

## Downey moves to fire city manager

■ A city council majority has decided to terminate city manager Gilbert Livas, sources said.

By Eric Pierce  
Editor

**DOWNEY** - In a major shakeup, the Downey City Council is poised to fire longtime city manager Gilbert Livas and bring in a new person to run city operations, according to sources at City Hall.

Council members met in closed session Dec. 7 where a majority of council members said they intended to fire Livas, according to sources not authorized to speak publicly.

The council members in favor of Livas' dismissal are Sean Ashton, Mario Trujillo and Catherine Alvarez, the sources said.

Mayor Blanca Pacheco and Councilwoman Claudia Frometa are said to favor keeping Livas.

The City Council scheduled a special 3 pm meeting Thursday to decide Livas' fate. Results of that meeting were not available at press time.

News of Livas' potential firing was met with negative reaction at City Hall, where officials feared an exodus of department heads.

"It could destabilize our city," said one high-ranking city official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "You're going to see Trujillo and Alvarez bring in their own person who will answer directly to them."

Livas joined Downey as community development director in 2007 and was promoted to assistant city manager in 2010. He took over as city manager following the retirement of Gerald Caton in 2011.

Downey has had only two city managers over the last 32 years and that stability has worked to Downey's benefit, officials said.

"We have two freshmen council members and their goal is not to bring fresh ideas, it is to bring someone that they can control," said another person inside City Hall who works closely with the city council. They asked that their name not be used out of fear of retribution. "Sean has been on the city council for seven years and always gave Gilbert glowing reviews. Why is he all of a sudden voting to remove him?"

Ashton, Trujillo and Alvarez did not return messages seeking comment. Frometa and Livas declined to comment.

On Wednesday, six labor groups in Downey authored a joint letter in support of Livas.

"Mr. Livas has led the City through challenging times; including a recession, a pandemic, and times of civil unrest," the letter read. "He has led with a steady hand, bringing wisdom and perspective to each situation. He has made difficult, but sound decisions and guided us through many challenges. As a result of his leadership, Downey has not only survived through difficult times, but has thrived."

"Mr. Livas' kindness, care for others and dedication to public service is what has helped shape the many of us who serve the community. Based on everything we know of Mr. Livas and his proven work record, we cannot support his removal as City Manager for the City of Downey and ask that any effort to do so be re-considered."

Former Downey mayor Alex Saab, who served on the City Council for eight years and worked alongside Livas, said it would be a mistake to fire him.

"Institutional knowledge is lost, seasoned staff members will seek employment elsewhere where there is more stability and finding a suitable replacement is extraordinarily challenging because there is currently a shortage of qualified city managers in the region," said Saab.

## Norwalk author highlights Latina struggles in critically-acclaimed novel

■ Francine Rodriguez's novel has already won awards and received praise for its collection of stories.

By Vincent Medina  
Contributor

**NORWALK** - Francine Rodriguez's third novel, "A Woman's Story," is a series of short stories inspired by actual events that highlight the hardships of Latinas and women of color.

"These are based on stories told to me when I worked in law oncology," said Rodriguez. "I was thinking of a way to tell them. I had published two novels, so I decided to write them in an anthology."

Rodriguez grew up in Los Angeles and showed a natural ability to be descriptive and detailed in her work. She later became a Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity Investigator in the federal sector, strengthening her attention to detail and imagery.

"We had a training exercise where I was in a dark room and I was told to pay attention to what was about to happen and write as much detail as I could," the author explained. "The lights would go on really quick and two people would try to rob you, then turn off and they were gone. I had to describe them based on that quick glimpse."

Rodriguez's book has earned acclaim from authors such as

Nikolas Gonzales who said, "Once again author Francine Rodriguez proves that she is the eyes and ears of Latina Realism."

Liliana Conlisk Gallegos, Ph.D., Decolonial Media Studies at CSU San Bernardino says, "In a unique and unlikely feminist reclaiming of dirty realism," Francine Rodriguez's novel takes readers on a journey of the "inner working of identity-based marginalization."

"A Woman's Story" was also awarded "Best Collection of Short Stories - English" by the International Latino Book Awards.

Rodriguez's novel can be ordered on Amazon.

Rodriguez starts the novel by throwing readers into a hospital room in May 2020. In the chapter, "Ten Days in May," the local author creates vivid first-person imagery of a Latina nurse intubating her COVID-19 patient and connecting him to a ventilator.

She walks the audience through the nurse's life and the abuse the nurse faces from colleges and patients. The author also takes time to give attention to other doctors and nurses of color.

The Norwalk author continues to engage readers with the chapter, "Smiley and Laughing Girl." By choosing to start the chapter with action, as one character is shot by MS 13, Rodriguez says it is one of her favorite stories in the book.



Francine Rodriguez gives a reading of her book, "A Woman's Story." Audiences engaged with the novel for highlighting Latinas' struggles in America.

Rodriguez had to advocate for her novel to get published, as several publishing houses rejected the book.

She finally resorted to publishing the book in pieces, and sent stories such as "I Still Like Pink" and "Smiley

and Laughing Girl" to literary journals. Rodriguez gained the attention of Madville Publishing, who agreed to publish the novel for its unique stories.

## Norwalk celebrates renovation of Holifield Park

**NORWALK** - The City of Norwalk held a ribbon cutting ceremony Wednesday for the unveiling of Holifield Park's brand-new playground equipment.

In attendance was Los Angeles County District 4 Supervisor Janice Hahn, whose major contribution of \$300,000 in financial assistance last year to the City of Norwalk helped support the cost of installing the new playground equipment at the park.

"This is an investment that several generations of park visitors can enjoy for years to come," stated Mayor Jennifer Perez, "Next year, the City Council will be focusing on improving all of our parks in some capacity and city staff has already been actively looking for funding sources to make improvements at our parks."

In July, the City Council approved the removal of the old playground equipment and the installation of the new playground equipment at Holifield Park. The new playground is comprised of equipment for both children ages 2 to 5 and ages 5 to 12. The new equipment includes a state-of-the-art tower and zip-line that will be the first of its kind in this region.

Supervisor Hahn was presented with a giant thank you card created by students from the adjacent John Dolland Elementary School who were eagerly awaiting the completion of the new playground equipment to be able to play.



### Weekend at a Glance

|          |     |  |
|----------|-----|--|
| Friday   | 67° |  |
| Saturday | 67° |  |
| Sunday   | 64° |  |

### THINGS TO DO



**Dave Koz and Friends** Friday & Saturday, 8 pm Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts

Grammy-nominated saxophonist extraordinaire Dave Koz leads a sterling lineup of Jazz greats in a festive, high-energy show filled with seasonal tunes and cheer. Tickets start at \$60.

### ON THIS DAY DECEMBER 17

#### 1903

Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first successful man-powered airplane flight, near Kitty Hawk, N.C.

#### 1933

In the first NFL championship game, the Chicago Bears defeated the New York Giants 23-21 at Wrigley Field.

#### 1944

The U.S. Army announced the end of its policy of excluding Japanese-Americans from the West Coast.

#### 1969

The U.S. Air Force closed its Project "Blue Book" by concluding there was no evidence of extraterrestrial spaceships behind thousands of UFO sightings.

#### 1969

An estimated 50 million viewers watched singer Tiny Tim marry Miss Vicky on NBC's "Tonight Show."

#### 1975

Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme was sentenced to life in prison for attempting to assassinate President Gerald R. Ford. (She was released on parole in 2009.)

#### 1989

"The Simpsons" premiered on Fox.



#### 2005

President George W. Bush acknowledged he'd personally authorized a secret eavesdropping program in the U.S. following Sept. 11.

#### 2010

Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old fruit vendor frustrated with harassment by local officials, set himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia. His act of defiance set off nationwide protests that brought down longtime President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and soon spread to the rest of the Arab world.

#### 2014

The United States and Cuba re-establish diplomatic relations after severing them in 1961.

### Birthdays

**Pope Francis** (85), "Ghostbusters" star **Ernie Hudson** (76), actor **Eugene Levy** (75), actor **Bill Pullman** (68), MMA fighter **Chuck Liddell** (52), actress and comedian **Sarah Paulson** (47), actor **Giovanni Ribisi** (47), actress **Milla Jovovich** (46) and retired boxer **Manny Pacquiao** (43).

# Obituaries

## Vicente Fernandez, Mexican icon

Vicente "Chente" Fernández, an iconic Mexican singer and actor called "The King of Ranchero Music," died Dec. 12 of medical complications after a fall at the age of 81.

Fernández' musical career took off when he released the single "Volver, Volver" ("Return, Return") in 1976. It was a hit across Latin America and became a standard, covered by many artists in the years to come.

He was already starring in movies then, and he would appear in more than two dozen films over 20 years, including "La Ley del Monte," "El Abañil," and "Coyote and Bronca."

Fernández retired from acting in 1991, but his musical career remained strong throughout the 1990s, 2000s, and beyond. He won three Grammy Awards, nine Latin Grammy Awards, and 14 Lo Nuestro Awards.

Among his hit songs were "Aunque Mal Paguen Ellas," "Lastima Que Seas Ajena," "Para Siempre," and "El Ultimo Beso," a No. 1 hit on the Hot Latin Songs chart in 2009.

In April 2016, Fernández bid farewell to live performance at a large-scale concert at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City, drawing more than 80,000 fans from across the globe.

He still continued to record, however, His 2020 album "A mis 80s" won Fernández his final Latin Grammy Award less than a month before his death.

Fernández is survived by his wife, Maria del Refugio Abarca Villaseñor, and three children.

## Anne Rice, prolific goth novelist

Anne Rice, the author of the popular vampire novel series 'The Vampire Chronicles,' died Dec. 11, her son Christopher announced on social media.

Rice was a prolific gothic novelist beloved for her vampire series 'The Vampire Chronicles,' which began in 1976 with her most popular novel, 'Interview with the Vampire.'

The book featured the vampire Lestat who would be a main character in the 13 book series, the most recent being 'Blood Communion: A Tale of Prince Lestat' which was released in 2018.

Two of the 'Vampire Chronicles' novels became feature films, 1994's 'Interview with the Vampire' which starred Tom Cruise as Lestat and 2002's 'Queen of the Damned,' which starred Stuart Townsend and Aaliyah.

Many vampire series have followed her work, including the 'Twilight' novels, which were adapted for the screen. Rice also wrote erotica fiction under the pseudonym Anne Rampling, including 'Exit to Eden.'

Many of her works have been adapted by others for comic books. The native of New Orleans often used the city as a backdrop for her writing.

## Cara Williams, popular actress from the 1940s-50s

Cara Williams, an actress known for her roles in movies including "The Defiant Ones" and on TV in "Pete and Gladys," died Dec. 9 at her home in Beverly Hills of a heart attack at the age of 96.

Williams began appearing in movies in the early 1940s, with credits including "Happy Land," "Laura," and "Boomerang."

She had a career highlight in 1958 with "The Defiant Ones;" she was nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actress for her performance as Billy's mother.

In 1960, Williams took a starring role opposite Harry Morgan on TV's "Pete and Gladys." She was nominated for an Emmy Award in 1962.

In both "Pete and Gladys" and her later sitcom, "The Cara Williams Show," Williams played scatterbrained characters, inviting comparisons to Lucille Ball.

Williams' acting career slowed down after the mid-1960s, but she had a notable later role playing Mae on "Rhoda."

## Larry Sellers, actor on 'Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman'

Larry Sellers, an actor of Osage, Cherokee, and Lakota ancestry who was best known for playing Cloud Dancing on "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" died Dec. 8 at the age of 72 in Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Sellers was an actor and stuntman who appeared in many movies and television series. His best known role was playing Cloud Dancing from 1993-1998 on the hit series "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman," which earned him an Emmy nomination.

He appeared in the movie "Wayne's World 2" and made guest appearances on the TV series "The Sopranos" and "Walker, Texas Ranger."

## Joe Simon, R&B singer turned minister

Joe Simon, an R&B singer known for hit singles including "The Chokin' Kind," "Power of Love," and "Get Down, Get Down (Get on the Floor)," died Dec. 13 in his hometown near Chicago at the age of 85.

After a poverty-stricken childhood and a time when he was homeless and lived in a chicken coop, Simon began singing professionally with the Golden West Gospel Singers in the 1950s.

After going solo, he began charting hits in the mid-1960s and had a No. 1 R&B hit in 1969 with "The Chokin' Kind," which also reached the Top 20 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Simon won a Grammy Award for Best Male R&B Vocal Performance for "The Chokin' Kind." His highest-charting single was 1975's "Get Down, Get Down (Get on the Floor)," another No. 1 R&B hit that crossed over to reach the top ten of the Hot 100.

Simon's music was widely sampled; his "Before the Night Is Over" was sampled by OutKast in their hit "So Fresh, So Clean," and his "It Be's That Way Sometimes" was sampled in Lil Kim's "Magic Stick."

In later years, he left the music world and was ordained as a minister.

"I went from the cotton field to the chicken coop to a superstar of rhythm and blues," Simon said in 2016. "You can't tell me I ain't gonna be nothin'."

## Ken Kragen, organizer of 'We Are the World'

Ken Kragen, a music manager and TV producer who organized the famous "We Are the World" and Hands Across America charity events in the 1980s, died Dec. 14 at his home in Los Angeles at age 85.

One of Kragen's earliest jobs in the entertainment world was as a production coordinator, and later executive producer, of "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour." There, he met Kenny Rogers, later becoming his manager.

Kragen also managed other artists including Lionel Richie, the Bee Gees, Trisha Yearwood, and Burt Reynolds.

In 1985, Harry Belafonte inspired Kragen to assemble dozens of musicians to record "We Are the World," the hit single that raised more than \$50 million for African famine relief. Kragen was honored with the United Nations Peace Medal for his efforts.

The next year, he organized Hands Across America, another charity event in which millions of people held hands in an attempt to form a human chain across the U.S. The event raised \$15 million to fight hunger and homelessness.

Kragen also served as president of the Country Music Association and the Academy of Country Music. He produced the film "12 Dogs of Christmas" and the TV show "Rollin on the River" featuring Rogers and First Edition, as well as producing a portion of President Bill Clinton's 1992 inauguration.

Kragen wrote the best-selling book "Life Is a Contact Sport: Ten Great Career Strategies That Work" and played himself in the movie "Late Shift."

## bell hooks, feminist author and poet

Author bell hooks, acclaimed for her writing on race and gender, died Dec. 15 at her home in Berea, Kentucky at the age of 69.

Born Gloria Jean Watkins, hooks chose her pen name as a tribute to her great-grandmother, Bell Blair Hooks. She didn't capitalize it, she said, to emphasize the "substance of books, not who I am."

With the publication of her first book, 1981's "Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism," hooks became an influential feminist thinker. Her focus on Black womanhood made her one of the first to bring intersectionality into feminism.

She wrote more than 30 books, including "Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center," "Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood," and children's books such as "Be boy buzz."

A sought-after public speaker, hooks was among the leading intellectuals of her time. She was honored with awards including an American Book Award and a Writer's Award from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

In recent years, hooks taught at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, where she founded the bell hooks Institute

## Carmen Salinas, Mexican telenovela actress

Carmen Salinas, a Mexican actress beloved for starring in dozens of telenovelas and movies, died Dec. 9 in Mexico City after suffering a stroke at the age of 82.

Salinas got her start on TV in the mid-1960s, acting in telenovelas, the popular soap operas of Mexican television.

She became an icon of telenovelas, working extensively in recent years and beloved as a mother and grandmother figure to viewers.

She was honored with TVyNovelas Awards for her performances in "María Mercedes" and "Preciosa," as well as nominated for "María la del Barrio," "Abrázame Muy Fuerte," and "Entre el Amor y el Odio." Salinas also had roles in many movies, including "Carnival Nights," "Man on Fire," and her most recent credit, the upcoming romantic comedy "The Valet."

In later years, Salinas added politics to her resume when she was elected to Mexican Congress in 2015. She served, representing the Institutional Revolutionary Party, until 2018.

At the time of her stroke, Salinas was in filming for the TV show "Mi fortuna es amarte."

## Lina Wertmüller, first woman nominated for Academy Award for directing

Lina Wertmüller, an Italian filmmaker and the first woman nominated for an Academy Award for directing, died Dec. 9 at her home in Rome at the age of 93.

Wertmüller directed her first film, "The Lizards," in 1963. She built her reputation over the 1960s and '70s as a risk-taker whose films defied genre conventions.

Her best-known films were made in the 1970s, beginning with "The Seduction of Mimi" in 1972, which was nominated for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

Her next film, "Love and Anarchy," was also a Palme d'Or nominee, and 1975's "Swept Away" won the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures Award for Top Foreign Film.

Wertmüller's 1977 film "Seven Beauties" was an international success, receiving four Oscar nominations including Best Director and Best Writing (Original Screenplay) for Wertmüller.

The last of her two dozen films was 2004's "Too Much Romance... It's Time for Stuffed Peppers."

In 2019, Wertmüller was recognized with the Academy Honorary Award for her career achievements.

## Masayuki Uemura, creator of Nintendo game console

Masayuki Uemura, a Japanese video game producer who created the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) and Super NES home gaming systems, died Dec. 6 at age 78.

Uemura began working for Nintendo in 1971, at a time when the company was just beginning to expand from toys and board games into electronic gaming.

With the success of their 1981 arcade game Donkey Kong, Nintendo's president asked Uemura to make something that would allow arcade game fans to play their favorite games at home on their TVs, with easy-to-use video games stored on cartridges.

He created the NES, originally known as the Famicom when it was released in 1983. Donkey Kong was among the first games available for the NES, which, along with Super Mario Bros., helped make it an international phenomenon.

In 1990, Uemura's next creation, the Super NES, was released.

Uemura remained with Nintendo until 2004, also producing video games including Baseball and Ice Climber.

In later years, he was the director of the Center for Game Studies at Ritsumeikan University.

# The Norwalk Patriot



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Adam Schiff a bright spot in Congress

By Jeff Robbins

The putsch-pushers and lawbreakers that comprise Trump World despise U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff, showering him with fourth-grade, fourth-rate epithets and seeing to it that he will live in perpetual concern for his safety and that of his family.

The extortion plot or, as then National Security Advisor John Bolton put it, the "drug deal," was loathsome enough. But it was made even more loathsome by Trump's stonewalling of Congress' subpoenas in order to obstruct its inquiry — the well-nigh unmistakable indicium of guilt — and by Trump's retaliation against the brave public servants like former Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch and National Security Council aide

Alexander Vindman, who refused to be Trump's co-extortionists.

Perhaps no one understands the danger to America posed by the witches' brew of demagogues and toadies that comprise the Trump Party better than Adam Schiff. He has spent the past five years sounding the alarm about it, and his recently published book, "Midnight in Washington: How We Almost Lost Our Democracy and Still Could," is a gripping, sobering account of how close we are to waving goodbye to the land our forebears sacrificed so much to reach.

When the House of Representatives voted to impeach Trump for his extortion and obstruction, it was Schiff who led the presentation of the evidence that supported Trump's conviction and removal from office. It was, Schiff told an audience on Saturday, a presentation intended more for the American people and posterity than for the Senate in whose chamber it was delivered, as Republican senators, either loyal to Trump or terrified of him, would not have voted to convict Trump had he, say, murdered someone in the middle of New York's Fifth Avenue in broad daylight.

Schiff has earned the right to begin every paragraph he utters for

the rest of his career with the words "I told you so." Trump's "big lie" that the election he lost was stolen from him; his felonious phone call to Georgia's secretary of state to "find" fake votes so that he could pretend he won in Georgia; the plotting to block certification of Biden's election; the incitement of the mob that did Trump's bidding and stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6 to prevent the peaceful, democratic transition of power that is our national hallmark — Schiff warned the nation that this is precisely the kind of totalitarian conduct Trump would engage in if he were not removed from office. And Schiff was right.

It is not only Trump who is to blame for our national crisis, of course. "There is a dangerous vein of autocratic thought running through one of America's two great parties," Schiff writes, "and it poses an existential danger to the country."

But Schiff refuses to write America off. "Midnight is the darkest moment of the day," he says. "But it is also the most hopeful, because everything that comes after holds the promise of light. America has a genius for reinvention, and we must use it."

Jeff Robbins is a former assistant United States attorney and United States delegate to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Keep politics out of the Olympics

By Steve Chapman

Before the White House announced that no U.S. officials will be attending a certain global sporting festival in Beijing, a spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry objected to the idea. "The Winter Olympic Games is not a stage for political posturing and manipulation," he said. That's right. Then he laughed so hard he ruptured his spleen.

Not really. The crucial job qualification for being a spokesman for an authoritarian government is the ability to utter bald-faced lies with stolid aplomb. If there is any unassailable truth about the Olympic Games, it's that nations host them for political reasons first and last.

The most brutal regimes see these extravaganzas as a way of improving their image abroad while dazzling the folks at home. The practice goes back at least to Adolf Hitler, who exploited the 1936 Summer Games with cynical abandon. He even went so far as to assert that the Olympics "unites the combatants in understanding and respect. It also helps to connect the countries in the spirit of peace."

China hosted the 2008 Summer Games, and as Wilson Center scholar Anne-Marie Brady wrote, the government devoted the two years leading up to them to a domestic "propaganda campaign designed to mobilize the population around a common goal and distract them from more troubling issues such as inflation, unemployment, political corruption and environmental degradation." The Beijing Olympics were the second most expensive in history. The government obviously believed that the political payoff justified vast sums of money.

The most expensive were staged by Russia in 2014 under President Vladimir Putin, who personally chose the site, Sochi, and made sure

that cost was no object. He plainly saw the Winter Games as a chance to enhance his image and Russia's.

President Barack Obama limited official U.S. representation to a couple of minor functionaries, a gesture meant as a rebuke for Russia's anti-gay policies. President Joe Biden has gone further, sending no one at all to Beijing. "U.S. diplomatic or official representation would treat these Games as business as usual in the face of (China's) egregious human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang, and we simply can't do that," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said.

But the administration chose not to ask the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee to withdraw. President Jimmy Carter demanded and got a U.S. boycott of the 1980 Moscow Summer Games to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Four years later, the Soviets and their allies retaliated with a boycott of the Summer Games in Los Angeles.

Biden's choice is in keeping with what should be the appropriate Olympic spirit. It denies China the U.S. government's imprimatur without denying American athletes the opportunity to compete in the world's prestigious sporting event.

The record shows that politics is as much a part of the Olympics as surreptitious doping, white elephant stadiums and inexplicable figure skating scores. One way to make the Games less political would be for politicians to stay away.

We don't expect the prime minister of Canada to show up at the NBA All-Star Game. One of President Donald Trump's few commendable decisions was never intruding on a major league baseball game to throw out the first pitch. (He did make a grand appearance at a NASCAR race, an

election-year stunt in the swing state of Florida).

The Olympics, at their best, offer a glimpse of humanity engaged in peaceful competition, transcending such barriers as race, religion and nationality. Fans can be uplifted by the feats of individuals and teams whose governments inspire only fear and loathing. Sport can remind us how much people have in common with other people. Politics does more or less the opposite.

What would really take politics out of the Games is denying bad governments the chance to play host. That could be accomplished by assigning the Summer and Winter Games each to one or two permanent sites, preferably in countries that are not the functional equivalent of open-air prisons.

No longer would tyrants be able to command the world's attention as they bask in the Olympic glow. No longer would athletes have to swallow their objections to unsavory regimes. No longer would cities be lured into ruinous bidding wars for a one-time blowout whose chief value is, yes, political.

By now, we all take it for granted that each set of Games will be manipulated for the benefit of governments, and especially by bad ones. But it's worth trying to change that. An Olympics without politics would be like a summer without sunburn.

Steve Chapman blogs for the Chicago Tribune.

How federal debt spiraled out of control

By Terence P. Jeffrey

As Congress worked in recent days to increase the legal limit on the federal debt, the Treasury kept that debt artificially frozen at approximately \$28.9 trillion, where it stood at the beginning of this week.

With that limit lifted, the federal debt will take a jump upward, then keep steadily climbing, constantly increasing the burden on future taxpayers.

In 2018, according to the last complete annual report on individual income tax returns published by the Internal Revenue Service, there were 100,424,240 households in the United States that filed what the IRS calls a "taxable return." "The taxable and nontaxable classification of a return for this report is determined by the presence of 'total income tax,'" explained the IRS.

"Total income tax," it said, "was the sum of income tax after credits."

In other words, the 100,424,240 households that filed a "taxable return" in 2018 actually paid income taxes to the federal government.

If you divide the \$28,908,004,857,445 in debt that the federal government owed before the debt limit was lifted by the 100,424,240 American households that paid net income taxes in 2018, it works out to approximately \$287,859 per income-tax-paying household.

Back in 1989, the year that President Ronald Reagan left office, there were 89,178,355 income-tax-paying households in the United States, according to the IRS. At the end of January that year, the federal debt was \$2,697,957,000,000.

That means the federal debt then equaled approximately \$30,253

per income-tax-paying household.

Even when the January 1989 federal debt of \$30,253 per income-tax-paying household is adjusted into November 2021 dollars (using the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator), it equals only approximately \$69,437.

In real terms, the current federal debt of \$287,859 per income-tax-paying household is more than four times that much.

How much larger will the debt burden be when your grandchildren are paying income taxes?

President Joe Biden's fiscal 2022 budget proposal called for running a cumulative deficit of \$14.531 trillion over just the next 10 fiscal years. Balancing the budget — let alone slowing the increase in the debt — plays no part in his fiscal plan.

Adding another \$14.531 trillion to the federal debt would increase the burden on the 100,424,240 income-tax-paying households of 2018 by approximately \$144,696.

What could the income-tax-paying households in this nation purchase for the \$287,859 in debt the federal government is already holding on their behalf?

In Iowa, according to Zillow, the average cost of a "middle price tier" home in October of this year was \$174,916. In Ohio, it was \$190,984. In Nebraska, it was \$217,232. In Michigan, it was \$218,051. In Wisconsin, it was \$241,369. In Illinois, it was \$243,355. In Pennsylvania, it was \$245,153. In Tennessee, it was \$253,263. In South Carolina, it was \$247,606. And, in Georgia, it was \$269,441.

Clearly, in many parts of America, the mortgage a taxpaying family would need to buy a home would be less than the amount the federal

government has borrowed in their name.

Which would you rather have over your head? A roof that you will someday own? Or a federal government that is steadily increasing its control over your finances and your life?

The federal government, obviously, has not been borrowing money from mortgage providers to purchase homes.

Among those lending money to the federal government so it can continue to run its massive annual deficits are foreign governments and foreign interests. According to the Treasury Department, entities in Japan owned \$1.299 trillion in U.S. government debt as of the end of September. Entities in mainland China owned \$1.047 trillion. Entities in the United Kingdom owned \$566.5 billion; entities in Luxembourg owned \$311.8 billion; entities in Ireland owned \$309.6 billion; and entities in Switzerland own \$296.5 billion.

Even though the average interest rate for publicly traded U.S. government debt has been very low in recent years (1.437% in November 2021 compared with 5.395% in November 2001), the actual interest the government pays now is still significant. In fiscal 2021, according to the Monthly Treasury Statement, interest payments on Treasury securities hit \$562.38 billion. That was more than three times as much as the fiscal 2021 cost of the Department of State (\$35.814 billion), the Department of Justice (\$39.261 billion) and the Department of Homeland Security (\$91.069 billion) combined (\$166.144 billion).

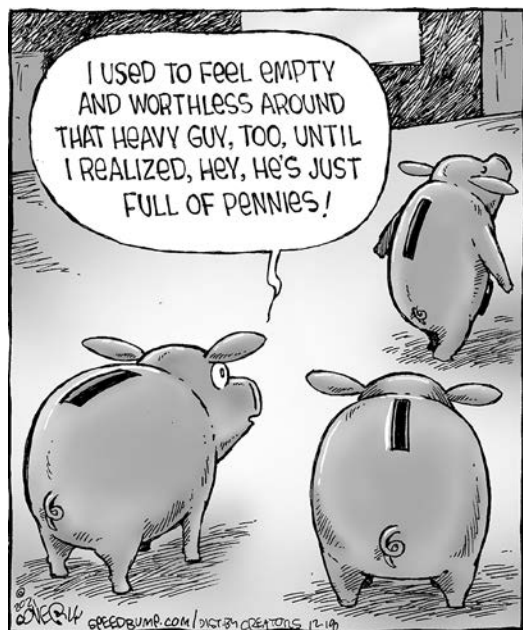
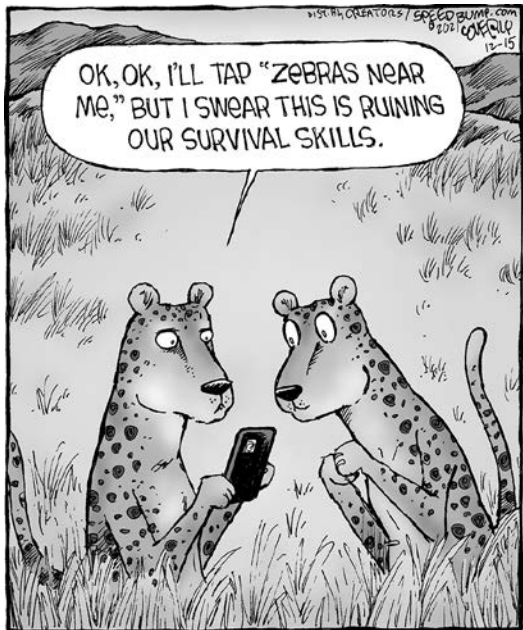
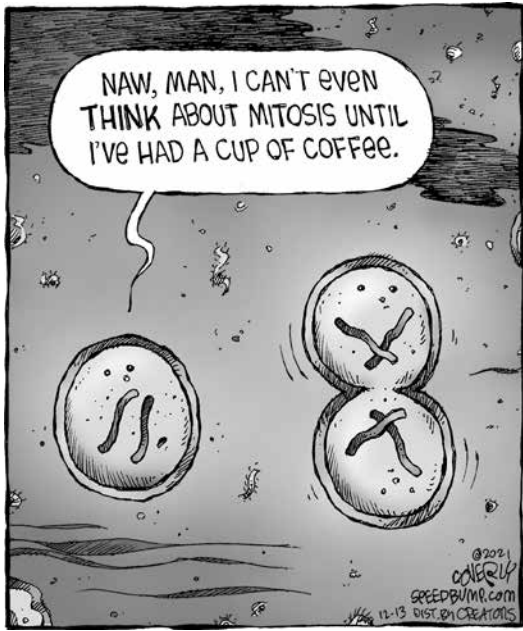
Will the federal government ever again balance its budget?

The obvious bet is: No.

Terence P. Jeffrey is the editor-in-chief of CNSnews.com.

Large advertisement for 'Advertise Your Business' featuring 'The Norwalk Patriot' logo, contact information for Julie (562) 404-3008, and a preview of a newspaper page with various local news articles and advertisements.

# 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)  
**COMMUTER NEWS: As heard in traffic reports**  
 by Gail Grabowski

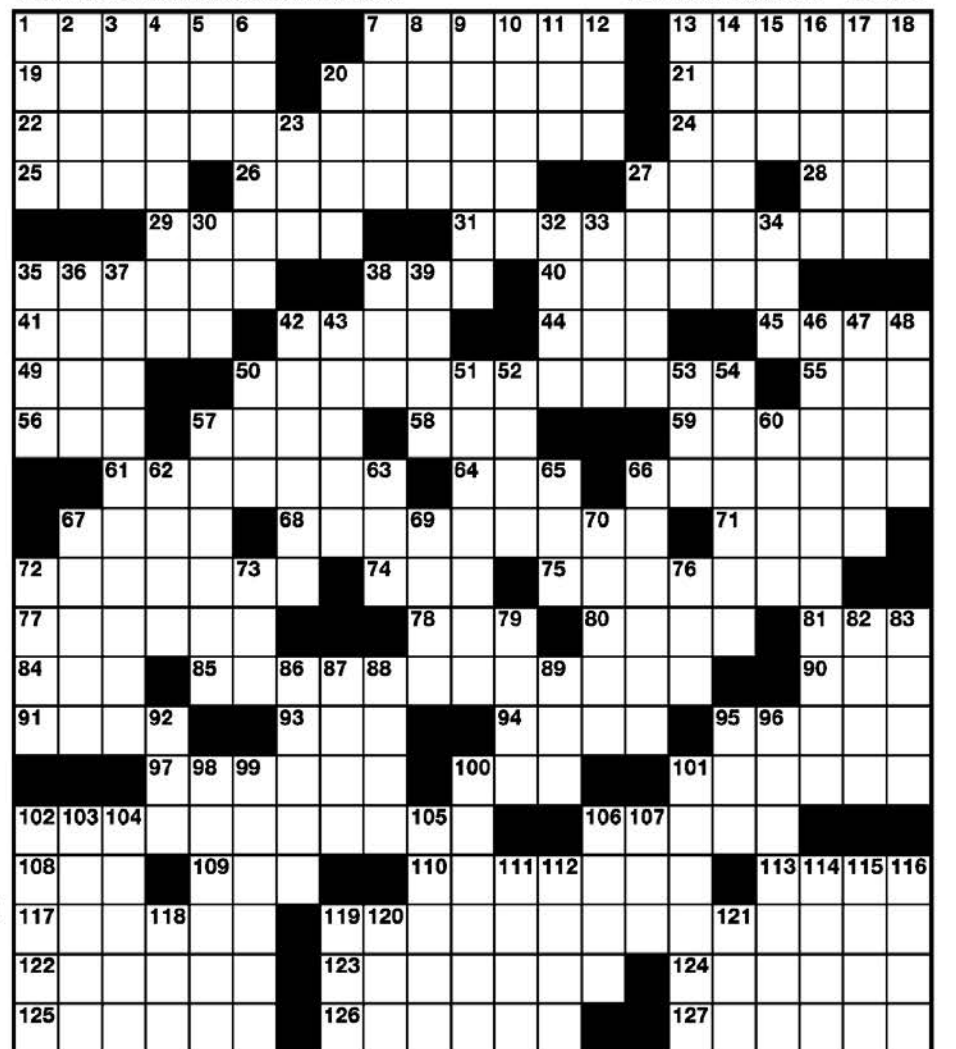
You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at his e-mail address: [StanXwords@aol.com](mailto:StanXwords@aol.com). Or write him at P.O. Box 69, Massapequa Park, NY 11762, Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you'd like a reply.

You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at [www.StanXwords.com](http://www.StanXwords.com)

Presbyterian minister Sylvester GRAHAM (7 Across) developed the white/wheat flour named for him in 1829, most remembered today as the basis of a "true" graham cracker. *My Fair Lady* lyricist Alan Jay LERNER (6 Down) also wrote the book, an adaptation of Shaw's *Pygmalion*. EIRE (32 Down) appears on the "heads" side of euro coins produced in the Republic of Ireland.

- |                                |                                  |                                    |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                  | <b>DOWN</b>                      | <b>DOWN</b>                        |
| 1 Mischief maker               | 1 Dissenters, for short          | 13 Piano piece                     |
| 7 Flour inventor               | 2 Pastel hue                     | 14 Abhor                           |
| 13 Hits the hay                | 3 Addition answers               | 15 Pillow's center                 |
| 19 Consider identical          | 4 Peninsula on Massachusetts Bay | 16 Makes less burdensome           |
| 20 Berth place                 | 5 Had something                  | 17 Thick board                     |
| 21 French "Wow!"               | 6 "My Fair Lady" lyricist        | 18 Insolent                        |
| 22 Like tight traffic          | 7 Large quantity                 | 20 Uses a scythe                   |
| 24 Bahamian capital            | 8 Decisive defeat                | 23 Coffee alternative              |
| 25 Request from an ed.         | 9 Fighting forces                | 27 When right turns may be allowed |
| 26 It may lead to an exclusive | 10 Cheerful                      | 30 Spanish king                    |
| 27 Mare's morsel               | 11 Historical period             | 32 Word on some euros              |
| 28 25 Across, for one: Abbr.   | 12 Marie's sea                   | 33 "This __ outrage!"              |
| 29 Sectors                     |                                  | 34 Shade source                    |
| 31 Traffic helicopter          |                                  | 35 Masterpieces                    |
| 35 Acquire                     |                                  | 36 '70s pop quartet                |
| 38 Crunch targets              |                                  | 37 Cause of a traffic delay        |
| 40 Where Mount Carmel is       |                                  | 38 Come to the rescue of           |
| 41 Fine wood                   |                                  | 39 Made a mess of                  |
| 42 Stir up                     |                                  | 42 Neglectful                      |
| 44 Singer Corinne Bailey       |                                  | 43 Start                           |
| 45 Car sticker abbr.           |                                  | 46 Cause of a traffic delay        |
| 49 Finance degree              |                                  | 47 Held another session            |
| 50 Minor traffic accident      |                                  | 48 Little legumes                  |
| 55 Duffer's peg                |                                  | 50 Fleeting fashion                |
| 56 Deplorable                  |                                  | 51 Islamic holy month              |
| 57 Machine parts               |                                  | 52 Fiber source                    |
| 58 Serious conflict            |                                  | 53 Prefix for center               |
| 59 Costa Rica neighbor         |                                  | 54 Stale                           |
| 61 Prepares                    |                                  | 57 Life's work                     |
| 64 Hot under the collar        |                                  | 60 Ship-related: Abbr.             |
| 66 "Grand" endings             |                                  | 62 Come by honestly                |
| 67 Learn about                 |                                  | 63 Call for help                   |
| 68 Like sluggish traffic       |                                  | 65 Banned insecticide              |
| 71 Religious sect              |                                  | 66 Blacksmith shops                |
| 72 Keep in check               |                                  | 67 Conversation starter            |
| 74 Piece of turf               |                                  | 68 Neutral hue                     |
| 75 Wood-eating bug             |                                  | 69 Cornfield cry                   |
| 77 Solar-system component      |                                  | 92 Poetic preposition              |
| 78 Sculler's implement         |                                  | 95 Work on seams                   |
|                                |                                  | 96 Greet warmly                    |

CREATORS SYNDICATE © 2021 STANLEY NEWMAN WWW.STANXWORDS.COM 12/12/21



- |                       |                                  |                                |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 76 Scratch up         | 98 Take as true                  | 111 Mr. Kringle                |
| 79 Taken-back car     | 99 Carpentry tools               | 112 Part of AD                 |
| 82 Bylaw              | 100 Harasses                     | 114 Regretful one              |
| 83 Potential flower   | 101 Cake components              | 115 Boatloads                  |
| 86 Parade twirler     | 102 Fabric from flax             | 116 "I Loves You Porgy" singer |
| 87 Warner __ Pictures | 103 Juvenile rebuttal            |                                |
| 88 Neutral hue        | 104 "You bet!"                   | 118 Month after <i>avril</i>   |
| 89 Cornfield cry      | 105 Run-down                     | 119 Part of Q and A            |
| 92 Poetic preposition | 106 Ill-gotten gains             | 120 Country meadow             |
| 95 Work on seams      | 107 Part of an Uncle Sam costume | 121 Go bad                     |
| 96 Greet warmly       |                                  |                                |

Reach Stan Newman at [www.StanXwords.com](http://www.StanXwords.com)



















# Glenn goes to a tiebreaker to defeat Norwalk, 43-42, in girls wrestling

■ John Glenn beats Norwalk in a thrilling non-league match.

By John M. Sherrard  
Contributor

**NORWALK** – It took 14 matches and nine different tie-breaking categories to determine a winner between host Norwalk and John Glenn high schools in a girls wrestling non-league match Wednesday (Dec. 8).

After it was determined that Glenn had won more first-points scored in each match, the Eagles won, 43-42.

With the score tied, 36-36, and two matches remaining, Glenn knew it had to win in the 13th match to have a chance to at least tie Norwalk. Glenn did not have a heavyweight wrestler and would have to forfeit the 14th and final match, which would result in six points.

JG needed a pin, which scores six points, from freshman Sarah Ramirez in the 189 Lb. weight class.

Asked if Ramirez knew how important her match was, she simply replied, "...no, not until right now," after the dual meet was over.

Ramirez, who knew about the rivalry between the two schools and how Norwalk had dominated recently in some of the sports, was well aware of the importance of the win, but just not her match.

"It was kind of crazy," she said. "We had a lot of pressure on us about winning, because a lot of the other sports don't win against Norwalk."

"I was so nervous and just went out there and tried my best."

Ramirez, who had a pin in a previous tournament, jumped out to a 2-0 lead on a takedown in the first period. She finished the match with the pin and the 42-36 lead.

"She is very green and she is coming off of being off for a little bit, but she's back and it was all on the line," said Glenn coach Hector Ramirez of Sarah Ramirez' match. "I told her to be patient and when you get the right moment, be explosive."

Glenn forfeited the heavyweight weight class and the match was tied, 42-42.

From there, both coaches, Bryan DeVries of Norwalk and Ramirez of John Glenn, and the official, went over the rules when a tie exists.

After a few minutes and eight tiebreakers later, it was determined that Glenn had a 14-6 advantage in first-points scored for the victory.

"This is the first time we've ever tied," said DeVries, of the match. "We either win or we lose, so this was exciting. It was a good match, since we were both champions last year."

"It came right down to a tie. We're getting there."

DeVries, who has been coach at Norwalk for three years, led his team to a Suburban League title last year. Assisting DeVries is the boys coach, Frank Soto.

Glenn, which won the 605 League championship for the third consecutive year last season, is assisted by Kathryn Gonzales and Jose Rodriguez.

"I have run into a tie situation before in my six years and it usually comes down to the criteria of most pins," Ramirez said.

This time, however both teams had the same amount of pins (5) and the same amount of forfeits (2).

"It always makes it entertaining," Ramirez added. "Norwalk High School has great athletes, just like John Glenn. It's all in the same community and they all know each other, so it becomes a bit of a rival. All it does is pushes our kids to be more competitive. You got to have a little rivalry to motivate your athletes to push harder. It was a great ending for us."

Norwalk opened the dual with two consecutive pins. In the 101 weight class, Ruby Hubbard pinned Glenn's Diana Bravo in the second period. Bravo actually recorded a near fall, takedown and a reversal in the first period, but couldn't pin her opponent.

At 106, Norwalk's Tatum Mora was leading Kaela Miranda, 3-2, and ended up pinning here in the first period, as the Lancers took a 12-0 lead.

The first forfeit occurred at the 111 Lb. class as Norwalk senior Sabrina Sinohui got the win since a Glenn wrestler had bumped up to another weight class. The Lancers led, 18-0.

Sinohui reflected on her previous three years wrestling at Norwalk.

"For the last three years it's just been a lot of sweat, tears, a lot of blood, being sore 24/7, never having any free time for sure and it's a year-round sport," she said. "I missed fighting my rival because I would have loved to beat them in front of all of my friends. It's fine though."

"(Wednesday) it was close. If we would've had enough wrestlers, we would have won."

"Having Bryan as a coach, he is so enthusiastic and like a father-figure, just like he is with his daughter (Lilah)."

Glenn's Mia Ramirez was next up at 116 Lbs. and battled Liyah Salazar in the first period, building up a 7-0 lead, before pinning her in the second period. The Eagles got on the board, trailing 18-6 after three matches.

"This is my third time wrestling against Norwalk," said Mia Ramirez, who was the 605 League Lower Weight MVP last year. "We (Ramirez and Salazar) were pretty equal and when I shot, I felt like I could take her down. She was very aggressive. When I did a fake shot so I could see how she moves, then I pinned her after that."

Ramirez recently took third at the James Monroe Tournament and the Santa Ana Lady Saints Tournament in the 116 Lb. weight class.

After losing in her first-round match by pin at the Lady Saints tourney, Ramirez came all the way back with four consecutive wins by pin to place third.

Glenn took 13th in the Lady Saints tournament as a team.

"I was going out there and I was trying to wrestle my hardest," said Salazar, of the match against Ramirez. "She is very tough and I like that about her. She is very aggressive. She put me on my back a couple of times, but I didn't want to give up."

"(The match against Glenn) was really exciting. I was really hyped for it."

Coach DeVries talked about the 116 Lb. match. "That was a great match," he said. "It was our girl, Liyah Salazar and their girl, Mia Ramirez, two captains battling. Liyah's defense just failed her by millimeters and that's all that Mia needed."

Norwalk then had its first forfeit in the 121 Lb. weight class and Glenn closed to within six points, 18-12.

Glenn, 2-0 in dual meets so far this season, recorded its second pin of the match as junior



John Glenn's Mia Ramirez eventually pins Norwalk's Liyah Salazar in the 116 Lb. weight class during their non-league girls wrestling match at Norwalk High School. (Photo by Keith Durlfing)

Rhain Aranjo (126), with a 5-0 lead on a two-point takedown and a three-point near fall, pinned her opponent, with 54 seconds left in the first period.

Aranjo, like Mia Ramirez, also placed third in the Lady Saints Tourney, but at 121 Lbs. After pinning her opponent in the first round in the tourney, she lost in the second round and then won all three matches by pins.

With Aranjo's win over Norwalk, the Eagles evened the match, 18-18.

"The person (Marley Estrella) that I wrestled (Wednesday), we are really good friends," Aranjo said. "I love Marley and she is one of my close friends. We had wrestled before at the Dog Pound."

"There are a lot of bonds between us and Norwalk," added Aranjo.

Coach Ramirez, who is in his sixth year as Glenn's coach, owns The Dog Pound MMA and Fitness gym, which is located in Norwalk

Norwalk then reeled off three consecutive pins by Melanie Manzo (131), junior Zitlali Sarmiento (137) and Celeste Otero (143) for the 36-18 lead with five matches remaining.

Following that, Glenn charged right back into the match with three consecutive wins, which included a forfeit in the 170 Lb. weight class.

Prior to the forfeit, Glenn's Aileen Lopez (150), with a two-point lead, pinned her opponent, Breion Thomas, and Olga Ledezma (160) pinned Norwalk's Thalía Ariste.

Those three JG wins evened the match, 36-36, and it all came down to the 189 Lb. match between Sarah Ramirez and Elisa Estrella.

The next varsity tournament for both John Glenn and Norwalk is the Blackwatch Girls Varsity Tournament, Dec. 28-29 at Upland HS.

The next home dual for Norwalk is a girls varsity and boys duals tournament.

The teams participating are: Warren, Perris, Dominguez, Arroyo and Alhambra.

Meanwhile, the John Glenn girls JV team will be at the Santa Ana Lady Saints Tournament Saturday (Dec. 18).

The next Glenn home action will be the JG lady Eagles Invitational, January 22.



John Glenn's Sarah Ramirez shakes Norwalk's Elisa Estrella's hand after pinning her in the 189 Lb. weight class during their non-league girls wrestling match at Norwalk High School. (Photo by Keith Durlfing)

## Glenn JV Boys win in last match

Just prior to the girls varsity match, an exciting ending to the J.V. boys match saw Glenn squeak out a 39-36 win.

With Norwalk holding a 36-33 lead, the match came down to the final weight class – the heavyweights.

After the first period, Glenn's Joseph Chavez held a 4-2 lead over Ray Malo of Norwalk.

The crowd was loudly cheering on both wrestlers and after another two-point takedown by Chavez for the 6-2 lead, he later pinned Malo for the win and the match.

"This match was exciting too," said DeVries, of the JV match. "That's what we want, to come down to the end and just show how hard everyone works. If every match could be that close, it would be fantastic."

## What they said:

**Bryan DeVries, Norwalk coach:** "(Lilah) is my little shadow. She goes everywhere with me. She started wrestling and had to wrestle a lot of boys. She just kind of gravitated when I started coaching the girls teams."

Ever since I started coaching here, she would come to practices when she could. She goes to all of the tournaments. She's up and ready to go with me early in the morning for the tournaments.

My wife Wendy, god bless her, she's a teacher at Artesia and she is also at home taking care of our three boys."

**Hector Ramirez, John Glenn coach:** "My assistant coach Kathryn Gonzales dedicates so much time helping the girls achieve their goals. She brings in wrestling experience coming from Millikan High School wrestling. I couldn't do it without her assistance."

Zitlali Sarmiento, Norwalk

junior (137 Lbs.) "We all tried our best to beat John Glenn. Even though we were bummed about the scores and they won by points, we won in our hearts because we gave it our all. Plus, we had three girls wrestling for the first time ever and they also gave it their all."

We're all still happy."

**Lilah DeVries, Norwalk's "little coach":** "My dad (Bryan DeVries) is the coach and I'm there to support the wrestling team," said 10-year-old Lilah DeVries, who is coach DeVries' daughter. "I've been wrestling since I was six or seven."

It's important to get those first points, because if you go to a tie-breaker you could win.

It (Norwalk-John Glenn rivalry) means a lot to me, because when I go to the Dog Pound, the coaches of John Glenn go there. It's cool to see who would win versus my dad's team."

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Phantom Projects was hired to manage the La Habra Depot Theatre, a 132-seat venue in La Habra.

Built in 1909, the theater will host a series of musicals, plays, concerts and special events beginning in February.

## La Habra hires company to manage its theater

**LA HABRA** – The historic La Habra Depot Theatre will reopen under the new management of the La Mirada-based Phantom Projects Theatre Group.

The theatre group which has been presenting theatrical productions at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts has been awarded a five-year lease to manage and program the venue owned by the City of La Habra.

The 132-seat venue will be renamed The Phantom Projects Theatre at La Habra Depot.

The theatre has been dark since February of 2020 when it was vacated by its previous tenants. The new theatre is not a replacement, but an expansion Phantom Projects' current operations at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts.

The new venue will receive a face-lift and reopen in January with a gala red-carpet event featuring the Grammy nominated singer-songwriter and Orange County native Aloe Blacc and Maya Jupiter, followed by the official launch of a season in February 2022.

The Phantom Projects Theatre at La Habra Depot will serve the diverse Orange County community with a mainstage series to include musicals and plays, a family series, and special events such as concerts, comedy, open-mic nights, Karaoke, improv, and more.

In addition, each season will feature ASL, sensory friendly and bilingual performances. An education department will offer acting, dancing and vocal classes for kids, adults, and seniors.

"I have fond memories of performing at the La Habra Depot as a 12 year old," said Steve Cisneros, Phantom's Founder and Producing Artistic Director. "Coming back 30 years later, but this time, with the keys to the building, feels very special."

La Habra Mayor Rose Espinoza said "I welcome Phantom Projects Theatre Group to our La Habra family and look forward to the high-quality, talent-filled theatre projects that they are known for. The Depot Theatre has been an integral part of the City for a long time and we can't wait to see what happens next."

The La Habra depot was built in 1909 on the northeast corner of Hiatt Street and Electric Avenue. The railway's freight and passenger service contributed to La Habra's population growth and business boom in the 1920s. It closed down in 1938, and in the late-1970s, the station was moved across the street to its current location at 301 S. Euclid Street in Portola Park. The depot was restored as a community playhouse in 1982.

A capital campaign is underway to raise funds to overhaul the venue from a technical standpoint. Currently in progress is an Adopt-A-Seat Program, combined with offering naming rights to various areas of the theatre. The group is 25% of the way toward their \$60,000 goal.

The naming rights to the box office and concessions area have already been purchased by local families.

## Hutchinson Middle School claims Golden Bell award

**LA MIRADA** – Hutchinson Middle School in La Mirada was awarded a Golden Bell for its STEM Magnet program from the California School Boards Association (CSBA), marking the fifth consecutive year that a Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District program or school has claimed the prestigious honor.

Based on feedback from the community, the leadership at Hutchinson developed the program to address the need to provide students with a STEM curriculum that is critical to increasing student engagement and opportunities.

It also is focused on having students think critically and creatively, collaborate with peers and mentors, and work towards solving challenging real-world problems with a focus on STEM. The program provides students with experiences to explore content and skill development for the future workforce.

"Hutchinson is so honored to receive the CSBA Golden Bell Award for our STEM Magnet program and share this recognition with our school community," said Hutchinson Principal Jenny Bae. "Our STEM Magnet program implements research-based curricula and equips our students to think critically and creatively, collaborate with peers, and utilize problem solving strategies to address real world problems. We are proud to embody our district's motto of "Every Student. Future Ready. Our Promise!"

The STEM program also had a list of goals and objectives to fully provide a top-notch experience for its students. This list consisted of:

- Support the inclusion of students who are underrepresented in K-12 STEM programs, college degree programs, and STEM careers.
- Provide students with real-world application in science, technology, engineering, and math using cross-curricular, problem-based activities in school and throughout the community.
- Provide exploration opportunities that promote participation of all students, including those students in underrepresented groups, in NLM high school STEM pathways.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn about a variety of STEM career options through community interactions, high quality curriculum, and the development of transportable skills.

"The Norwalk-La Mirada family is so proud of Principal Jenny Bae and her staff at Hutchinson for the Golden Bell award from the CSBA," said Norwalk-La Mirada Superintendent John M. Lopez. "The STEM program offers a curriculum that not only challenges students but provides them an environment of collaboration that fosters critical thinking and enhances problem-solving skills. With programs like this in place around our District, the future is bright for NLM students!"

Principal Bae and Hutchinson teacher Kelly Garcia were presented with the Golden Bell at the 42nd annual CSBA Golden Bell Awards on



From left: Hutchinson Principal Jenny Bae, Norwalk-La Mirada Superintendent John M. Lopez, and Hutchinson teacher Kelly Garcia.

Thursday, December 2. Garcia is also a Project Lead the Way Gateway Teacher of the Year. They were joined by the NLM Board of Education as well as Superintendent John M. Lopez.

## Whittier superintendent to retire next June

Contributed by the Whittier Union High School District

**WHITTIER** – Whittier Union High School District Superintendent Martin J. Plourde has announced he will retire effective June 30, 2022, bringing to a close a storied 40-year career in education in which he has served in nearly every capacity, beginning as an English teacher and basketball coach and finishing as top administrator of a diverse and thriving district that serves more than 11,000 students.

Hired as Whittier Union Superintendent in 2016, Plourde has overseen a host of successful initiatives, building upon the core values embraced by the district to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education and establishing a culture of success and academic achievement for all students.

The high school district consists of five comprehensive high schools, a continuation high school, an independent study high school and an adult school.

"It's been a privilege to lead Whittier Union, and while I will miss the people of this district, I am pretty excited about this next chapter in my life focused on grandchildren and travel with my wife," Plourde said. "These are tremendous times in education and we have done tremendous

things in this District to support our students and create a safe, nurturing environment that fosters success and resilience.

"Whenever I am asked what makes Whittier Union special, my first, last and only response is the people. We have amazing students and the best employees anywhere and I am awed by their dedication to our students; especially in the last two years.

"Our Board's leadership has been steady and mindful, entirely focused on ensuring we were serving each and every student, wherever they were learning. Watching our folks do the impossible incredibly well has been nothing short of inspiring."

Plourde's steady hand and guidance helped Whittier Union in meeting its biggest challenge – taking on the disruptions created by the COVID-19 pandemic, which included school closures and an immediate transition to distance learning.

Among Plourde's most notable accomplishments are establishing the Whittier Union Transportation Division, guiding the passage of the \$183 million Measure AA bond, adopting the Latin Honors academic system, unifying the Sierra Education Center campus, overseeing the completion of the Pioneer High School Aquatic Center and guiding the process to establish by-trustee elections.

"Martin has served our students with the faithful stewardship of a father guiding his children," outgoing Board of Trustees President Ralph Pacheco said.

"He kept a steady course and provided the social-emotional and technical support students needed to find a new normal, regardless of the hurdles dealt

Martin Plourde will retire next June after serving as superintendent since 2016.



him by the day-to-day challenges of running a high school district in a pandemic."

In Plourde's tenure as superintendent, Whittier Union schools have received numerous accolades, including the Bright Spot Award from the Education Trust West, the designation of both Pioneer and La Serna high schools as California Distinguished Schools, the recognition of Pioneer as an AVID National Demonstration School and Frontier High School twice being named a Model Continuation High School.

"We are very proud of the success the District has achieved in supporting student excellence for our communities under Martin's superintendency," incoming Board President Russell Castañeda-Calleros said.

"From securing the recognition of Pioneer and La Serna as California Distinguished Schools, to maintaining beautiful, modern schools and working with

the community to approve bond funds for future improvements, the District continues to thrive as a result of his strong leadership."

Beginning his career as a teacher in 1982, Plourde came to Whittier Union in 1991, spending four years at Santa Fe High School, dividing his time as Assistant Principal of Guidance and Assistant Principal of Curriculum.

After leaving the District to become principal of Arcadia High School, Plourde returned to La Serna High School as its principal in 2005, serving until 2009.

Plourde gained valuable administrative experience after being named Whittier Union's Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Services in 2009, a position he held until becoming Assistant Superintendent of Business Services in 2014, where he oversaw the District's massive facilities program.

In 2016, Plourde was hired as Superintendent, leaving a legacy of academic rigor, fiscal strength and a deep bench of strong academic leaders.

"Every day I am surrounded by the best and brightest minds in education, serving a community that is truly committed to seeing their children grow and prosper," Plourde said. "Thank you to all who have made this a wonderful journey."

The Whittier Union Board of Trustees will be reaching out to community members in the new year for input in helping shape the hiring process for Plourde's replacement.

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