be taken seriously as an artist and not just a sexual icon.”

Well, let’s not go there. Whatever Marilyn’s ambitions, she most definitely intended to and succeeded in playing simple-minded sexual kittens. She was an actor, you know.

The real issue remains what putting this cheesy statue where its backers want it would say about Palm Springs. The museum chairwoman, Jane Emison, complained that “the statue will damage our credibility and our goal to highlight Palm Springs as a world-class destination for midcentury architecture and design for international cultural tourists.”

The big question, implied by Emison, is what kind of tourist Palm Springs wants to attract. Can’t a city renowned for its dramatic desert setting and sophistication sell itself on those virtues?

Here’s hoping Palm Springs can resist the growing push to infantilize the culture. There’s such a thing as civic dignity. And Disneyland, after all, is only an hour and a half drive away.

Froma Harrop is a columnist who writes about culture, politics and economics.



Traffic circles don’t get enough love

By John Stossel

I hate waiting at traffic lights.

There’s a solution: traffic circles, or roundabouts.

Traffic circles terrified me when I first confronted them in Europe. A movie, “National Lampoon’s European Vacation,” captured my experience when it portrayed Chevy Chase driving in London, unable to exit a rotary all day.

Besides being hard to navigate, I also assumed roundabouts cause problems, but a Freakonomics podcast woke me to their advantages. Roundabouts are a reason Britain’s rate of traffic deaths is less than half the U.S.’s.

“We’ve converted almost all of our traffic lights to roundabouts because we save lives,” says the mayor of Carmel, Indiana, Jim Brainard. His little town now has 133 roundabouts.

A University of Wisconsin–Madison study confirmed that roundabouts save lives. Roundabouts increased crashes a bit, but deaths and injuries dropped by 38%.

It’s because of the angle of the cars, says Brainard. “Instead of a T-bone, you got a sideswipe.”

Roundabouts also slow cars down a little, giving drivers more time to react.

“That makes it seem like it’ll take longer for cars to get through intersections,” I say to Brainard.

“It really doesn’t,” he responds. “A roundabout moves 50% more traffic than a traffic light.”

More than a four-way stop sign intersection, too, according to a test ran by the TV show “Mythbusters.”

Roundabouts are also better for the environment. “You never come to a complete stop,” Brainard points out. “Tremendous amounts of fuel are saved.”

Indianapolis realtor Jason Compton says roundabouts even increase the value of homes “because they just flat out look better (by adding) more green space.”

Sometimes communities put artwork in the middle.

Bottom line: Roundabouts are safer, cost less, move more traffic and are better for the environment.

Yet, most Americans still say, “I don’t want these things.” I tell Brainard. “They’re confusing. I’m more likely to have an accident!”

“Well, it takes public education,” he responds. “Chevy Chase didn’t do us any favors.”

Brainard points out that Chase was stuck in a large rotary, not a

roundabout. Some traffic circles and rotaries have many lanes. The one by Paris’ Arc De Triomphe connects 12 roads!

“Those are dangerous,” says Brainard. “That’s not what we’re building. Modern roundabouts are small; the smaller they are, the safer they become. They’re very different.”

Europe learned that lesson. European countries are building lots of small roundabouts.

“America is way behind,” I tell Brainard.

“America is catching up,” he replies. “When I started, we probably had under a couple of hundred in the United States. Today, we’re pushing five or six thousand.”

That’s progress.

Still, his little town, with just 97,000 residents, has 2% of all the roundabouts in America.

John Stossel is a journalist and author of “Give Me a Break: How I Exposed Hucksters, Cheats and Scam Artists and Became the Scourge of the Liberal Media.”

Taking liberty for granted

By Judge Andrew Napolitano

“Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.” — Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826).

No one knows if Thomas Jefferson personally uttered those words. They have been widely attributed to him, but they don’t appear in any of his writings. If he did not literally utter them, he uttered the sentiments they offer. They remind us not to take liberty for granted.

As America returns to pre-pandemic normalcy, we should think about the dangers of taking liberty for granted. This column has argued frequently that personal liberty is our birthright. It is a natural right. It doesn’t come from the government. It comes from our humanity, which is a gift from God. As God is perfectly free, so are we.

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution presume that our liberties are natural and cannot be suppressed or taken away by the government absent due process.

Due process requires a notice of charges, a fair hearing with all constitutional protections at which the government must prove fault, and the right to appeal. The Constitution doesn’t grant liberty; it restrains the government from infringing upon it.

Some liberties are so essential to the pursuit of happiness that the Constitution prohibits their infringement, period — with or without due process. These are the liberties that we exercise every day — worship, speech, peaceable assembly, self-defense, privacy, ownership and use of property, commercial transactions, travel. We voluntarily establish governments to protect our liberties.

Are the governments we have established morally legitimate? They are when they have, as Jefferson wrote in the Declaration, the consent of the governed, and when they defend our liberties. Absent consent and defense of liberty, government is not legitimate.

Jefferson argued that government exists only to secure our rights. When it fails to protect our rights, or when it destroys our property, we have the right to alter and abolish it.

These principles of personal liberty in a free society were mocked and attacked by the government during the recent pandemic, and most folks went along with it.

How, in a land made prosperous by rugged individualism and personal sacrifice, not by government, did the people become sheep when their governors — without legal authority and in utter defiance of constitutional guarantees that they swore to uphold — signed orders that purported to deny the right to worship, work, travel, assemble peaceably and use private property as one sees fit?

Why did so many folks who believe in personal liberty accept these illegal orders and cave to them? Why did we wear medically useless masks on our faces when we, not the government, own our faces? Why did we allow the government to close lawful businesses? Why did police and prosecutors break their oaths to defend the Constitution in deference to these gubernatorial power grabs?

The same Constitution that restrains the federal and state governments from curtailing fundamental liberties also guarantees those liberties. Stated differently, the 14th Amendment — which imposes the guarantees of the Bill of Rights on the states and prohibits the states from impairing those guarantees — also enables Congress to intervene when states fail to uphold basic, fundamental, constitutionally protected rights.

Did the feds come to the rescue of any of us in beleaguered states where our liberties were curtailed by executive decree? They did not.

Did the courts, whose principal role is to apply and enforce the Constitution, invalidate the unlawful commands of governors or curtail the unconstitutional prosecutions of those who had the courage to defy them? They did not.

Did any legislative body — state or federal — use its powers to write laws to invalidate the unlawful, unconstitutional, immoral orders of governors? They did not.

There is a common thread running through all this, and it leads to the dark and baleful state of voluntary servitude — a lamentable, Orwellian state of affairs where people are so afraid of a new demon that they voluntarily bow to rules and commands that bankrupt them and crush their liberties in a vain hope for safety.

The core thread running through all this is fear. Fear of sickness and death. Fear of bucking the tide. Fear of exercising personal liberty. Fear that the government might be right.

Wishful thinking

Dear Editor:

I look forward to the day the majority of our representatives in Washington and Sacramento are fiscally responsible.

**John Lacey
Downey**

All these lockdowns happened overnight. There was no great public debate about them. There was far more acquiescence than challenge to them. The public took for granted that the governors actually had the authority they claimed they had and actually could become dictators in a crisis of fear — a crisis they created. Now that this is for the most part behind us, the question arises: Why did we let this happen?

It happened because we take liberty for granted. We repose the Constitution for safekeeping in the hands of men and women who, in the eternal conflict of personal liberty versus governmental power, side with power. These are folks popularly elected who don’t care about liberty; they care about control.

At this writing, there is no clear answer as to the cause of COVID-19. But the cause of the pandemic was taking liberty for granted. What kind of a society is ours? You can go to jail for fishing or barbering without a license, but if you are a governor, you can crush the liberty of millions and destroy the property of thousands with impunity.

The next time this happens, will we cave, or will we resist?

One of the rights championed by Jefferson and his fellow founders was the right to secede from the government — the right to avoid a government to which one never consented. This is the core natural right for which the American Revolution was fought.

For a government without the consent of those it governs is invalid and illicit — and of no lawful authority. It only endures when masses of folks and shapers of opinion take liberty for granted.

Judge Andrew Napolitano is the senior judicial analyst for Fox News.

Cyber security

Dear Editor:

The recent cyber attacks from the Colonial Pipeline to the most recent attack to JBS Food Supply reveal how vulnerable we are, how unprepared we are to defend ourselves from these attacks and how incompetent are the people in charge.

I find hard to understand that the CEO of Colonial Pipeline did not invest in cyber security but did not hesitate in paying a millionaire ransom to the hackers.

Cyber attacks represent a clear and present danger to the security to the US and hence they must be prevented and stopped. It is time to create a Manhattan Project like group that includes, in addition to the UK and Canada, all the advanced countries in Europe and Japan to come up with answers to this problem.

We have been able to land a man on the moon, land on Mars and develop a vaccine against the Covid-19 virus, we certainly have the technology to prevent and stop cyber attacks. It just has to be properly managed.

Our nemesis in Russia, China, Iran and North Korea will get bolder because they see that we are not prepared and are doing nothing to stop it. Threats don’t work on them and hence we must build the capability of doing to them what they are doing to us now.

Only then we will be safe.

**Jorge Montero
Downey**

The Norwalk Patriot STAFF

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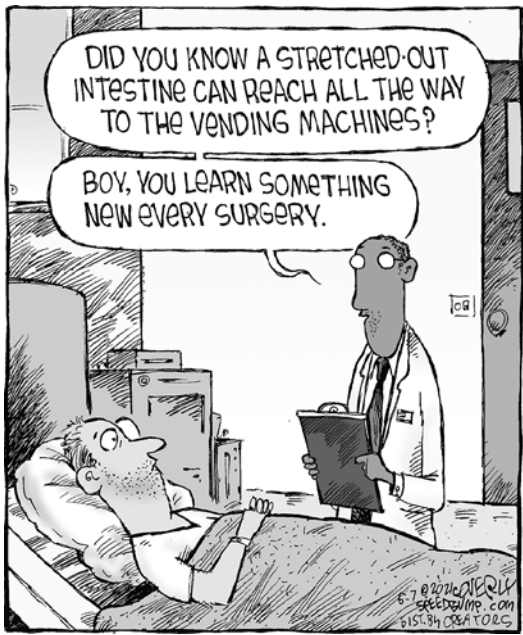
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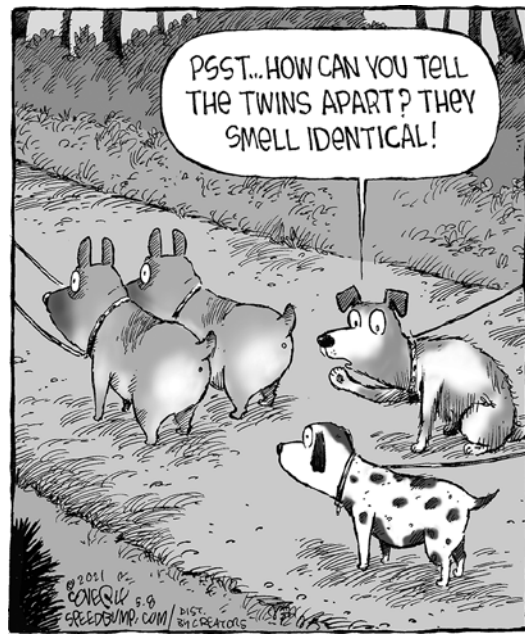
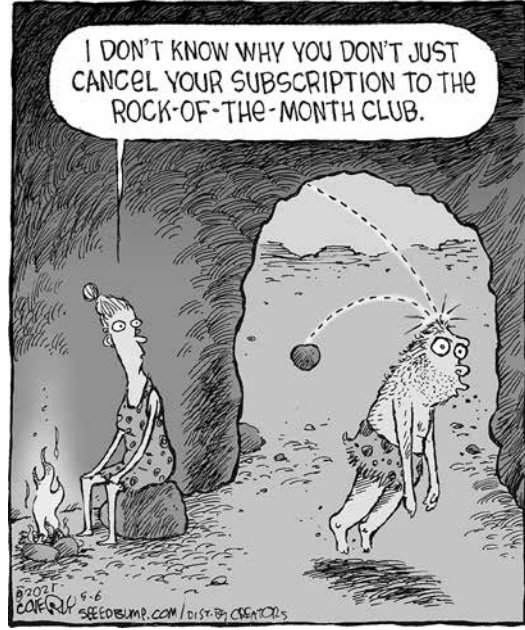
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONDAYS

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

TUESDAYS

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Farmers Market - Norwalk City Hall
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
3rd, 7:00 p.m. - Soroptimist International - Via Zoom

WEDNESDAYS

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, 7:00 p.m. - American Legion Post No. 359 - 11986 Front St.
2nd, 7:30 p.m. - Golden Trowel -Norwalk Masonic Lodge

SATURDAYS

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Farmers Market - Norwalk City Hall
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

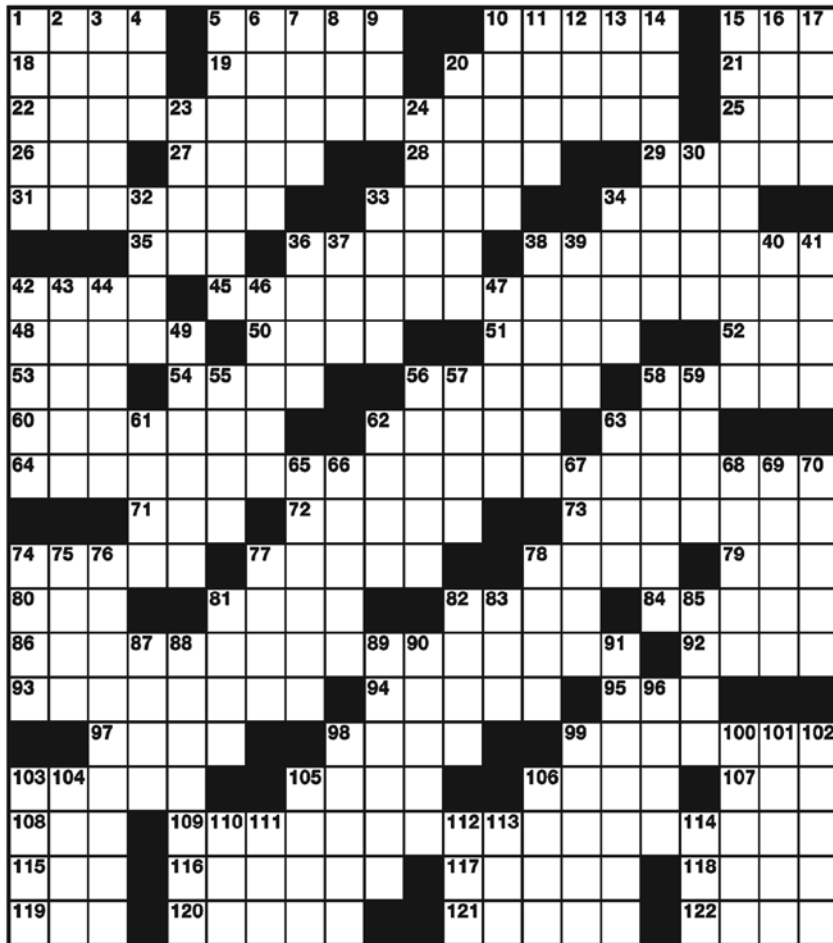
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THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
MIXED SIGNALS: From the world of "words of wisdom"
by Alan Siegel and Mark McClain

- ACROSS
- 1 ___ Romeo (Italian auto)
- 5 Applicant's goal
- 10 Jazz singer Vaughan
- 15 Highest level allowed
- 18 Bird on some dollars
- 19 Garth Brooks' hometown
- 20 Mississippi River explorer
- 21 "___ we having fun yet?"
- 22 "An eye for an eye," but ...
- 25 Masters' middle name
- 26 Sch. in Stillwater
- 27 Lend a hand
- 28 Dust speck
- 29 Best imaginable
- 31 What new drivers must learn
- 33 Unruly hair
- 34 Gas sealed in tubes
- 35 Web address
- 36 Maestro Ozawa
- 38 Series segments
- 42 Read quickly
- 45 "Birds of a feather flock together," but ...
- 48 Quits clamming up
- 50 Something to lend a hand
- 51 Misbehaves, with "up"
- 52 Sorority letter
- 53 Lend a hand
- 54 Olay alternative
- 56 Manila money
- 58 Fables byline
- 60 He drove Tandy's
- 62 Less outgoing
- 63 Chicken ___ King
- 64 "Better to be safe than sorry," but ...
- 71 Golf starting point
- 72 Greek peace goddess
- 73 Farsi speaker
- 74 Tortious material
- 77 Buttercup kin
- 78 Desktop image
- 79 Long-established
- 80 One, in Peru and Palermo
- 81 Owned by us
- 82 Book after Matthew
- 84 New Haven student
- 86 "Knowledge is power," but ...
- 92 Legendary buccaneer
- 93 Fish that swims upright
- 94 Rations, for instance
- 95 Opposite of non
- 97 Pope during WWII
- 98 Hens and mares
- 99 Associates (with)
- 103 Major disorder
- 105 Attention-getter
- 106 Urban district
- 107 Get too personal
- 108 ___ Royal Highness
- 109 "Everything in moderation," but ...
- 115 Works on the wall
- 116 Second-smallest continent
- 117 Social activities
- 118 It means "averse to"
- 119 Low digit
- 120 Loved ones
- 121 Mentally adept
- 122 Greek cuisine staple
- DOWN
- 1 Choir section
- 2 Dreadful
- 3 Venue for discussion
- 4 Raggedy doll
- 5 Shakespearean soldier
- 6 Fills the tank
- 7 Much worse than a smash
- 8 VA winter setting
- 9 Quaint college cry
- 10 Religious spinoffs
- 11 ESPN's Arthur ___ Courage Award
- 12 Sushi eggs
- 13 Picnicked, say
- 14 Maximally corny
- 15 Court dockets
- 16 Sphere of interest
- 17 Spa service
- 20 Change the subject
- 23 Marvel horned-hat wearer
- 24 Texting icon
- 30 Barrier to entry
- 32 Place to sleep on a sub
- 33 Fine rain
- 34 Minor quibbles
- 36 Quick car ride
- 37 Very long period
- 38 Prom partner
- 39 Butter squares
- 40 Repeat, as a sentiment
- 41 Boarding place
- 42 Workforce
- 43 Largest North African city
- 44 Birch relative
- 46 Landline or mobile
- 47 Relaxes
- 49 Twain's first name
- 55 Rooster on a rooftop
- 56 Counterfeit
- 57 Word on Irish euros
- 58 Capital on the Hudson
- 59 Come by honestly
- 61 Ending like -ule
- 62 Frozen reindeer
- 63 Prefix for space
- 65 Intensely competitive
- 66 Emerged
- 67 *Idol* champ Taylor ___
- 68 Garlicky sauce
- 69 Bona fide
- 70 Wound up, or wound down
- 74 San ___ Obispo, CA
- 75 Picnic playwright
- 76 Whom a French dessert is named for
- 77 Many names of hair salons
- 78 Garden perennial
- 81 Pair of propellers
- 82 Some Wharton grads
- 83 Maximum effort
- 85 Similar
- 87 17th state
- 88 Drove (out)
- 89 Arrival announcement
- 90 Terse written summons
- 91 As early as possible
- 96 Ridesharing service
- 98 Selling centers
- 99 *Iliad* byline
- 100 Express a view
- 101 Quarterback great
- 102 Land south of Turkey
- 103 Casual conversation
- 104 Protagonist
- 105 *Sentimiento romántico*
- 106 Actress Catherine ___ Jones
- 110 Nuance of color
- 111 Significant stretch
- 112 NFL successes
- 113 Meat in a Cuban sandwich
- 114 Defence Ministry concern

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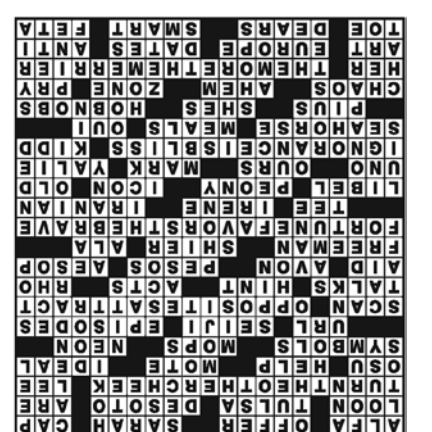
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- 76 Whom a French dessert is named for
- 77 Many names of hair salons
- 78 Garden perennial
- 81 Pair of propellers
- 82 Some Wharton grads
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- 85 Similar
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- 111 Significant stretch
- 112 NFL successes
- 113 Meat in a Cuban sandwich
- 114 Defence Ministry concern

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The LOON (18 Across), a common bird throughout Canada, has appeared on its \$1 coin since 1987. SEIJI OZAWA (36 Across) was music director of the Boston Symphony from 1973 to 2002. Eugenio Pacelli was the Vatican's Cardinal Secretary of State before being elected Pope PIUS XII (97 Across) in 1939.



Obituaries

Kay Lahusen, LGBTQ activist and photographer

Kay Lahusen, an activist and photojournalist who chronicled some of the earliest U.S. protests for LGBTQ rights, died May 26 at a hospital in West Chester, Pennsylvania at the age of 91.



Lahusen and her partner, Barbara Gittings, were key members of the early movement to secure equal rights for the LGBTQ community. The 1969 Stonewall uprising was, for many, the moment that brought the movement to the attention of the mainstream, but even before that, Lahusen and others marched for their rights.

Those early protests, in the mid-1960s, simply demanded equal rights for LGBTQ citizens. In one, Lahusen carried a sign reading "The American way: employment based upon competence, ability, training; not upon private life" - reflecting the fact that sexual orientation was not a protected class and didn't become one until recent years.

Lahusen photographed many of these marches, and she and Gittings also produced the pioneering lesbian newsletter, "The Ladder." Gittings edited the journal, while Lahusen wrote for it under the name Kay Tobin. She also took photos for the journal, including groundbreaking cover photographs of notable lesbians at a time when it could be dangerous to be so public about one's LGBTQ status.

Lahusen was also among those who successfully fought for the American Psychiatry Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental illnesses.

Lois Ehlert, 'Chicka Chicka Boom Boom' author

Lois Ehlert, an illustrator known for children's books including the classic "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom," died May 25 in Milwaukee of natural causes at the age of 86.

Ehlert was working as a graphic designer before she began illustrating children's books while she was in her 50s. Her first book was 1987's "Growing Vegetable Soup," but it was the 1989 book "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom," with text by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault, that became her best-known work. Its simple images, depicting the letters of the alphabet climbing a coconut tree, have delighted children for decades, and Ehlert received several awards for her work on it. In 2013, President Barack Obama read "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" to children at the White House Easter Egg Roll.

Ehlert's unmistakable style was collages composed of bright, simple shapes that resonated with the preschoolers who were her audience. She also illustrated books including "Eating the Alphabet," "Crocodile Smile," and "Color Zoo," for which she was awarded a Caldecott Honor.

Kevin Clark, drummer in 'School of Rock'

Kevin Clark, a drummer and actor who played the young drummer, Freddy "Spazzy McGee" Jones, in the 2003 movie "School of Rock," died May 26 in Chicago when his bicycle was struck by a car at the age of 32.



Clark began taking drum lessons when he was just five years old. At 12, he saw a newspaper ad seeking children who could play a musical instrument to star in a movie with Jack Black. Though he had no acting experience, Clark auditioned, playing "Iron Man" for his audition. He got the part and seemed like a natural, playing the drummer who eagerly embraced a punk aesthetic as he played music with his classmates.

"School of Rock" was Clark's lone acting credit, but he was a drummer all his life. He played in Chicago bands including Dreadwolf, Funk it Let's Jam, and Jess Bess and the Intentions. He

also taught drums at a Chicago-area School of Rock location.

Miranda Cosgrove, who starred as the band's manager in "School of Rock," wrote on Instagram that she was "stunned and saddened" by the news.

"The world lost an amazing soul," Cosgrove wrote. "I'll always remember your spirit and how kind you were to me. I'll never forget all the memories. You'll always be missed Kevin."

Rivkah Reyes, who played the bassist Katie in the movie, wrote on Twitter that they'd "never forget your hugs and your laugh and the sheer joy on your face when we'd run into each other in Chicago. Thank you for always showing up for me with that 'big brother I never had' energy."

Gavin MacLeod, actor found fame in TV sitcoms

Gavin MacLeod, an actor known for his roles on TV shows including "The Love Boat," "McHale's Navy," and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," died at his home in Palm Desert at the age of 90.

Best known as Captain Merrill Stubing on "The Love Boat," a role he played from 1977 to 1986, MacLeod was nominated for three Golden Globes for the role and parlayed his fame portraying the cruise ship's captain into a gig as global ambassador for Princess Cruises.

Prior to his tenure on "The Love Boat," MacLeod had his first taste of fame playing Joseph "Happy" Haines on "McHale's Navy" from 1962 to 1964, when he left the show in pursuit of larger roles.

His breakout performance came in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," where he played news writer Murray Slaughter from 1970 to 1977.

When MacLeod got a call from his agent about an audition for Mary Tyler Moore's new show, he was thrilled, he said in a 2017 interview with Maritime Matters. He loved the scripts the show's producers sent him, but he wasn't sure about the role they wanted him to audition for - Lou Grant.

Having worked with Moore when he guest starred on "The Dick Van Dyke Show," MacLeod didn't feel he was the right choice to play her boss. He auditioned

for the Lou Grant role, then asked if he could try reading for the role of Murray Slaughter.

He ultimately got the role he really wanted, and Ed Asner was unforgettable as Lou Grant in a role that spun off to its own show during the years when MacLeod was creating his own iconic role on "The Love Boat."

MacLeod was also in movies including "The Sand Pebbles" and "Kelly's Heroes."

In later years, MacLeod made appearances on TV shows including "The King of Queens," "That '70s Show," and "The Suite Life on Deck."

John Davis, real Milli Vanilli singer

John Davis, one of the real vocalists behind Milli Vanilli including their 1989 hit "Girl You Know It's True," died May 24 at the age of 66 from COVID-19.

Music producer Frank Farian created the French/German dance pop duo Milli Vanilli with frontmen Rob Pilatus and Fabrice Morvan. The duo became international stars behind the hit songs "Girl You Know It's True" and "Blame It On The Rain."

Milli Vanilli won the Grammy Award for Best New Artist in 1990. It was discovered after the award that the duo were lip syncing songs on stage, which featured the voices of the real singers who recorded the originals in studio.

John Davis was one of the real singers, along with others.

After the scandal, Farian changed the group name to The Real Milli Vanilli featuring Davis and Brad Howell, another Milli Vanilli singer. The group's 1991 single "Keep on Running" was a top ten hit in Germany.

Davis remained in Germany and later performed with Fab Morvan as the group Face Meets Voice.

B.J. Thomas, 'Hooked on a Feeling' singer

B.J. Thomas, a Grammy-winning pop country singer known for the hits "Hooked on a Feeling" and "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head," died May 29 at the age of 78 from lung cancer.

Thomas hit the top ten on the charts 26 times and sold 70

million albums worldwide.

Thomas had a winning formula combining country with pop music, including his version of the Burt Bacharach and Hal David song "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head," which won the Academy Award for Best Original Song as part of "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

His other popular hits included "Hooked on a Feeling," later made famous by Blue Swede, and "(Hey Won't You Play) Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song."

Thomas also performed the theme song titled "As Long As We've Got Each Other" for the hit sitcom "Growing Pains."

"I'm so blessed to have had the opportunity to record and perform beautiful songs in pop, country, and gospel music, and to share those wonderful songs and memories around the world with millions of you," Thomas said when he announced his diagnosis.

Joe Lara, starred in TV's 'Tarzan'

Joe Lara, an actor best known for starring in the TV series "Tarzan: The Epic Adventures," died May 29 at the age of 58 in a small plane crash in Tennessee. His wife Gwen also died in the accident.

Lara starred in the 1989 CBS television movie "Tarzan in Manhattan" and played the lead role in the TV series "Tarzan: The Epic Adventures," which aired in syndication from 1996 until 1997.

He mostly appeared in action movies, including "Steel Frontier" and "Doomsdayer." Lara moved on from acting to become a country music singer, releasing an album in 2009.

Paul Soles, original voice of Spider-Man

Paul Soles, a Canadian actor best known as the original voice of Spider-Man in the 1967 animated series, as well as the voice of Hermey the Elf in "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," died May 26 in Toronto at the age of 90.

Soles got his start working in radio before serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He returned to co-host the Canadian

newsmagazine TV show "Take 30" for 16 years. While he was appearing on "Take 30," Soles also did his most memorable voiceover work. He voiced Peter Parker and Spider-Man for the three-season run of popular Saturday morning cartoon "Spider-Man," and he voiced Hermey the misfit elf in the iconic animated special "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." In addition, he was the voice of Bruce Banner in the 1966 animated series "The Marvel Super Heroes." Soles was also a stage actor both on and off Broadway, and he appeared in movies including "Just the Way You Are" (1984) "The Score" (2001), and "The Incredible Hulk" (2008).

Mark Eaton, defensive star with Utah Jazz

Mark Eaton, a former 7-foot-4 shot-blocking defensive star with the Utah Jazz, died May 28 at the age of 64 in Utah.

Authorities announced he died in a single person bicycle accident and no vehicle was involved.



Eaton played his entire career for the Utah Jazz. He holds the NBA record for most blocks per game in a career and was a two-time NBA defensive player of the year.

Eaton was discovered by a junior college coach in California who noticed him when he was driving by a tire store where Eaton was a mechanic.

Eaton wasn't initially sure he wanted to play basketball.

"I was making \$20,000 a year and I didn't see any point in giving that up to go to college," he told the Salt Lake Tribune.

He played in junior college and transferred to UCLA and was drafted by the Jazz in 1982.

He finished his career with 3,064 blocks. He is fifth all-time in that category behind Hakeem Olajuwon, Dikembe Mutombo, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Artis Gilmore.

After his playing career, he became a successful restaurant owner, author and motivational speaker.

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Grace Hu selected to serve as Cerritos mayor

CERRITOS – Grace Hu was selected as mayor of the City of Cerritos and Chuong Vo as Mayor Pro Tem by their colleagues during the City Council’s annual reorganization meeting and mayoral transition on April 21.

Mayor Hu was elected to the City Council in 1992, served as Mayor in 1995 and was re-elected to the City Council in 1997. She served a second term as Mayor in 1999. In 2017, she was re-elected to the City Council and became Mayor.

Mayor Hu served on the City’s Property Preservation Commission from 1991 to 1992. A member of the City Council’s Budget/Finance, Performing Arts and Senior Services/Senior Center committees, she is also the city liaison to the Chamber of Commerce. Hu serves as the Council’s delegate to the League of California Cities and is an alternate delegate to the California Contract Cities Association, Gateway Cities Council of Governments, Sanitation Districts 2, 3, 18 & 19/Waste Management and Southeast Water Coalition Joint Powers Authority.

A Cerritos resident for more than 40 years, Mayor Hu is a real estate broker and investment consultant, owning real estate agencies in Cerritos and Artesia. She was named 1996 “Woman of the Year” for the 56th State Assembly District and was listed as one of the top 100 businesswomen from 1999 and 2000 by the “Los Angeles Business Journal.”

Mayor Hu has a graduate degree in business administration from the University of San Francisco and a bachelor of law degree from Catholic Fu-Jen University in Taiwan. She has served on the Rancho Los Cerritos Board of Realtors and the Los Cerritos YMCA, and is a member of the Cerritos Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Pro Tem Vo was elected to the Cerritos City Council in 2020. He was named Mayor Pro Tem in 2020 and 2021. A Cerritos resident since 2000, Vo served on the Cerritos Community Safety Committee from 2009 to 2011 and as a Cerritos Planning Commissioner from 2011 to 2017.

Mayor Pro Tem Vo is a city liaison to the ABC Unified School District and Cerritos Community College. A member of the city’s MIS/Technology, Performing Arts and Parks and Recreation committees, he is also the city’s delegate to the California Joint Powers Insurance Authority and serves on the Executive Committee.

Local colleges set to receive \$93 million in emergency funding

NORWALK – Local colleges and universities will receive \$93 million in emergency funding as part of the American Rescue Plan, according to Rep. Linda Sanchez.

The funding will help local institutions cope with the severe financial fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and continue serving their students safely.

At least half of the funding each institution receives will be distributed in the form of emergency cash assistance grants to students who are facing hunger, homelessness, and other hardship.

The American Rescue Plan provides \$36 billion for nearly 3,500 public and private, nonprofit colleges and universities nationwide.

The colleges and universities in California’s 38th District receiving funding under the American Rescue Plan are:

- ABC Adult School: \$371,287
- Biola University: \$10,534,968
- Cerritos Community College: \$45,287,637
- NTMA Training Centers of Southern California: \$1,178,658
- Presbyterian Theological Seminary in America: \$139,598
- Rio Hondo Community College: \$28,887,516
- Southern California University of Health Sciences: \$1,572,598
- Whittier College: \$5,046,191

Students should contact their institutions for more information about how they can apply for an emergency grant.

“Colleges and universities are instrumental in helping Southern California communities succeed,” said Sanchez. “The American Rescue Plan provides critical lifelines for our local institutions, ensuring they can keep serving our communities while giving students the resources they need to stay in school and complete their education. I am proud of our work to secure this funding, and I applaud the Biden Administration for their tireless efforts to put an end to this pandemic and build back a better America in the process.”

Rio Hondo College honors extraordinary students

NORWALK – Rio Hondo College has honored five students with its 2021 Extraordinary Graduating Students award, a distinction that recognizes individuals who have reached their goals while overcoming adversity and personal tragedies.

This academic year’s award winners are Albert Steven Mendoza Jr., Dominic Castanon, Pretty Garcia, Luis Alberto Cruz and Stephanie Paz. They were selected by faculty members and staff for their stellar work ethic and ambition for achievement.

Albert Steven Mendoza Jr. has turned his life around after spending years in and out of the Los Angeles County Jail system and struggling with drug addiction. One day, he decided enough was enough – he earned his GED and enrolled at Rio Hondo College, where he thrived in subjects such as algebra and physics.

Mendoza has completed biophysics research at the City University of New York and is an active member of Extended Opportunity Programs and Service, the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) and TRIO Student Support Service STEM. Graduating with a 3.95 GPA, Mendoza will attend UCLA in the fall to study physics.

Luis Alberto Cruz turned self-doubt into success, after nearly dropping out of Rio Hondo College due to mounting academic struggles and his undocumented status while also finding his place in the LGBTQ+ community. However, a trip to the College’s Student Success and Dream Center showed that he could apply for financial aid while gaining support. Cruz quit his full-time job and focused on his education, joining the (MESA) program. Graduating with a 3.7 GPA, Cruz will attend UC Berkeley to major in chemistry. Cruz was also awarded the prestigious Regents’ and Chancellor’s Scholarship from UC Berkeley.

Dominic Castanon joined Rio Hondo College in spring 2020 through the Near Completion project. Castanon was originally a business major, but a near-fatal motorcycle accident in 2014 left him with a head trauma, a fractured spine and a severe diffuse axonal injury.

After learning to walk and talk again, Castanon decided to major in child development, pursuing his passion of helping others. Graduating with a 3.7 GPA, Castanon will attend Cal Poly Pomona in the fall to major in early childhood studies.

Pretty Garcia thought she made a mistake when she decided to study environmental science, believing the work to be too difficult. She would arrive on campus at 7 a.m. and leave after 10 p.m. every day before COVID-19 hit, continuing to study at local parks and in her car afterward. Her motivation to provide a better life for her family through education is driving her decision to become a synthetic biology researcher. Graduating with a 3.4 GPA, Garcia will attend UC Santa Cruz in the fall to study bioengineering.

Stephanie Paz is the definition of a determined, strong single mother. Paz originally enrolled at Rio Hondo College in 2009, but struggled with the demands of being a single mother, a student and a full-time worker, and dropped out to focus on her career. In 2019, Paz knew she needed a change and re-enrolled at Rio Hondo College to study sociology. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting her education, Paz secured a 3.6 GPA and will attend Cal State Los Angeles to study sociology in the fall.

“We are so proud of our Extraordinary Graduating Students, for overcoming so many obstacles to find true success,” Superintendent/President Teresa Dreyfuss said. “We know that these five graduates have bright futures ahead of them and we are glad to have encouraged and nurtured them on their academic journeys.”

Norwalk offers adult school scholarships

NORWALK – The City of Norwalk is committed to connecting the community with opportunities for success. Funding provided through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) has made it possible for the city to offer scholarships to low income residents pursuing career and technical training.

The scholarships, ranging from \$1,050 to \$2,600, will assist with the cost of occupational training in health sciences, medical technology or welding/metal fabrication at Norwalk-La Mirada Adult School (NLMAS). Scholarships cover tuition costs only, with the student responsible for books, exam supplies and uniforms.

Fall programs at NLMAS begin on Aug. 16.

To qualify, the applicant must be a Norwalk resident (proof of residency is required), must be 18 years of age or older, and meet income qualifications.

Applications are available online at <https://tinyurl.com/norwalktrainingscholarships>. The deadline to apply is Wednesday, June 30, at 4 p.m. Appointments are required to submit applications and required documentation.

For more information, please contact the Housing & Neighborhood Development Division at (562) 929-5951.

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How to choose the right real estate agent

1. Check out the local housing market in person

Drive or walk around your neighborhood and look for repeat agent names on real estate signs (bonus if there's a "sold" sign next to them!). According to our research, five percent of sellers find agents from a for-sale sign, while 16 percent hire an agent based on knowing them from their community.

2. Talk to an agent in person at an open house

Pop into a nearby open house and observe how the agent engages with potential buyers. Take the time to interact with the real estate agent — don't just grab a business card and leave. Keep an eye out for personality and professional chemistry. Seven percent of sellers find their agents at an open house.

3. Compare real estate agents online

Do a quick name search online for the real estate agents you've identified. An agent's online presence (e.g., real estate websites, search

engines and social networks) is the next best thing to a personal referral. Read what people in your area are saying about a recommended real estate agent. And, take note of how that agent responds to negative reviews. Use Zillow's Agent Finder tool to search for agents in your area by star rating.

4. Get a referral

There's nothing better than a personal referral from a friend or family member you trust. According to Zillow research, more than one in five sellers (22%) find their agent because of a referral from a friend, relative, neighbor or colleague.

5. Meet with at least three agents

When hiring a real estate agent, don't settle on the first agent you meet. According to Zillow research, 56% of sellers only ever contact one agent, but by talking with multiple agents, you'll be able to compare and contrast to find someone who will be a good fit. Handle it like a job

interview — because it is! While you might have a front-runner based on a referral or local reputation, ask each of the three agents the same questions and compare their responses.

6. Ask the right questions

- How long have you been working in real estate?
- Do you primarily work with buyers or sellers?
- How many active clients do you have at a time?
- Are you part of a team?
- What's your specialty?
- Are you equipped to handle my unique situation?
- How will you market my home?
- Can you put me in contact with some references?

7. Explain your communication preferences

Make sure you're on the same page from the get-go. Discuss how the agent will keep you informed and how often you expect to hear from them. If you prefer email but the agent is most responsive to phone calls, you may not be a good fit for each other. Or, if you know you're going to have lots of questions and expect quick responses, but the agent usually just sends bi-weekly updates, you may want to find someone who is a better fit.

8. Clarify your motivation to sell

Make sure you've made clear any requirements that are specific to your own home sale.

Are you on a strict timeline? Need to reach a specific bottom dollar? Looking to fall within a particular timing window to avoid capital gains taxes? Make sure to share these details from the beginning so your agent knows what to expect.

9. Discuss selling strategy and number of showings

Make sure you and your potential real estate agent are on the same page about their selling strategy. Will you do open houses? How many showings do you want to do? How much lead time will the agent give you before a showing? How will the property be marketed?

10. Agree on all the important details

The best agent-seller relationships are those with clearly defined expectations. Make sure that, in writing, you've agreed upon the commission structure, list price, and contract length (i.e., what happens if your home hasn't sold after a certain amount of time).

Alternatives to working with a typical real estate agent

If you decide not to engage with a traditional seller's agent, consider these alternatives:

For sale by owner

Known in the industry as "FSBO," this approach is when a homeowner decides to list their home without the guidance of a real estate agent, usually to avoid commission

costs that average 6% of the final sale amount — about \$15,000 on the sale of a \$250,000 property.

Zillow Offers

Instead of a traditional listing, when you sell your home with Zillow Offers, you'll receive an all-cash offer.

Checklist: What to look for in a real estate agent

Throughout your real estate agent search, consider the following hallmarks of a good real estate agent:

Familiarity with the local area and neighborhood

Takes the time to become familiar with the features of the home he/she is selling
Approachable and friendly
Excellent reviews, plus professional handling of negative feedback

Local reputation of closing deals quickly and successfully
Creative negotiator and proactive problem solver

Has experience with your specific selling scenario

Listens to your needs
Provides you with an up-front quote

Zillow.com

'The Last Five Years' musical opens in Long Beach

LONG BEACH — International City Theatre virtually presents "The Last Five Years," an intimate, emotionally powerful musical by Tony Award-winning composer and lyricist Jason Robert Brown.

Directed by Jamie Torcellini, "The Last Five Years" will stream June 3 through June 20 on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays (dark Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays) at www.InternationalCityTheatre.org.

"The Last Five Years" captures some of the most heartbreaking and universally felt moments of modern romance, ingeniously deconstructing a five-year love affair — from meeting to break-up and from break-up to meeting.

Jamie, a young up-and-coming novelist, falls in love with Cathy, a struggling actress. Their story is told almost entirely through song, using an intercutting timeline device: Jamie's songs start as they first

get to know each other and move forward to the end of their marriage, while Cathy's songs begin as the marriage dissolves, moving backwards in time to the beginning of their love.

"The Last Five Years" premiered at Chicago's Northlight Theatre, going on to an off-Broadway production at the Minetta Lane Theatre in New York City. It was named one of the ten best productions of 2001 by TIME magazine, and garnered the Drama Desk Award for music and lyrics.

In the two decades since, the musical continues to see productions across the country and around the world, including an off-Broadway revival at Second Stage in 2013. A film adaptation was released in 2014, starring Anna Kendrick and Jeremy Jordan.

Tickets to "The Last Five Years" are priced at \$35 per household.

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