

## Sprouts opening store in Norwalk

**NORWALK** - Sprouts has announced plans to open a new grocery store in Norwalk.

The store, which is expected to open in the fall of 2022, will be located at the southwest corner of Alondra Boulevard and Maidstone Avenue, east of the former Norwalk Swap Meet.

The Planning Commission unanimously approved plans for the 22,440 sq. ft. store on Oct. 27.

An existing 33,911 sq. ft. multi-tenant commercial building will be demolished to make room for Sprouts.

In addition to the grocery store, the site will also house a new drive-through restaurant and a 4,900 sq. ft. commercial building with space for three tenants.

"Residents had been requesting a grocery store that offers a wide selection of natural and organic foods and the City of Norwalk will finally be getting its very own Sprouts Farmers Market," said Mayor Jennifer Perez. "There is a misconception that cities have the authority to dictate which businesses operate in their cities, but that is all up to property owners and developers.

"However, the City of Norwalk is committed to planning for the economic prosperity of our community and continues to look for ways to improve our city that will ensure a thriving future for those who live, work and play here."

Headquartered in Phoenix, Sprouts is one of the fastest growing retailers in the country. The grocer employs approximately 35,000 workers and operates over 360 stores in 23 states nationwide.

A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 19.

## College, labor union strike deal

**NORWALK** - Cerritos College and the Cerritos College Faculty Federation have reached an agreement on healthcare coverage for the 2022 calendar year.

The college and labor union also have a tentative agreement covering the 2023-24 calendar year.

For 2022, the college will continue to fully cover all healthcare premiums for all plans. Full-time employees can maintain their current medical plans and avoid out of pocket expenses on healthcare premiums.

## Masks no longer required indoors at Norwalk ampm

Customers expressed disapproval at the gas station's decision.

By Vincent Medina Contributor

**NORWALK** - Customers were surprised to learn that the Norwalk ampm at 10602 Imperial Hwy. will no longer require masks inside the convenience store. The business' decision comes as California reports a rise in COVID-19 cases.

Upon entering the store, some customers are taken aback to see ampm employees maskless. Most indoor businesses require face coverings to protect against the virus.

Los Angeles County department of public health says everyone must wear a mask in all indoor public places regardless of vaccine status.

"I don't think it's safe, [COVID] is still around," said LA resident Mayra Hernandez as she filled her car with gas. "If everyone wore a mask, it would bring the numbers down and hopefully not have COVID next year."

A portion of customers, including Hernandez, chose to pay for their gas at the pump to avoid going inside. However, numerous people from across LA County still decide to go inside the ampm convenience store every day.

The county department of health says people should wear a mask when around others who are not in their household to avoid contracting or spreading the virus.

According to the CDC, masks are proven to help protect a person from contracting and spreading COVID-19.

"You get people from different places, and you don't know if they're sick or vaccinated. I work at Disneyland and still have to wear our masks outside," said Hernandez.

Norwalk resident Albert Contreras felt ampm's decision was unsafe but noted that most people in the area are vaccinated.

"I feel there's a lot less risk out in these areas where, I think, almost everyone is vaccinated," said Contreras. "If it were like Orange County, I think that would be a bigger issue."

He expressed confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine, which is proven to be 90% effective in protecting people from the virus. Contreras also feels that restrictions will continue to go down as vaccination rates go up.

The county department of health says 72% of LA County residents, ages 12 and higher, are fully vaccinated. However, in Norwalk, 71% of residents in the same category are fully vaccinated.

"Everything in the county is so strict, you can't go anywhere



The ampm convenience store in Norwalk lifted its mask mandate indoors. Their decision comes as COVID-19 cases rise in California. (Photo by Vincent Medina)

without a mask. It's weird that [ampm] lift their requirement now," said Joana Estrada, LA resident and digital marketing specialist.

She called ampm's decision "irresponsible." Estrada said the community would be safer if they and other high-volume businesses enforced COVID safety protocols.

To businesses that do not implement COVID safety rules, Estrada asks, "Why aren't you doing everything you can to keep the community safe?"

The Norwalk ampm supervisor was not available for comment.

Surrounding ampm stores are choosing to lift mask requirements indoors, too.

The Bellflower ampm at 10159 Alondra Blvd does not enforce masks inside, despite the sign on their door telling customers to put on a face-covering before entering.

The Downey ampm at 10808 Lakewood Blvd deviates from their neighboring partners and requires masks inside their store.

## Norwalk foster mother charged with abuse

The 4-year-old boy was admitted to a local hospital in grave condition.

**NORWALK** - A Norwalk woman has been arrested for allegedly beating her foster son "into a coma."

An investigation began on Oct. 28, when Los Angeles County sheriff's detectives responded to a home along the 14,700 block of Pioneer Boulevard regarding the physical abuse of a boy.

The victim was gravely injured and was admitted to a hospital intensive care unit, officials said in a news release.

The boy's foster mother, Gabriela Casarez, 26, was arrested the next day on suspicion of child abuse.

The case was presented to the L.A. County District Attorney's Office and Casarez, who weighs nearly 300 pounds, was charged with one count of assault on

a child becoming comatose/paralysis and two counts of child abuse under circumstances or conditions likely to cause great bodily injury or death, according to the Sheriff's Department.

She remains in custody on \$1.2 million bail, inmate records show.

Casarez pleaded not guilty to the charges and is due back in court on Dec. 6.

During a news conference Monday, relatives said the boy was placed in foster care by the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services in April.

"We have no evidence that he was with anyone other than this foster family and there's clear evidence that he was tortured and beaten into a coma," the family's attorney, Michael Alder, said. "Like every parent, you're just horrified beyond belief. You don't understand one, how it happened, but, two,

why someone would do this."

Alder is preparing to file a lawsuit against the county and is demanding an investigation.

The boy's 2-year-old brother was also placed in foster care, but the family does not know where he ended up. They're hoping to find out what led to the abuse on the older boy, and where the younger boy currently is.

"No kid deserves this in any care, under anyone's care," Maria Jacinto, the boy's aunt, said. "We're just asking for justice and for everything to come out."

Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn on Tuesday announced her intention to ask the LA County Office of Child Protection to conduct an investigation into the alleged abuse.

"This story is appalling," said Hahn. "We were supposed to be protecting this boy when

we took him away from his family, but if these allegations are true, we put him in the care of an abusive foster mother who hurt him so severely that he had to be hospitalized.

"I am praying for this little boy's recovery and I am asking for a full investigation by the Office of Child Protection. We not only need to know how it is possible that we could have placed a child in such a home, but we also need to question why he was removed in the first place and whether language barriers could have had a role in that decision."

A motion calling for the investigation will be placed on the agenda for the upcoming Nov. 16 meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

## Downey council member cited after son found living in laundry room

The Downey council member was cited by code enforcement after her son was discovered living in an apartment storage room.

By Alex Dominguez Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** - Downey council member Catherine Alvarez was cited for unapproved occupancy earlier this year, after her son was found to be living in a storage room at Eden Roc Apartments.

According to code enforcement documents, officials received several complaints about a person sleeping in the laundry room closet.

Upon inspection, officials found "a male of approximately 21 years old laying down on what appeared to be a bed made of two large plastic storage containers and a piece of wood," as well as some blankets and pillows.



Catherine Alvarez

The report continues that the individual, identified as LennJhon Alvarez, stated that he "can't live in his mother's house in the apartments."

Officials ordered him to remove his personal belongings, and returned two hours later to ensure that the space had been vacated.

A month later, a new complaint was brought to the code enforcement counter that the same person was once again living in the storage room, adding that they would discard used condoms and smoke marijuana in the small storage unit.

Upon return, officials once again found LennJhon inhabiting the space, with the same layout as before, and with several shoe boxes and bags of clothing.

The report says that LennJhon claimed that "his mom was in the living room with her dog and he was not allowed to stay in her apartment."

When confronted again with the issue, the report states that Alvarez responded by saying he was an adult and that she could

not control him, adding that he had taken the key to the storage room from the house.

According to Downey Police Captain Leslie Murray, the matter was investigated by Downey Police Department and has been closed, as officials found no foundation to support allegations of neglect or endangerment.

Alvarez, LennJhon, and Eden Roc Apartment manager Andres Delgado were all given citations.

The citations were first discovered by supporters of Alvarez's recall effort.

Alvarez declined to respond directly to two Downey Patriot emails asking for comment, instead opting to release a statement of her own.

### Weekend at a Glance

Friday	91°	
Saturday	87°	
Sunday	88°	

### THINGS TO DO



"The Conductor" Saturday, 4:30 pm Downey Civic Theatre

The Downey Theatre hosts a free screening of "The Conductor," a film about the first woman to successfully conduct a large symphony orchestra.

### ON THIS DAY NOVEMBER 12

#### 1920

Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis was elected baseball's first commissioner.

#### 1942

The World War II naval Battle of Guadalcanal began. The Americans eventually won a major victory over the Japanese.

#### 1954

Ellis Island closed after processing more than 20 million immigrants since opening in New York Harbor in 1892.

#### 1958

A team of rock climbers led by Warren Harding completes the first ascent of The Nose on El Capitan in Yosemite Valley.



#### 1985

Xavier Suarez was elected Miami's first Cuban-American mayor.

#### 1997

Ramzi Yousef was found guilty of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

#### 1999

President Bill Clinton signed a sweeping measure knocking down Depression-era barriers and allowing banks, investment firms and insurance companies to sell each other's products.

#### 2001

An American Airlines flight crashed near New York's Kennedy airport, killing 265 people.

#### 2004

A jury convicted Scott Peterson of murdering his pregnant wife, Laci, and dumping her body in San Francisco Bay. (Peterson was later sentenced to death.)

#### 2009

Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan was charged with 13 counts of premeditated murder in the Fort Hood, Texas, massacre.

### Birthdays

Sportscaster **Al Michaels** (77), singer-songwriter **Neil Young** (76), retired baseball player **Sammy Sosa** (53), retired figure skater **Tonya Harding** (51), R&B singer **Tevin Campbell** (45), actor **Ryan Gosling** (41), actress **Anne Hathaway** (39), R&B singer **Omarion** (37), and Lakers guard **Russell Westbrook** (33).

# Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer

We all need to eat. Most of us assume that the food we buy is safe. Is this assumption correct? Well... no.



Lost productivity and medical expenses resulting from unsafe food worldwide cost about \$110 billion every year. Unsafe food might contain harmful bacteria, viruses, parasites or chemicals, leading to some 200 different diseases, ranging from diarrhea to cancer. According to the CDC, roughly one in six Americans fall ill from foodborne disease each year, and children under five are especially

susceptible. Diseases causing diarrhea are by far the most common.

Common bacterial food pathogens result in symptoms including fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. Salmonella can be found in eggs, poultry and other animal products. Campylobacter is mainly seen in raw milk, raw or uncooked poultry and contaminated drinking water. E. coli is associated with unpasteurized milk, undercooked meat and fresh fruit and vegetables. Listeria is found in unpasteurized dairy products and various ready-to-eat foods, and can grow even at refrigerator temperatures. It can lead to miscarriages, or death of

newborn babies, and this is why it is important for pregnant women to avoid unpasteurized products.

Food contaminated with viruses is often from infected food handlers. Norovirus symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. It has been seen on cruise ships. It can be spread through very small particles of feces or vomit from an infected person, or from direct contact. Hepatitis A can cause liver disease and spreads through raw or undercooked seafood, or contaminated raw products.

Parasites are transmitted through food, contaminated water, or person-to-person contact. They can live in soil and contaminate fresh produce. In the United States, the most common foodborne parasites are strains of protozoa, which include Cryptosporidium, Giardia, Cyclospora and Toxoplasma. These protozoa can be found in undercooked fish, crab and mollusks, undercooked

meat, raw watercress, and raw vegetables that were exposed to human or animal feces. Food service workers can be a source. Typical symptoms of foodborne parasites include diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms.

Chemicals can contaminate food and water, and result in a wide range of health problems. Some of these chemicals are natural, and others are manufactured. One well-known example is BPA, found in plastic water bottles. It is released into the water when the bottles are opened and exposed to heat. BPA has been linked to various reproductive issues. Based on hundreds of studies, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has said that BPA is safe at the very low levels that occur in some foods, but continues to monitor the research.

How can we help to ensure that our food is safe to eat?

Clean: Wash hands and working surfaces frequently. Wash for 20 seconds with soap

and water before, during, and after preparing food, and before eating. Wash utensils, cutting boards, and countertops with hot, soapy water. Unless the packaging clearly states "pre-washed," rinse fresh fruits and vegetables well.

Separate: Be careful to not cross contaminate certain foods. Use separate cutting boards and plates for raw meat, poultry, and seafood. When shopping, and in the refrigerator, keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and their juices, away from other foods.

Cook: Food is safely cooked when the internal temperature is high enough to kill germs that can cause illness. Use a food thermometer, as checking the color or texture is not good enough.

Chill: Once food is properly handled and cooked, it needs to be properly stored. Bacteria can multiply rapidly. As a rule, never leave perishable food out for more than two hours, or one hour if the

temperature is above 90 degrees. Keep this rule in mind when bringing home "doggy bags"! Make sure that the refrigerator temperature is 40 degrees or below. Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Don't thaw foods on the counter, because bacteria can quickly multiply in the parts that reach room temperature.

When shopping, avoid cans that are bulging or jars that have cracks or loose lids. Always check expiration dates, and discard foods when they expire. Once fruit and vegetables are cut, refrigerate them. Remember that potlucks are legendary for causing food poisoning, because foods often sit out too long.

Be cautious, be safe, and bon appetit!

*Dr. Alan Frischer is former chief of staff and former chief of medicine at Downey Regional Medical Center. Write to him in care of this newspaper at 8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240.*

# PTSD in the spotlight this Veterans Day

On Nov. 11, we honored the men and women who served our country, and acknowledged their heroism and sacrifices that have helped protect our freedoms since our nation's birth.

However, their patriotism and service comes at a very high price, especially for those who have been involved in military conflicts. Many of these heroes struggle long after they have been discharged with the real and daunting effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Because of PTSD, many veterans experience nightmares and flashbacks as they relive traumatic events they experienced on the battlefield, which have become seared in their memories and are adversely affecting their mental health.

In one major study of 60,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, 13.5% screened positive for PTSD, while other studies show the rate to be as high as 20% to 30%. As many as 500,000 U.S. troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan may have been diagnosed with PTSD, according to the study.

And, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, a National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study found differences among African American and white Vietnam theater Veterans in terms of readjustment after military service. Black male Vietnam Veterans had higher rates of PTSD than whites. Rates of current PTSD in the study were 21% among African Americans, and 14% among whites.

"For those veterans who are struggling with PTSD, they are often affected in many different ways," said Dr. Luis Sandoval, a psychiatrist with Kaiser Permanente Southern California. "They all have one thing in common, however. They often experience

significant challenges when it comes to handling daily activities such as work, going to school or having healthy relationships with their spouse, children, friends and loved ones. That can often lead to shame, anxiety, social withdrawal, sleep disorders, or even suicide."

Dr. Sandoval noted the simplest triggers can make someone with PTSD feel like their nervous system becomes hijacked by a panic reaction, and that can cause you to fight (get angry), flight (avoid) or freeze (feel numb).

Certain factors increase the chances of someone developing PTSD, Dr. Sandoval added. They include having directly witnessed or repeatedly experienced the aftermath of a very intense or long-lasting traumatic event, which is common among many veterans.

According to Dr. Sandoval, doing the following may improve a person's path to recovery from PTSD:

Always attend scheduled counseling sessions and doctor's appointments.

In times of anxiety, reassure and comfort yourself.

Avoid alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and illegal drug use, as they can raise your anxiety level and cause problems with sleeping.

Make sure you get sufficient rest.

Exercise.

Use proven relaxation techniques.

Get involved in your community.

Dr. Sandoval emphasized the importance of knowing when to seek help. That's because there are times when PTSD can cause severe anxiety and other challenges that require medical attention to ensure good mental health.

"If you have thoughts of hurting or injuring yourself or others, then call 911 right away," he stressed. "Also, if you feel your state of mental health isn't improving, or if your symptoms get worse, then you should contact your health care provider. Remember, there's no shame in seeking help."

# Rancho's pediatrics sees bright future

Newly-appointed pediatrics chair Dr. Michael Bolaris says the Rancho Los Amigos program is ready to grow.

**DOWNEY** - Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center is poised once again to take pediatric rehabilitation to the next level with the recent appointment of Rancho's new Chair of Pediatrics, Dr. Michael Bolaris.

Rancho has always believed in giving their pediatric patients a tremendous amount of support and opportunity to live a happy, productive, and independent life, a sentiment that is shared and embodied by Dr. Bolaris. "I feel that it's our duty to guide these pediatric patients into adulthood and into being fully functional members of society."

Dr. Bolaris continued,

"Through our partnerships with the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation, Las Floristas, and the social work department, we are in a unique position to offer our patients help with their college education, give them experiences like team sports through our wheelchair basketball teams, and find a community that they can belong to through the various art programs and support groups."

Individuals dealing with a spinal cord injury, brain injury, massive stroke, or any degenerative disease must confront a different set of lifelong challenges, which most hospitals do not have the financial resources necessary to assist these patients with the community reintegration portion of their recovery. The patient programs funded through the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation bridges this gap for Rancho's patients by affording them the opportunities to discover and explore a variety of adaptive experiences.

When a child or young person is given the opportunity to gain independence through adaptive driving classes or find their unique talents through art workshops or team sports, they are able to see beyond their disability to focus on their ability. The Rancho Los Amigos Foundation is fortunate to partner with Las Floristas, a local non-profit dedicated to serving the special needs of children at Rancho with exceptional physical and/or cognitive challenges.

In addition to pediatric support groups, wheelchair



Las Floristas' scholarship awardee Gaby M. celebrating her graduation from USC.

sports, dentistry, a pediatric art program, and a multitude of inpatient recreation therapy programs, Las Floristas has been funding educational scholarships for Rancho's pediatric patients through financial assistance for community colleges, universities and master's level programs, as well as trade schools.

"Many of these young adults would not have the opportunity to attend higher education programs if not for the grants they receive from Las Floristas. Our program has grown over the last few years and now includes two fully funded four

year award scholarships in addition to stipends offered to more than 40 students on an annual basis," shared Amanda Settlage, Las Floristas Executive Director.

When asked what the future holds for Rancho's pediatric programs, Dr. Bolaris stated, "Rancho is growing and ready to accept more patients. We can provide the specialty care that is needed and we have more transitional services than most other children's hospitals.

"While we may still be a long way from my vision of a large, complete care pediatric center, we are on the right track. With the addition of Rancho's new SHARK clinic (Strong, Healthy, And Resilient Kids), we not only focus on the physical health and well-being of the patient, but also the emotional issues these young people face.

"When you add in our community resource partners like the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation and Las Floristas, Rancho is already well on its way to providing the very best in continuum of care for our pediatric patients."

For more information about the programs and services funded by the Rancho Los Amigos Foundation or to make a donation, call (562) 385-7053 or go to [www.RanchoFoundation.org](http://www.RanchoFoundation.org).

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# What we owe our veterans

By Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard

On Thursday, November 11th, we celebrated our second Veterans Day since the beginning of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Like last year, many of us were still largely restricted from honoring our veterans with our traditional Veterans Day celebrations and family gatherings. This reality in no way minimizes the great respect and gratitude we have for our veterans, who have served and made the sacrifices needed to defend our nation and American ideals.

As we know, 2021 has been a year of multiple challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, our nation's civil unrest, and the tragedy in our nation's capital on January 6th. These heartbreaking realities of polarization, unrest, and threats to our American values are constant reminders of just how fragile our democracy is.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon us all to celebrate Veterans Day to reaffirm our commitment to the patriotism, heroism, and ideals for which our veterans risked and gave their lives. Let us also pledge to respect and honor the men and women who bravely served our country by doing our part to protect and preserve our American democracy.

I am privileged to represent so many veterans in our 40th Congressional District, and I am proud to be part of a family of veterans that includes my husband, a Marine officer who served two combat tours in Vietnam.

On behalf of all of our veterans, I am thrilled to have joined my Democratic colleagues to pass President Biden's American Rescue

Plan into law. This legislation provides the care and support our veterans have earned and rightfully deserve.

It delivers extensive funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) service organizations, including the East Los Angeles VA Clinic in the City of Commerce, to strengthen its ability to serve veterans facing challenges from the impact of COVID-19.

The American Rescue Plan also addresses the weaknesses the pandemic exposed in the VA's hospital supply system, which have increased delays in claims processing and slowed the delivery of benefits to disabled veterans. To ensure a more efficient and effective VA, the American Rescue Plan provides funding to modernize the VA's supply chain, expand service record digitization services, boost the ability of the VA to conduct tele-hearings, and accelerate the claims process by covering overtime costs for staff.

I am extremely pleased that during the pandemic, the American Rescue Plan continues to provide our veterans with access to lifesaving COVID-19 vaccinations and State Veterans Homes and covers co-payments for their medical care. In addition, President Biden's plan will enable expansion of VA services for suicide prevention and women's health services, enhancements for VA homeless programs, and increases in telehealth appointments to reduce the risk of contracting the virus.

It is now up to Congress to build on these successes and past President Biden's Build Back Better Act. This bill would make an

additional \$5 billion investment in the VA's workforce and help to rebuild the physical infrastructure of the VA system, including the many hospitals that are over fifty years old and in need of serious repair. The funding will also bring needed updates to the support structures that serve our veterans.

The fact remains, however, that we can never fully repay our veterans and their families for their patriotism and sacrifices made on our behalf and that of our country. We must never give up on our efforts to express our gratitude and respect.

One way to fulfill our solemn duty and responsibility is to do everything in our power to find common ground as Americans to both heal and strengthen our democracy as well as protect our country and our American values from those who would do us harm.

As the greatest country in the world, when united we can and will meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. We owe this to our veterans, who must know that their sacrifices and service to our country were not made in vain.

May God continue to bless our veterans, our troops, our military families, and the United States of America.

*Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard represents California's 40th District, which contains the communities of Bell, Bell Gardens, Commerce, Cudahy, Downey, Huntington Park, Maywood, Paramount, Vernon, and parts of Bellflower, East Los Angeles, Florence-Firestone, and South Los Angeles.*

# Why religious exemptions are a mistake

By Steve Chapman

Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice once recounted how her grandfather experienced a spiritual revelation. When he lacked the money to fulfill his dream of graduating from Stillman College, he was told he could get a scholarship — but only if he wanted to become a Presbyterian minister. “That’s just what I had in mind,” he replied.

Other Americans are hoping that religion can offer them a way to fulfill one of their cherished dreams: avoiding vaccination for COVID-19. They are claiming that they should not have to be inoculated because their faith forbids it.

This assertion didn't help a nurse at the Kaiser Permanente San Diego Medical Center who lost her job for declining the vaccine because of her “sincerely held religious beliefs.” Kaiser Permanente responded with a polite version of “give me a frickin’ break.” Said its chief medical officer, “We believe that misusing the religious exemption to avoid vaccination is disrespectful to those with sincere religious beliefs, and could violate the ethical standards we expect our employees to meet.”

Federal civil rights guidelines advise employers to accommodate the religious obligations of their workers, but it doesn't compel them to be gullible saps. Companies are entitled to insist that employees provide persuasive evidence that they are acting on the iron imperatives of faith rather than personal whim.

Marshalling such evidence won't be easy. No major faith bars its followers from being immunized against disease. Even Jehovah's Witnesses, which rejects blood transfusions, and Christian Science,

which discourages medical treatment, don't forbid it.

A lot of the holdouts have never claimed religious objections to other vaccines. Most, it's safe to say, couldn't articulate any halfway plausible rationale to refuse.

The San Diego nurse, Victoria Jensen, admitted she had gotten other vaccinations. For this one, her excuse was, “God speaks to me clearly.” Funny — God tells me she's making that up.

On Thursday, the Biden administration issued a vaccine mandate for workers at companies with 100 or more employees and for health care workers at facilities that participate in Medicare and Medicaid. Those mandates, unfortunately, allow religious exemptions, which promise nothing but trouble.

Employers who choose to accommodate religious exemptions face a dilemma. If they try to verify each claim, they have to investigate subjective matters on which they have no expertise. If they accept all claims, they invite every phony and crank to escape a basic measure needed to protect those around them. It would make more sense for the administration to simply forbid such exemptions.

That's not exactly a radical idea. Mississippi is one of the most conservative states, and one of the most churchgoing. But since 1979, it hasn't allowed parents to get religious exemptions from the vaccinations required for kids to attend school. Thanks to this policy, it leads the nation in childhood inoculation rates.

Nor is the federal government or any state obliged to grant such accommodations. In 1990, the Supreme Court ruled that the

Constitution's guarantee of religious freedom doesn't mean believers are exempt from laws that apply to everyone else.

To rule otherwise, the court said, would lead to “religious exemptions from civic obligations of almost every conceivable kind — ranging from compulsory military service to the payment of taxes” and, yes, “compulsory vaccination laws.” The author of the court's majority opinion? Conservative hero Antonin Scalia.

In some instances, it's fair and humane not to penalize people for practicing their faith — say, by denying unemployment benefits to someone fired for refusing to work on the Sabbath or by imprisoning committed pacifists for refusing military induction.

But even in those cases, it makes no sense to wave through anyone who says the magic words. The burden should be on those requesting an exemption to show that their objection is sincere, consistent and rooted in religious principles.

When it comes to the COVID-19 shots, though, the number of people who could legitimately qualify is too tiny to be worth the bother. Besides, the need to combat the spread of a virus that has already killed 5 million people around the world is grave enough to overrule even authentic religious qualms, if there is such a thing.

Some people who feel entitled to behave in a grossly selfish manner that endangers others claim the Almighty has granted them permission. But that doesn't mean the rest of us should.

*Steve Chapman blogs for the Chicago Tribune.*

# America's judges are putting my life in jeopardy

By Sara Nelson

Workers are flexing collective power in major strikes, workplace actions and organizing drives, as they are forced to fight battles that labor won decades earlier: over workplace safety, an eight-hour day, vacation, sick leave, a living wage, health care and retirement security. But even as workers build power and wield it, we are thwarted by laws and judges who reliably side with corporations over workers.

America needs more judges who understand and support the rights of workers. For too long, the courts have sided with corporations over labor, fundamentally and perniciously reshaping American law, life and liberty. Today, they are doing their part to unravel the American dream — and the social contract that has been in place since the 1940s, offering the working class a good life if they spend 40 hours on the job, the means to enjoy it in off hours and a secure retirement.

In one stark example, a judge in Alabama in October barred union mineworkers from picketing within 300 yards of mine entrances, even as the authorities there have failed to charge the drivers of vehicles that struck lawful picketers. In a more common infringement of free speech, a judge in Iowa limited United Auto Workers picket lines outside a John Deere plant in Davenport last month to just four people at each entrance to the plant.

The wholesale theft of workers' rights is happening in broad daylight.

With the help of conservative judges, corporations have systematically weakened labor laws for decades, leaving workers fewer and fewer tools to hold their bosses accountable. In the rare cases when workers win judgments against a bad boss, employers rarely face more than a slap on the wrist.

This didn't happen by accident. Republican presidents have stacked the federal courts with judges who hail from elite law schools, white-shoe law firms and corporate boardrooms. (More than a quarter of all federal judges on the bench in January had been appointed by Donald Trump.) As a result, the corporate win rate in American courts is sky-high.

This is especially true in cases heard by the Supreme Court, which has sided with the Chamber of Commerce 70 percent of the time since 2006. A study published in 2013 ranked Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas among the five most-corporate-friendly members of the court since 1946, and the pro-corporate voting rate of its conservative wing is only growing. According to one recent report, the court agrees with the Chamber of Commerce more now than it had at any other time in recent history.

Two other cases this year vividly demonstrate how the business lobby is using the courts to undermine workers' rights.

In June, in Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid, the Supreme Court elevated property rights above the rights of workers, upending a 1975 California law that allowed union organizers to speak with farmworkers in the fields and vineyards. This law had been a seminal accomplishment for the farmworker labor movement led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. As if to emphasize the court's hostility to workers' rights, Chief Justice Roberts declared that the California law granted union organizers the “right to invade the growers' property.”

In another case decided in June, Trinity Services Group v. National Labor Relations Board, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia gave employers a free pass to hoodwink their employees into voting against the union as long as they don't make threats or promises or evoke future consequences.

Because judges have created loopholes and carve-outs in labor law over the years, companies can seek to weaken the collective power of workers by forcing them to attend anti-union “captive audience meetings,” firing workers who organize their colleagues and disseminating propaganda smearing unions, as well as employing other intimidation tactics to keep employees from organizing.

Congress wrote labor laws to foster union organizing and encourage collective bargaining, recognizing that workers are the foundation of our economy, and their collective power can check corporate abuses. Congress is today considering landmark legislation to update outdated, broken (and in some cases overtly racist and

sexist) labor laws and give workers a fair chance to organize, bargain and hold employers accountable. But its passage would prove hollow if the courts dismantled it or wouldn't enforce it.

This isn't just an academic question, or even an economic one — it's often a matter of life and death. Before he joined the Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch, as a judge on the Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, voted to allow the firing of an employee who abandoned an unheated company truck in a blizzard to avoid freezing to death. This is just one example of the judicial callousness toward workers that has put our livelihoods and lives in real danger.

President Biden has an important opportunity to appoint judges who have been in the trenches with workers, and who know that strong labor laws and union contracts create workplace protections and rights for workers. By nominating union lawyers and worker advocates, he can help break the cycle of courts undermining our rights to benefit their corporate friends.

Workers have seen progress when presidents appointed judges who had a personal understanding of injustice. Justices like Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg devoted their careers as lawyers to arguing for civil and women's rights and changed our nation for the better from the bench. We've had laws to protect workers' rights for nearly 100 years, but workers have learned that seeking justice in the courts leads all too often to frustration. No workers are immune from having their rights snatched away as long as judges reflexively side with employers.

With the midterm elections approaching, it's imperative that the White House act swiftly to fill vacancies while Democrats hold a Senate majority to confirm Mr. Biden's nominees.

In this moment of historic economic inequality, the president can take a powerful action to help workers build — and keep — power.

*Sara Nelson is the president of the Association of Flight Attendants-C.W.A.*

## The Norwalk Patriot

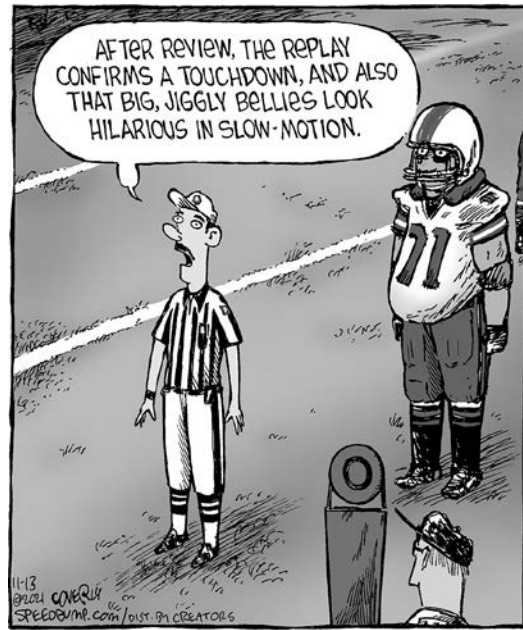
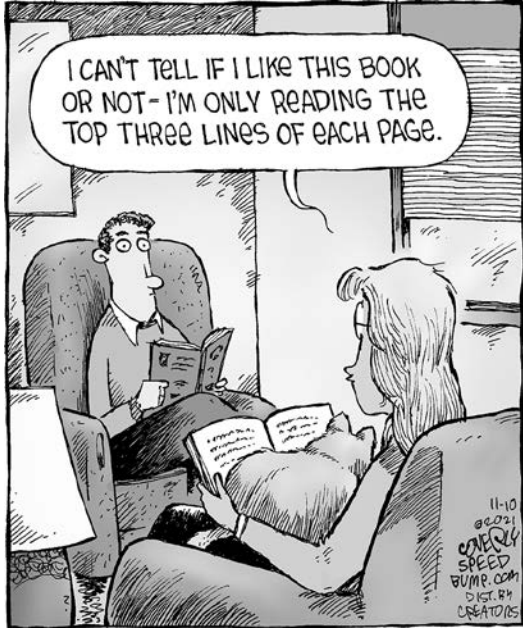


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# SPEED BUMP DAVE COVERLY



## Norwalk Community Calendar

### MONDAYS

1st Mon., 6 pm - Public Safety meetings - Council Chambers

### TUESDAYS

9:00 a.m. - 1 pm - Farmers Market - Norwalk City Hall  
 1st & 3rd Tues., 6 pm - Toastmasters Meetings - Registrar Recorder/County Clerks Office  
 1st & 3rd Tues., 6 pm - City Council - Council Chambers  
 3rd Tues., 5:45 pm - Housing Authority - Council Chambers

### WEDNESDAYS

1st & 3rd Wed., 7 pm - Lions Club - Bruce's Restaurant  
 2nd Wed., 10:30 am - Norwalk Woman's Club - Faith Church  
 2nd & 4th Wed., 1:30 pm - Alondra Senior Citizens - Social Services Center  
 2nd & 4th Wed., 6 pm - Soroptimist International - Via Zoom  
 2nd & 4th Wed., 7:30 pm - Planning Commission - Council Chambers  
 4th Wed., 11:30 am - Coordinating Council - Arts & Sports Complex

### THURSDAYS

7 pm - Boy Scouts Troop 924 - Norwalk United Methodist Church  
 2nd Thurs., 6 pm - 605 Kiwanis Club - Mr. Rosewood Family Restaurant  
 2nd Thurs., 7 pm - American Legion Post No. 359 - 11986 Front St.  
 2nd Thurs., 7:30 pm - Golden Trowel - Norwalk Masonic Lodge

### SATURDAYS

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Farmers Market - Norwalk City Hall  
 2nd Sat., 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. - Pancake Breakfast - 1st Christian Church of Norwalk

Would you like an event listed in the community calendar?  
 E-mail news@thedowneypatriot.com

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# PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

## THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)  
**WHERE'D THEY GO?: They're here**  
 by Mark McClain

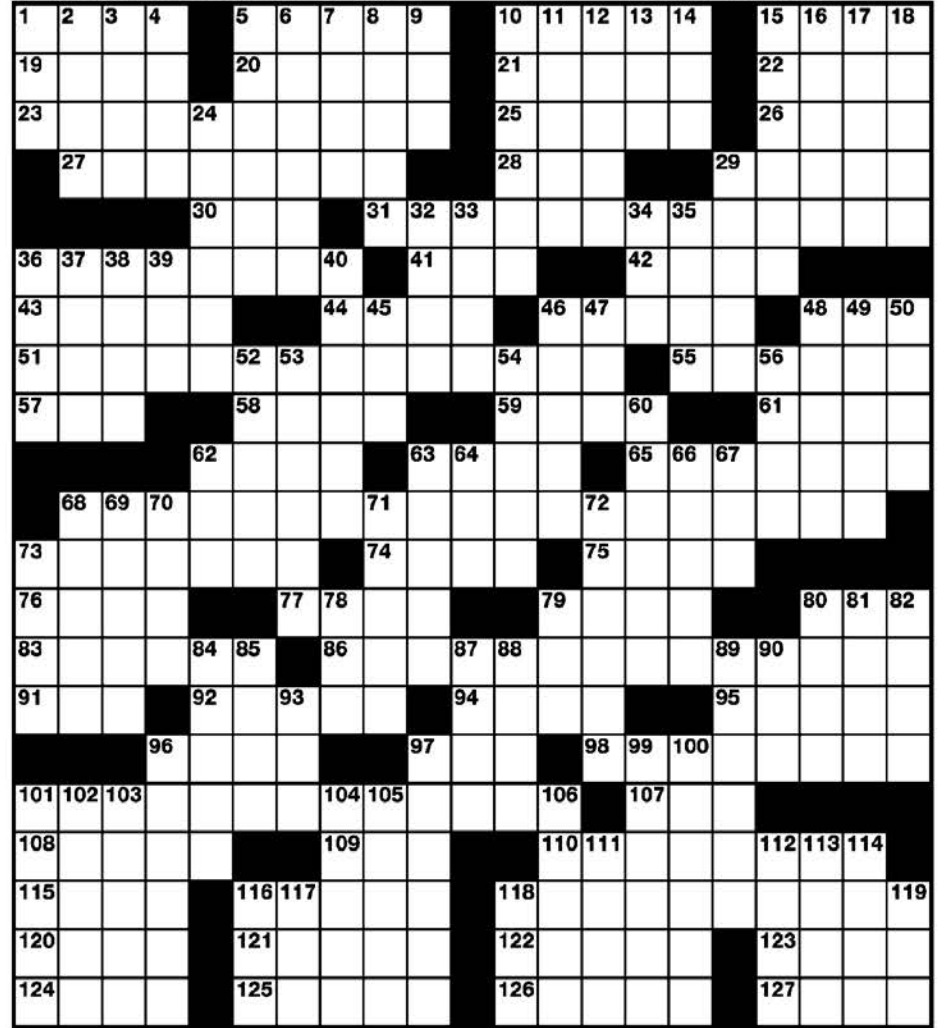
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| <b>ACROSS</b> | 1 Obsessive Melville character | 5 Part of a dinette set | 10 Pucks, for instance | 15 Isn't passive | 19 Leisurely gait | 20 Microsoft cofounder | 21 Ho-hum feeling | 22 Flue collection | 23 Fell behind | 25 Reporter's territories | 26 Munich monsieur | 27 "Disarmed," as a bull | 28 "Time for a walk!" | 29 Legislative body | 30 ___ Moines, IA | 31 Familiar light on a busy street | 36 Smelled like | 41 Pumpkin concoction | 42 Pool filler, at times | 43 Skate park stunt | 44 "Don't you wish!" | 46 Show contempt for | 48 Fighter jets' HQ | 51 "Taken" or "fallen" | 55 Payable soon | 57 Compass reading | 58 Telejournalist Paula | 59 Disreputable one | 61 Sensibly reasoned | 62 Peseta successor | 63 Gallic gal pal | 65 Least complicated | 68 "Time to get tough with you!" | 73 Valleys formed by erosion | 74 Take exception to | 75 Fairy tale starter | 76 Start the betting | 77 Walked upon | 79 Solemnly state | 80 Some LG appliances | 83 Deprived (of) | 86 AFI's #1 movie song | 91 Superlative suffix | 92 Leave alone | 94 Eurasia's vanishing ___ Sea | 95 Nabisco wafer brand | 96 Fleet hopper | 97 Minimal quantity | 98 Police unit | 101 "No crib for a bed" carol | 107 Keats creation | 108 Less established | 109 "___ luck?" | 110 Breakfast bread | 115 Author Auel | 116 Flower that sounds like sheep or birds | 118 Long distance romantic lament | 120 Pod veggie | 121 What tops jalapeños | 122 One ___ chance (long odds) | 123 Three-min. periods of boxing | 124 Puts in the game | 125 Beasts of burden | 126 Diving lake birds | 127 Board member, for short | <b>DOWN</b> | 1 Fully | 2 It's near fenders | 3 Chapel area | 4 Little Women girl | 5 Repaired, as a road | 6 King in <i>The Tempest</i> | 7 Needing cheering | 8 Czech tennis great | 9 Wrap up | 10 Interscholastic match | 11 Nonreactive, as neon | 12 Ridiculous muddle | 13 Reduce | 14 Graffon's ___ for <i>Silence</i> | 15 Where driftwood drifts | 16 ___ d'Alene, ID | 17 Sculpted trunk | 18 Spread around | 24 Hit a homer | 29 Is compelled | 32 "Awesome, dude!" | 33 Generic poodle name | 34 Sorority letter | 35 Any word for an object | 36 Climber's accessory | 37 Impressive style | 38 "If all ___ fails..." | 39 Young fox | 40 Grasp the meaning of | 45 Evil act | 46 Albatross or aviator | 47 Rural expanse | 48 Parting word | 49 Not easy to please | 50 Chard cousin | 52 Sky color | 53 Least obtainable | 54 Engaged in, as a trade | 56 Piece of a nest | 60 See 78 Down | 62 Unimaginably long time | 63 Set ___ (nullify) | 64 Peak: Abbr. | 66 Capital of Ghana | 67 Consult with | 68 Backs of necks | 69 Out in the open | 70 Go for the gold | 71 Start of a formal proposal | 72 Romances, for instance | 73 Court clothing | 78 With 60 Down, <i>The Princess Bride</i> director | 79 "So that's it!" | 80 Skilled | 81 Dark drink | 82 Did some horizontal laps | 84 Sparkling style | 85 Sort of seabird | 87 Resonated | 88 Tire swing's support | 89 Office apprentice | 90 Minor matter | 93 Brewed beverage | 96 African scavengers | 97 Cameo stones | 99 Deteriorate | 100 Computer accessories | 101 Pear variety | 102 Pay periods, often | 103 In the know | 104 Retail complexes | 105 Battery pole | 106 Massive mammal | 111 Concerning | 112 Tyrannical boss | 113 Bobcat cousin | 114 Ore galore | 116 School support org. | 117 ___ Holiness (Dalai Lama address) | 118 www.army. ___ | 119 LA campus |
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You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at [www.StanXwords.com](http://www.StanXwords.com)



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| 72 Romances, for instance                           | 87 Resonated             | 104 Retail complexes                  |
| 73 Court clothing                                   | 88 Tire swing's support  | 105 Battery pole                      |
| 78 With 60 Down, <i>The Princess Bride</i> director | 89 Office apprentice     | 106 Massive mammal                    |
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# Last second field goal ends Norwalk's football season

■ 19-yard field goal knocks Lancers out of Division 12 playoffs.

By John M. Sherrard  
Contributor

**NORWALK** — With a late lead in the CIF-Southern Section Division 12 playoffs, a heartbreaking last second field goal ended the season for the Norwalk Lancers in a first-round game Friday (Nov. 5) at Norwalk High.

Norwalk had a 21-13 lead with five minutes to play in the game. Woodbridge scored a touchdown, a two-point conversion and a 19-yard field goal by Daniel Goodrich with 11 seconds left to defeat the Lancers.

With the win, Woodbridge (4-7) will play Rosemead (6-5), a 28-7 winner over Rancho Alamitos, in a second-round game.

Norwalk ends its season at 6-5.

"The game didn't go the way we thought it would," Norwalk first-year coach Ruben Guerrero said. "It didn't go according to plan. That's a pretty good little football team (Woodbridge) over there."

"When we started on a roll, they had some answers for things that we were doing. We stymied our own offense with the penalties. Our offense was moving backwards rather than forwards like it usually does."

A big missing link to the Norwalk offense was running back David Herrera.

The junior, who had rushed for 1,312 yards and scored 19 touchdowns this season, didn't play in the last league game and Friday's playoff game.

It was a huge loss for the team, as he had been averaging 9.8 yards per carry, 145 yards per game and rushed for over 100 yards in eight of his nine games

played.

Senior running back Jonathan Goodloe led the Lancers with 17 carries for 139 yards and touchdown runs of seven, four and 33 yards.

Woodbridge was led by sophomore quarterback Edward Ma completing 20 of 23 passes for 201 yards and a touchdown.

"I'm happy that we went further than everybody said we could go," Goodloe said. "We met the expectations that nobody else thought we were going to make. So, that's a good thing for us."

"As for the game, I knew we were going to have to stop their best player on the team. They didn't stop me, but defensively we didn't stop them."

Goodloe gave the Lancers the first lead of the game, 7-0, with a 7-yard run early in the first quarter.

Woodbridge, on its first drive of the game, answered with a touchdown to tie the game, 7-7, with 2:18 left in the opening quarter.

Highlighting the touchdown drive was a 12-yard pass from Ma to wide receiver Jackson Trerotola to the 20-yard line. Junior running back Feiamma Armstrong capped the drive off with a four-yard run to the right corner, going in virtually untouched for the score.

Norwalk took its second lead of the game, 14-7 with a long five-minute drive that ended early in the second quarter.

Goodloe scored his second touchdown of the half with a 4-yard run with 9:01 left in the half.

The back-and-forth half saw Woodbridge score on a 19-yard pass to Trerotola. They failed to tie it after a missed extra point.

Norwalk, which hadn't been in the playoffs since 2017, held on to a one-point, 14-13 tie at the half.

Early in the fourth quarter, Norwalk took its third lead of the

game, 21-13, on Goodloe's third touchdown of the game with a 33-yard run.

The fourth quarter comeback began by the Warriors with a 17-yard touchdown run by Ma. On the play, Ma scrambled and found an opening and ran in for the score.

Ma threw a 2-point conversion pass to Trerotola to tie the game at 21-21 with 5:16 left in the fourth quarter.

Highlighting the drive was a fourth-down conversion of seven yards to Trerotola at midfield for the Warriors.

Norwalk was trying to take its fourth lead of the game on its ensuing possession, but penalties forced the Lancers to punt near midfield with less than two minutes remaining.

"We held on to the ball, we were driving the ball, we were very positive and many, many times we were running the ball, but the penalties killed us," Guerrero said. "When our offense moves backwards, it doesn't work as well as it should. We kind of shot ourselves in the foot a few times."

On the final game-winning drive by Woodbridge, another crucial penalty hurt the Lancers again.

Highlighting the drive was a 32-yard pass from Ma to junior wide receiver Dereck Moore, ending up deep in the Lancers territory at the seven-yard line. That eventually led to the winning field goal.

Asked about the successful season the Lancers just concluded, Guerrero said, "As seniors, they put some things on the field (Friday) and they showed some things that we haven't seen with Norwalk football in a while."

"That's positive and they set the table for the future players and they set a very high bar that we're going to try and reach now."



Norwalk's Jonathan Goodloe (6) reacts as they lose to Woodbridge in their CIF first round football game at Norwalk High School on Friday. Woodbridge defeated Norwalk 24-21. (Photo by Keith Durlfingler)

## La Mirada 35, Golden Valley 29

After an up and down season, the Matadores are on a roll at the right time, as they came away with the win and advanced to the second round of the CIF Division 7 playoffs.

La Mirada, which had a three-game winning streak early in the season and then a three-game losing streak, has now won four straight.

The Matadores (7-4) will host Pasadena (9-2), a 50-13 winner over Thousand Oaks, at Excelsior High tonight (Nov. 12).

"It was a great game," said La Mirada coach Mike Moschetti, of the back-and-forth game. "The games they remember are played in November and December."

"Each week is a season of its own. You wait to win the week. We're playing well right now."

La Mirada had a tough preseason schedule, which included a loss to the Nation's top team, Mater Dei.

"The reason why we play teams like Mater Dei, is just for games like Pasadena this Friday," added Moschetti, on the second-round game.

Leading the way for the Matadores was senior running back Eddie Lafferre with 157 yards on 23 carries and two touchdowns, while senior Jacob Black (6 carries, 40 yds.) ran for two scores.

Junior wide receiver Xavier Hicks caught 12 passes for 128 yards and a touchdown.

Junior quarterback Nehuel Garcia (16 for 27, 2 Int.) threw for 142 yards and a touchdown.

Trailing, 15-13, at the half, Golden Valley (4-6) extended the lead to 22-13 with a pick six early in the third quarter.

The Matadores came back with two consecutive TDs on runs by Lafferre for 17 and two yards for the 28-22 lead.



Midway through the fourth quarter, Golden Valley retook the lead, 29-28, on a touchdown pass from quarterback Jaxson Miner to receiver Ajani Smith. Smith caught three touchdown passes in the game.

La Mirada failed to convert on its next possession and Golden Valley then drove down to the Matadores 7-yard line. On fourth and seven, the La Mirada defense stopped the Grizzlies.

The final series for La Mirada was reminiscent of Denver's John Elway "The Drive" to tie and eventually beat Cleveland in the AFC Championship in 1986.

However, the "drive" took over five minutes, going 98 yards and La Mirada's drive was only 90 seconds to win the game.

La Mirada, led by Garcia, drove the ball 90 yards, culminating with a 12-yard touchdown pass to Hicks for the 35-29 lead, with 22 seconds left in the game.

Hicks highlighted the drive with a clutch 13-yard catch on fourth and 10 near midfield and caught six passes.

"Hicks was out the last two weeks, missing the Norwalk and Bellflower games with a high ankle sprain," Moschetti said. "He was such a competitor on the last drive. He and Garcia made plays when plays had to be made."

## Upland 24, St. Paul 13

St. Paul, which had a six-game winning streak to begin the season, finishes with an 8-3 record.

Upland took a 17-0 lead in the first half and led 24-7 in the second half and never looked back. Upland advanced to the second round and will play Long Beach Poly in a Division 4 game tonight (Nov. 12).

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