

Crime is up in Norwalk, captain says

■ Sheriff captain Christopher Johnson explained the increased crime rates in the city and how assistance from the DA’s office would reduce grand theft auto cases.

By Vincent Medina Contributor

NORWALK – Norwalk sheriff captain Christopher Johnson explained to the city council on Tuesday that crime rates have increased in the city.

Captain Johnson said that grand theft auto rates have decreased since last year by 24%. To continue making progress, he said the sheriff’s department would need assistance from the district attorney.

“We’re making some contacts at the DA’s office to help file some of these smaller cases. They consider Grand Theft Auto a very minor thing, but we consider it a big thing,” Johnson said. “We’re working with them to try to file some of these cases and hold these people accountable.”

Johnson said of three recent homicides, two were solved and the suspects are in custody.

“As for the third one, there’s good workable information,” the sheriff captain said. “No one is in custody yet, but I have confidence that in due time there will be a third person in custody for that third homicide.”

Approximately 31% of the crime in Norwalk are “estes” robberies, and 41% of robberies are random street robberies according to Johnson.

“Estes robberies” are where a person tries to steal an item and threatens or commits violence against others who try to stop him.

In the sheriff department’s efforts to keep guns off the streets, the “guns for gifts” event will be on Oct. 22 at the Norwalk sheriff’s station and hosted by supervisor Janice Hahn.

“There’s a lot of guns out there, and we want to get as many as we can off the street,” Johnson said. “So maybe some gangster will come to Jesus and give up his gun or his mom will find it and give it up for him.”

College, faculty agree on labor deal

NORWALK – Cerritos College and the faculty’s union have agreed to extend its labor deal through 2024.

The agreement includes salary increases for faculty members, along with management, confidential and Child Development Center employees.

Salaries will be increased 6.07% for 2021-22 and 6.81% for 2022-24.

For 2023-24, workers will receive a cost of living allowing plus .5%.

In addition, instructional part-time faculty will receive a .60 parity factor.

The labor deal also includes “other substantive revisions that will improve working conditions and ensure continued student success through the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and beyond,” according to a news release issued by the college.

Norwalk approves \$3.7M in street repairs

■ Work is expected to begin this year on a massive street repair project across Norwalk.

NORWALK – On Tuesday, Aug. 16, the Norwalk City Council approved the contracts for concrete work in Zones 3, 8, and 19 as part of the Local Streets Rehabilitation Project.

The project areas are as follows: Zone 3 is in the northern part of the city, Zone 8 is in the northwestern part of the city, and Zone 19 is in the eastern part of the city.

This project continues to implement the Streets Master Plan.

The project will consist of concrete repairs of curbs and gutters, cross gutters with slots being updated to meet current standards, updates to sidewalks, and accessibility ramps at intersection corners will be upgraded to meet current American with Disabilities (ADA) standards. In Zone 8, the neighborhood alley along Downey-Norwalk Road will also be reconstructed with concrete paving.

“Residents have voiced their concerns regarding the need for road repairs and the City Council has prioritized the Local Streets Rehabilitation Project to expand efforts for infrastructure improvements in our city. We have earmarked resources to ensure that our roads are up to current standards and safe for residents to drive on,” stated Mayor Rick Ramirez.

Zones 3 and 19 are being funded by Measure M funds, which was passed by voters in 2016, and Zone 8 is being funded by Measure R funds, which was passed by voters in 2008.

The estimated cost for these three zones is over \$3.7 million. No General Fund monies are being used for this project. Previous zones completed as part of the Local Streets Rehabilitation Project include Zones 24, 27, 28, and 32, which are in the southern end of the city and the eastern part of the city.

“We have much more work to do. Last year we completed concrete and asphalt repairs on three different zones and this year we are taking on four additional separate zones. In fact, one zone was completed earlier this year.



The Norwalk City Council voted recently to spend \$3.7 million on street repairs throughout Norwalk. (Photo courtesy City of Norwalk)

The City Council has set these infrastructure improvements as a priority — safety is important to us all,” stated Mayor Ramirez.

The concrete work is estimated to be completed by the end of December 2022, with the asphalt resurfacing following soon thereafter.

The contracts for the asphalt repaving will be awarded at a future City Council meeting.

Playgrounds

At the same meeting, the Norwalk City Council unanimously approved a contract with Miracle Playground Sales, Inc. for the installation of new playground equipment and demolition of outdated equipment at five parks.

The parks that will receive new playground equipment include Bob White Park, Holifield Park, New River Park, Norwalk Park, and Vista Verde Park.

The total project cost is estimated to be \$1,727,500.

Each new playground will include climbing equipment, activity areas, and slides for both 2–5-year-olds and 5–12-year-olds.

Each of the playgrounds will be installed within the existing



playground footprints, with the exception of Norwalk Park, which will have the new playground situated at a new location within the park.

“The Norwalk City Council was aware that some of the playgrounds at our parks were in need of replacement and made it a priority to include funding in the Fiscal Year 2022/23 budget to upgrade

playground equipment,” stated Mayor Rick Ramirez.

The Fiscal Year 2022/23 budget includes funding for park renovations for a total of \$2,050,000 for playground installations at all five parks. Any unused funds will be utilized for future park projects.

Bus driver sues Montebello for wrongful termination

■ Fernando Ramirez said he was fired after refusing the Covid vaccination on religious grounds.

By City News Service

MONTEBELLO – A judge has pared a lawsuit filed by a former bus driver for the city of Montebello who alleges his ex-employer discriminated against him and wrongfully fired him in 2021 after he refused to get a coronavirus vaccination because of his faith.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael L. Stern said plaintiff Fernando Ramirez will have to shore up his religious discrimination claim for it to move forward. The judge also said Ramirez can move forward with his claim the city was in violation of a memo of understanding with its mid-management employees because he did not receive a full hearing.

However, the judge dismissed Ramirez’s claims for intentional and negligent infliction of emotional distress and invasion of privacy. Stern ordered Ramirez to file an amended complaint by Sept. 26. The judge heard arguments in the case on Friday, then took the case under submission and ruled

Tuesday.

“With an iron boot, the city destroyed Ramirez’s 17-year career and the sanctity of his personal life,” the suit states.

However, in her court papers, Nancy Doumanian, an attorney for the city, argued that Ramirez’s case should have been dismissed.

Ramirez was hired by the city as a part-time bus driver in 2004 and was later promoted to a full-time driver and eventually a supervisor, according to his suit filed May 19, which also named as defendants City Manager Rene Bobadilla and Human Resources Director Nicholas Razo in the now-dismissed causes of action.

In March 2020, the city designated Ramirez an essential worker, so he worked through the pandemic, the suit states.

In August 2021, the city announced a plan to enact a vaccine mandate for its employees that was implemented by Bobadilla, the suit states. The city distributed its written vaccine policy and its process for claiming a religious exemption and Ramirez filed the appropriate written application, the suit states.

“Ramirez said that he objected to the vaccines due to his sincere



religious beliefs and specifically his interpretation of the bible,” the suit states. “He also objected on the grounds that the vaccines were developed with the assistance of stem cells taken from aborted fetuses.”

Before an interview with Razo, the human resources head told Ramirez that only 1% of requested religious objections to the vaccine

mandate would be granted, the suit states.

When Ramirez reported to work last Dec. 16, he was escorted out of the building by security for failing to comply with the city’s vaccine mandate and then fired Dec. 30, according to the suit, which further states the plaintiff moved to Texas in the aftermath of what happened to his job in California.

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ON THIS DAY

1493: Christopher Columbus, with 17 ships and 1,200 men, sailed on his second voyage from Cadiz.

1739: Stono Rebellion, the largest slave uprising in Britain’s mainland North American colonies prior to the American Revolution, erupted near Charleston, South Carolina.

1791: Washington, D.C., the capital of the United States, was named after President George Washington.

1919: The Boston Police Strike began after the city denied the police’s right to unionize.

1939: Burmese monk and national hero U Ottama died in prison after a hunger strike to protest Britain’s colonial government.

1941: American singer and songwriter Otis Redding, considered one of the great soul stylists of the 1960s, was born.

1942: During World War II, a Japanese floatplane dropped incendiary bombs on Oregon.

1956: Elvis Presley appeared on “The Ed Sullivan Show” for the first time.

1971: The four-day Attica Prison riot began in New York, eventually resulting in 39 dead, most killed by state troopers retaking the prison.

1990: American tennis player Pete Sampras defeated Andre Agassi at the U.S. Open to capture his first of 14 Grand Slam singles titles.

1998: Special Prosecutor Kenneth W. Starr sent to Congress the report on his investigation into the actions of U.S. President Bill Clinton in the Whitewater affair and subsequent matters, including Clinton’s improper sexual relationship with intern Monica Lewinsky.

2015: Elizabeth II became the longest-reigning monarch in British history, surpassing Victoria’s record reign of 63 years and 216 days.

2016: The government of North Korea conducted its fifth and reportedly biggest nuclear test. World leaders condemned the act, with South Korea calling it “maniacal recklessness.”

Birthdays

Actor **Hugh Grant** (62), actor and film producer **Adam Sandler** (56), “Modern Family” star **Eric Stonestreet** (51), jazz singer **Michael Bublé** (47), and actress **Michelle Williams** (42).

Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer

Menopause: you don't know whether to laugh or cry, so sometimes you do both! It is the permanent end of menstruation and fertility, officially

beginning 12 months after the last menstrual period. It's a natural biological process, and certainly not a medical disease. Nonetheless, it may take a significant physical and emotional toll. I have told my patients that almost any symptom is possible as a result of the chemical and hormonal changes that occur in their body at this time.

This transition most often happens between the age of 45 and 55, and typically lasts about seven years. The actual duration is affected by several things, including one's age at which it starts, race, ethnicity, and lifestyle factors (like smoking). The months or

years leading up to it are known as perimenopause; note that pregnancy is still possible during perimenopause.

Signs and symptoms of menopause and perimenopause can range from extremely mild, to severe and disruptive. They may include:

- Irregular cycles which may be shorter, longer, or heavier, or skipped altogether.

- Hot flashes, which can last for years. These are described as a sudden feeling of heat in the upper body. The face and neck can become flushed. Red blotches may appear on the chest, back and arms, accompanied by heavy sweating followed by cold shivers. They range in severity, and last between 30 seconds to 10 minutes. They can occur several times an hour, or once or twice per week.

- Night sweats and other menopausal symptoms

leading to insomnia (both trouble falling asleep, as well as waking too early).

- Vaginal dryness, which can make sexual intercourse uncomfortable.

- Incontinence, the sudden urge to urinate, or the leaking of urine when exercising, sneezing, or laughing. (Lower estrogen levels can cause pelvic muscles to weaken, leading to some loss of bladder control.)

- Changes in feelings about sex, ranging from loss of interest to feeling freer and sexier due to pregnancy being less likely. (Of course, the risk of contracting an STD continues to make protection important.)

- Moodiness and irritability may be more common. Causes may include changing hormones, family stress, growing children, aging parents, or fatigue.

- Other body changes, related to menopause and aging, may include a widening waist, loss of muscle tone, thinner and more fragile skin, loss of breast fullness, stiff and achy muscles and joints, hair loss, and palpitations.

Your doctor will usually make the diagnosis by taking a simple health history. If you are the appropriate age, menstrual cycles have stopped, and some symptoms are present, the diagnosis will likely be menopause. Blood tests, looking for increased levels of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and decreased levels of estrogen (estradiol), can be ordered to confirm it. (Occasionally, other conditions can have symptoms that mimic menopause, such as hypothyroidism.) Menopause can also be triggered by a hysterectomy, or by surgical removal of the ovaries. Unless hormones are taken, the symptoms of menopause will begin immediately after those surgeries.

Due to hormones and other changes, post-menopausal women may become more vulnerable to heart disease and osteoporosis, vaginal atrophy, and some mental health issues. Should the symptoms of menopause be treated? The answer must take into account a number of issues, including any family history of cancer and heart disease, the severity

of symptoms, and one's individual medical history. Data from well-controlled studies on hormone replacement therapy (HRT) show that it can carry significant risks. Today, HRT is used only for those with the most severe symptoms.

Other treatments for menopausal symptoms include:

- For hot flashes, many use botanical products that naturally contain or act like estrogen. These include soybeans, chickpeas, other legumes, whole grains, some fruits and vegetables; and herbs, such as black cohosh. Research is limited. Low dose antidepressants have provided some relief, as well as Neurontin, a seizure drug that is also used for chronic pain.

- To help prevent osteoporosis, foods and supplements that are rich in calcium and vitamin D are recommended. Moderate exposure to sunlight also helps the body produce vitamin D. An active lifestyle, including regular weight-bearing exercise, helps to stop bone loss. Medication includes bisphosphonates such as Fosamax, as well as a

newer class of medications, selective estrogen receptor modulators (SERMs), such as Evista. Note that it is also important to limit alcohol consumption, in order to reduce the risk of falls, and to avoid smoking, which prevents calcium absorption, leading to lower bone density and weaker bones.

- To reduce the risk of heart disease, follow a heart-healthy lifestyle: not smoking, limiting consumption of saturated fat and cholesterol, salt, and alcohol; maintaining a healthy weight; and being physically active. Medications may be helpful for the control of high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, or diabetes.

Menopause can be a complex physical and emotional process. I urge you to discuss it with your loved ones and with your physician.

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.

Hurricane Kay could bring rain this weekend

■ Heavy rains and flash flooding are possible as Hurricane Kay approaches Southern California.

Hurricane Kay steamed toward a possible brush with land on a sparsely populated stretch of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula Thursday, and forecasters say it might bring rains to southernmost California by the weekend.

Authorities in Baja opened shelters and closed schools ahead of

Kay, which had maximum sustained winds of 85 mph (140 kph).

Forecasters said it could bring hurricane-force winds to parts of the peninsula and brush central Baja on Thursday around the village of Punta Abreojos, near the gray whale sanctuary of El Vizcaino.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said there is a chance the outer bands of the big storm could bring heavy rain — and possibly flash floods — to parts of scorched Southern California and southwestern Arizona on Friday

night and Saturday.

The Hurricane Center said Kay was centered about 85 miles (135 kilometers) west of Cabo San Lazaro early Thursday. Kay was moving north-northwest, up and just offshore from the Baja coast, at 14 mph (22 kph).

A hurricane warning was issued for a sparsely populated stretch of the peninsula around Bahia Asuncion and Punta Abreojos and the state government of Baja California Sur said more than 1,600 people had evacuated to shelters. It

said some creeks were rising and closed some roads.

Heavy rain fell on Los Cabos at the southern tip of the peninsula. Mayor Oscar Leggs Castro said Wednesday there were more than 800 people in shelters in the twin resort destinations.

Long lines of cars waited to fill up at gas stations. Nonessential businesses were closed and some airlines cancelled flights.

Landslides reportedly cut some roadways on the peninsula, but there were no reports of injuries.

Meanwhile, Hurricane Earl churned through open waters in the Atlantic Ocean and was forecast to pass just southeast of Bermuda on Thursday night as a major Category 3 storm.

The island's national security minister, Michael Weeks, told reporters that public services and government offices would keep operating but warned residents to brace for tropical storm conditions.

"Bermuda will certainly feel the effects from Earl, so we must guard against complacency," he said.

Earl was centered about 265 miles (425 kilometers) south of Bermuda early Thursday. Its maximum sustained winds had strengthened to 105 mph (165 kph) and it was moving north at 10 mph (16 kph).

Farther east, Danielle weakened to a tropical storm far out over open waters in the Atlantic some 660 miles (1,060 kilometers) north-northwest of the Azores. It had maximum sustained winds of 70 mph (110 kph).

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How Michigan resisted political extremism

By Barbara McQuade

A brutal plot to abduct the governor. An armed protest in the galleries of the State Capitol. A candidate for governor who stormed the halls of Congress — only to see his popularity rise.

In Michigan, you can feel extremism creeping into civic life.

Michigan is far from the only state in the grip of politicians who peddle disinformation and demonize their opponents. But it may also be the one best positioned to beat back the threat of political violence.

Unlike, say, Arizona and Pennsylvania, two purple states where Republicans have also embraced a toxic brew of political violence and denialism, Michigan is home to voters who, to date, have avoided succumbing to the new conservative dogma, thanks in large part to its Democratic politicians, who have remained relentlessly focused on kitchen table issues. In that sense, Michigan may hold lessons for residents of other states looking to withstand the tide of authoritarianism and violence, restoring faith in the American institutions under siege from the right.

Certainly, recent history is concerning. Although a jury last month convicted two men who plotted to kidnap Gov. Gretchen Whitmer over her Covid shutdown orders, that verdict came only after a jury in an earlier trial could not reach a unanimous verdict on the charges against them and acquitted two other co-defendants, despite chilling evidence that members of a militia group known as the Wolverine Watchmen had been building homemade bombs, photographing the underside of a bridge to determine how best to destroy it to slow a police pursuit and using night-vision goggles to surveil Ms. Whitmer’s vacation home.

In that first trial, the defense argued that the F.B.I.’s informants had egged on the men, and it was persuasive enough to deadlock the jury. But I doubt the jurors would have been so receptive to that line of argument without Donald Trump persistently blasting government employees as “the deep state” and calling the conduct of the F.B.I. “a disgrace.”

For the upcoming November elections, the G.O.P. nominees for attorney general and secretary of state are election deniers, and the candidate for governor has also cast doubt on the results of the 2020 vote for president. And not only are Republican candidates consumed with signaling an allegiance to Mr. Trump, but we are also seeing an alarming rise in political extremism in Michigan.

In spring 2020, armed protesters demonstrated against Covid shutdown orders by occupying the galleries over the Senate chamber in the State Capitol while brandishing assault rifles. After the 2020 election, Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson faced a deluge of threats and harassment from election deniers, including an armed protest at her home, where a mob chanted “stop the steal” while she was inside with her 4-year-old son. Ryan Kelley, who sought the Republican nomination for governor, was charged with four misdemeanor offenses for his alleged role in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. After his

involvement in the attack became well known, his polling numbers actually went up.

Still, there is reason for some cautious optimism. In the Republican primary, voters rejected Mr. Kelley. An independent citizens redistricting commission has been created by a voter initiative to end the gerrymandering that has led to a Republican-controlled State Legislature. Recent polling shows Ms. Whitmer, Ms. Benson and Attorney General Dana Nessel, who are all Democrats, with comfortable leads as the general election approaches, and their resilience in the face of threats has only strengthened their political stock. And the convictions in the Whitmer kidnapping case show that 12 random people can still be found who will set aside their biases and decide a case based on the law and the facts they hear in court. My hunch is that there are more fair-minded people out there who will go to the polls in November.

Pragmatic problem-solving still seems to appeal to Michigan voters. Many families’ fortunes are tied inextricably to the auto industry, the health of which can swing sharply with every economic trend. Ms. Whitmer has championed economic development legislation that has helped create 25,000 auto jobs during her administration. She recently made a pitch to leverage federal legislation to lure companies to manufacture semiconductors in Michigan.

In a state sometimes referred to as the birthplace of the middle class, labor unions carry more influence with working-class voters than the MAGA movement. From the rebirth of Detroit to the expansion of tourism Up North, Michigan is also a place that has long welcomed newcomers. Whether they be laborers on the assembly lines of Henry Ford or engineers for autonomous vehicles, workers from all over the world have always been needed and accepted as part of the work force, making it more difficult to demonize outsiders as “other.” As a result, voters tend to be less susceptible to the politics of fear that are driving the culture wars. Indeed, Ms. Whitmer was elected with a slogan to “Fix the Damn Roads.”

Maybe it is a Midwestern sensibility, but Michiganders seem more interested in candidates who will help advance their financial bottom lines than those who traffic in conspiracy theories. And, four years later, Ms. Whitmer has fixed a lot of the damn roads.

By focusing on economic outcomes of working families, Democrats in Michigan have managed to clinch not only the top state offices, but also the state’s two U.S. Senate seats.

And while every state is different, politicians in other states could learn from Michigan to ignore the bait Republicans use to demonize them and focus on the bottom line issues that matter to voters.

Barbara McQuade (@BarbMcQuade) is a professor of law at the University of Michigan. She served as the U.S. attorney for Michigan’s Eastern District from 2010 to 2017.

The U.S. war on drugs failed here and abroad

By Christy Thornton

Colombia, one of the world’s top producers of cocaine, has long been a key partner in Washington’s failed war on drugs. But Gustavo Petro, the country’s newly sworn-in president, has made good on a campaign pledge to take the country in a different direction. Last month, he said he would end forced eradication of coca, and support legislation to decriminalize and regulate cocaine sales in an effort to undercut illicit markets and the profit motive that drives them.

Here at home, the Biden administration has also signaled an important shift. In April, Dr. Rahul Gupta, the director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, introduced a new strategy that directs federal resources to harm-reduction services. The aim is to prevent deaths from opioid overdose by increasing access to medical treatment and addiction recovery programs, and promoting alternatives to incarceration for minor drug-related offenses.

This new strategy recognizes that the way we have approached the drug problem here at home hasn’t worked. But U.S.-led international drug control efforts have also been a staggering failure, contributing to violence, degradation and displacement in places like Colombia, which largely export cocaine. It has also fueled the move toward synthetic opioids like fentanyl, driving overdose deaths here at home. The Biden administration’s new forward-thinking national policies are a step in the right direction, but the president must go further and end the global drug war.

In the 1980s, the United States began working closely with the Colombian National Police to reduce illegal drug production and trafficking, including by eradicating coca fields and intercepting smugglers. Then in 1999, President Bill Clinton signed into law Plan Colombia as violence and drug trafficking escalated and a concern about guerrilla influence grew. The plan sought to stabilize the nation and undermine drug production, among other things. But the militarized crackdown failed to stamp out cocaine production.

Plan Colombia has also taken a staggering human toll. The Truth Commission created in 2016 as part of that country’s peace deal between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia recently found that the war on drug trafficking left more than nine million victims, a vast majority of whom were civilians. More than 450,000 people died, 121,768 went missing, thousands were kidnapped, raped or tortured, and millions were displaced. The panel called on Colombia and the United States to move toward the legal regulation of drugs.

In the meantime, the drug overdose crisis in the United States killed more than 107,000 people last year alone, a significant acceleration of a deadly trend that has claimed nearly a million lives in the past two decades. Dr. Gupta — the first medical doctor to hold the position of drug czar — knows the impact of this crisis firsthand, having served as health commissioner in West Virginia, the state with the highest overdose mortality rate.

Though a place like West Virginia may seem removed from the jungles of Colombia or the mountains of Mexico, they are connected by U.S. drug control policy. Prohibition measures abroad not only have failed to stop the flow of drugs but also have been a key driver of the deadly innovations in the drug supply here at home.

While forced eradication can temporarily decrease the supply of drug crops in a particular location, studies have shown that these reductions are always temporary. In fact, experts have long recognized that crackdowns in one place merely create a “balloon effect” in which production and trafficking shift to another place. Cultivators move production to locations under less scrutiny, and traffickers move to new territory — as we have seen in the shift in recent years from Colombia to Mexico and Central America.

Further, going after high-profile kingpins merely splinters drug trafficking organizations into new factions, increasing competition and violence in source countries. As a result, traffickers are pushed into ever more remote and often ecologically fragile areas — with devastating environmental effects that contribute to displacement.

And perhaps most important, militarized source-control measures and increased border security efforts actually create incentives for traffickers to find new profit sources that are easier to manufacture and transport, as we’ve seen over the decades — from cannabis to cocaine and heroin, to methamphetamines, and now to synthetic opioids like fentanyl. Combined with a well-documented crackdown on overprescribed prescription painkillers here in the United States, this has led to an explosion in the supply of the fentanyl that is driving our overdose crisis.

Ultimately, more than four decades of the U.S.-led war on drugs abroad has not only failed to reduce the supply of illicit substances — it has actually made them more dangerous. A recent U.N. report found that global drug use is up 26 percent from a decade ago. Another survey by the Drug Enforcement Administration confirmed that despite decades of these source control measures, drug prices remain steady, purity and potency remain high, drugs remain widely available, and overdoses are skyrocketing.

“It is time for a new international convention that accepts that the war on drugs has failed,” President Petro said during his inauguration speech, echoing an argument that has been made by other Latin American leaders in recent years. Promoting policies that foster violence overseas will do nothing to reverse the trend toward an increasingly unsafe drug supply here at home.

The Biden administration has taken key steps to address our failures here at home — but to find lasting success, it must end our drug war abroad, as well.

Christy Thornton is an assistant professor of sociology and Latin American studies at Johns Hopkins University.

Try better pay, benefits to keep workers

By Jim Hightower

For more than a year, America’s corporate chieftains have been moaning about the “Great Resignation”: the recent phenomenon of workers just up and quitting their jobs. And now comes “quiet quitting”: workers who don’t leave their jobs, but only do what they were hired to do, quietly rejecting the endless extra (unpaid) tasks and weekend assignments that bosses try to pile on. What’s at work in the heads of all these workers?

Simple, barked one taskmaster way back in 1894. “Nobody wants to work.” And here’s an anti-New Deal baron in 1940, snorting that “trouble is everybody is on relief or a pension — nobody wants to work.” Then in ’52 came the same refrain: Everybody is “too damned lazy and nobody wants to work anymore.” Year after year, the exact same wail is repeated from on high, including this group gripe expressed in a corporate survey this year: “One in five executive leaders agree (that) ‘No one wants to work.’”

Given the historic continuum of executive-suite disdain for working stiffs, it’s no surprise that the top dogs are still blaming “sluggish” workers for today’s rampant job dissatisfaction. But it’s both hilarious and pathetic that high-dollar bosses are so inept at employee relations that they can’t keep the rank and file on the job, much less keep them quasi-happy. The corporate response has been to put a silly Band-Aid on this serious problem. They’ve created new executive-level positions with titles like “Chief People Officer” and hired consulting firms with such names as “Woohoo” and “Happy Ltd” to come up with treats, trinkets and gimmicks, trying to make the workplace seem like a playscape: Beer tastings! Ping-pong games! Meditation periods! A Lizzo concert! Office slides! Company water bottles! Wine Wednesdays!

Seriously? Memo to CEOs: Try decent pay and benefits, rational scheduling, meaningful goals, real teamwork and personal respect. In a word: Dignity.

In the world of work, what two occupations might seem to have the very least in common? How about long-haul truck drivers... and school librarians? Yes, an odd pairing, but both are prime examples of workers who’ve had their workplace dignity stripped away. So, solidarity forever!

Start with truckers; the job is literally a grueling haul. You’re wrangling massive 18-wheelers some 500 miles a day for 2-3 weeks straight, putting up with traffic jams, storms, bad roads, lunatic drivers, helter-skelter scheduling, truck-stop food, sleeping in the truck — and battling fatigue, aches, your bladder and loneliness.

Trucking used to be a good union job, with decent pay and conditions — until the deregulation craze four decades ago brought in Wall Street profiteers and fast-buck hustlers who turned the industry into anti-union exploiters. As a result, the yearly quit rate for drivers is almost 100%! But rather than retaining drivers by upping pay and stopping their torturous treatment, the corporate bosses have rushed to Washington demanding access to an even cheaper pool of low-wage workers: teenagers. Yes — put an 18-year-old in that 18-wheeler... and keep them profits rolling!

And here’s another good job suddenly turned ugly: school librarian. Yes, while student enrollments rise and the need for these nurturers of our society’s literacy is greater than ever, their quit rate is soaring — not because of low pay or long hours, but because of raw right-wing politics. These dedicated, invaluable educators are literally being abused by demagogic GOP politicians and their extremist partisans who’ve launched an anti-librarian crusade, including book banning and harebrained witch hunting. Come on — how twisted are you to pick on librarians? Yet, they are under attack by political hacks, condemned by reprobate preachers and physically threatened by frenzied parents... and being fired by wimpy school boards.

Forget the “law” of supply and demand; today’s job market is being ruled by greedmeisters and political lunatics.

Jim Hightower is a syndicated columnist and radio host.

Be a responsible pet owner

Dear Editor:

There is no doubt in my mind that having a pet at home can bring a lot of happiness to a family, some people actually regard their pets as their “children.” This being said, it seems like the norm nowadays in pet ownership is to have them indoors part-time and for the rest of the day, let them loose to do as they will.

The problem with this concept is that these owners’ “children” are running around and either damaging property or that they seem to be running an orphanage and disrupting the quality of life for their neighbors.

I personally have neighbors who raise pigeons and have a multitude of cats that they let loose during the day and night. It is totally disheartening when you take your car to the carwash, pay good money to have it detailed, and then find either a cat resting on the roof of the car or paw prints trailing from one end of the car to the other.

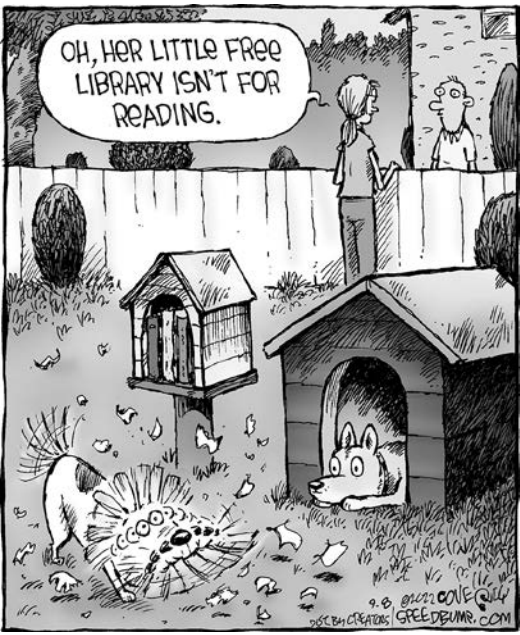
An example of the quality of life that I mentioned is the number of fleas that they leave behind (both pigeons and cats) in your yard, the feces they leave behind, or the carcasses of dead animals they kill and leave in your yard.

Once again, I really believe that having a pet is a great thing, but come on people, be responsible and only keep those animals you can actually care for, and be respectful and considerate to your neighbors.

Edward Ramos
Downey

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SPEED BUMP DAVE COVERLY



Norwalk Community Calendar

MONDAYS

1st Mon., 6 pm - Public Safety meetings - Council Chambers
2nd Mon., 7 pm - Relay for Life meetings - Mr. Rosewood Family Restaurant

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

SUNDAYS

12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Food Pantry - 12201 Firestone Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

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

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PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

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

You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at www.StanXwords.com

OUR sacred Honor." of Independence (15 Down) is "and closing phrase of the Declaration on its opening day in 1931. The at London's Abbey Road Studios (Across) conducted a performance and aunt. Edward ELGAR (27 character (20 Across) on his mother Tyler Perry based his MADEA



THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
WHERE ART THOU?: Where, who, and what
by Richard Shlakman & Howard Barkin

ACROSS

- 1 Weakens, as the tide
5 Game for little batters
10 Rooster topper
14 Raucous
19 Arrange, as hair
20 Tyler Perry film persona
21 Bring up the __ (trail)
22 Broadcast portion
23 The Hague's Mauritshuis (Vermeer)
27 "Pomp and Circumstance" composer
28 "Much to my surprise . . ."
29 Prefix meaning "bull"
30 Antidrug agcy.
31 Ophthalmologist, familiarly
34 Housecleaning tool
36 General __ chicken
38 Sound of a snarl
40 GPS reading
41 Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum (Rembrandt)
47 Erstwhile prince of India
49 Is supervised by
51 Frequent upper-left PC hit
52 Spanish bears
53 Frying medium
54 Juice-name starter
56 Church's large crucifix
57 Paris' Musée d'Orsay (artist redacted)
63 Reverend Jackson
64 French Open barrier
65 Your choice of
66 Common trivia quiz choices
68 FDR's third VP
69 Certain square dancer
70 Repair shop fig.
71 Brewery client

DOWN

- 72 Sound heard by Bo Peep
75 Software testing phase
76 __ Baba
77 Cause much mayhem
80 Make happy
83 New York City's MOMA (Andrew Wyeth)
86 Not quite a majority
87 Smile big
88 QVC rival
89 Ready to eat, in a way
90 Italian cheese
92 Disneyland souvenir
97 Taj Mahal city
98 Milan's Santa Maria delle Grazie (da Vinci)
100 Apt. coolers
102 Term of endearment
103 Guitar ancestor
104 Color TV pioneer
105 "That describes me, right?"
107 NBA tiebreakers
110 Zodiac beast
112 Defamatory writing
115 "Great" ancient emperor of India
118 Paris' Musée d'Orsay (Manet)
123 Oscar actress Marisa
124 WWW addresses
125 Kumquat-shaped
126 Last part of Hamlet
127 Heavenly hunter
128 Finger jab
129 Aligns, for short
130 Do without

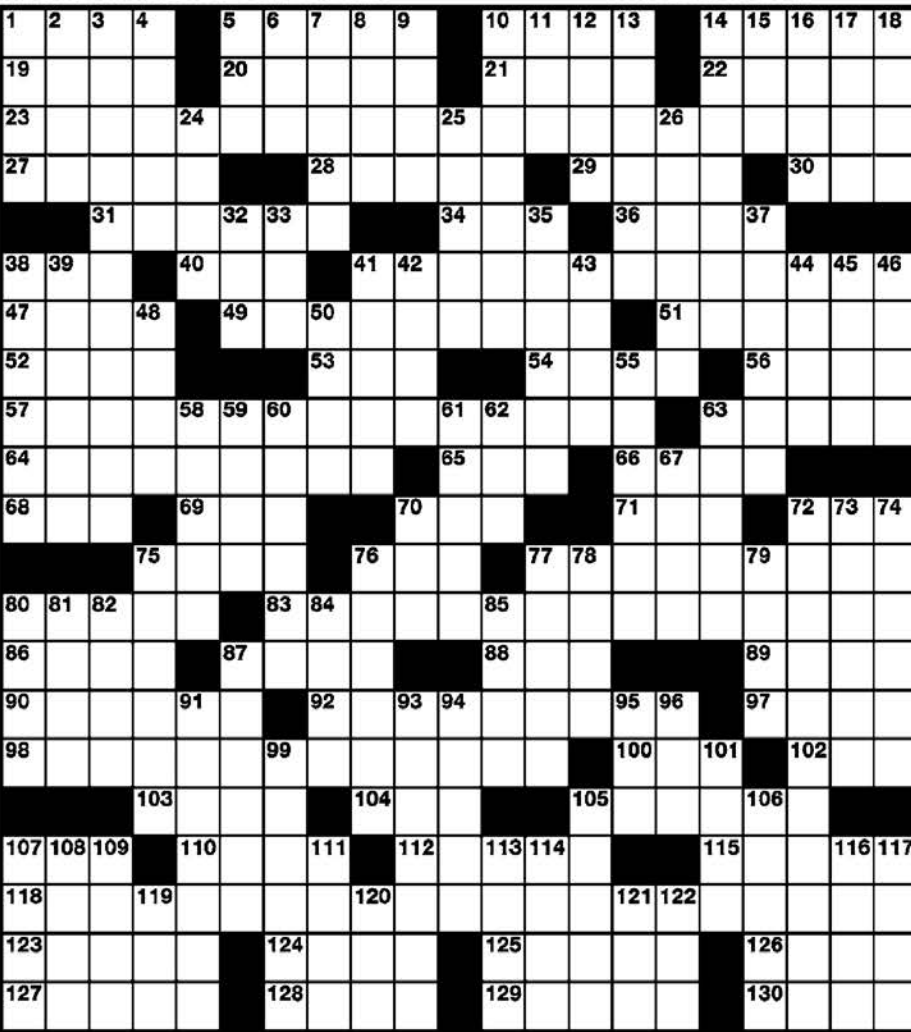
DOWN

- 1 Narrow advantage
2 Cookbook verb
3 Many a fast-food restaurant
4 Spread awkwardly
5 Texter's "Enough details"
6 Mammalian flier
7 Committee adjective
8 Starring role
9 Southern Cal cops
10 Sticks for coloring
11 'Neath opposite
12 Brewer's grain
13 Inhalation
14 Reduces in width
15 Last Declaration pronoun
16 Terse confession
17 __ qua non (essential thing)
18 Meditative exercise
24 Tiny songbird
25 Bugs Bunny's pursuer
26 Sir Walter Scott contemporary
32 Forensic evidence
33 Have and hold
35 Black as tar
37 Hallowed
38 Investor's objective
39 Multitudes of instances
41 Literary surprise
42 Captain's wheel
43 Quayle successor
44 Bout enders, in brief
45 Bosses of boards
46 London's __ Park
48 Special interest grp.
50 Carrying a grudge
55 World's largest peninsula
58 Striped roarer
59 Exam for would-be attys.
60 Intertwine
61 Desert haven
62 Blaster's buy
63 LL Bean rival
67 Glee club voice
70 Connecticut collegian
72 Promise for a quick return
73 NFLer's honor
74 Country music star Jason

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9/4/22



- 75 Happen to
76 British knight's suit
77 One getting up
78 Novelist Quindlen
79 Circle dance
80 E-tailer's help option
81 Breakfast order
82 Peace Nobelists Wiesel
84 Easter entrées
85 "With this ring I __ wed"
87 Ben Franklin's birthplace

- 91 His At the Pond is in Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum
93 Face-to-face
94 Most of Iberia
95 Zodiac beast
96 -fi
99 Piece of china
101 Minor obstacle
105 TV chef Brown
106 Gumbo ingredients
107 Simpsons bus driver

- 108 Mythical thunderbolt thrower
109 "Sweet" starter
111 Burns' "Comin' __ the Rye"
113 Spectator protests
114 Begrudging feeling
116 Wine town near Turin
117 Evite answer
119 Zodiac beast
120 Reindeer's kin
121 Gulpy sound
122 Mag VIPs

MORE OF STAN'S CROSSWORDS! Play FREE from Stan's archives of Easy, Hard and Sunday puzzles at: tinyurl.com/stan-newman-crosswords

Santa Fe girls volleyball off to hot start

■ Coach Brokenbough helped turn team around from 2021 and is off to 12-4 non-league start.

By John M. Sherrard
Contributor

COVINA – The Santa Fe High School girls volleyball team is off to a great start for the 2022 season. What a difference a season makes.

Tuesday afternoon (September 6) was no exception, as the Chiefs swept the host Covina Colts, 3-0, in a non-league contest.

The Chiefs, who improved to 12-4, won by scores of 25-12, 25-17, 25-16.

After a 2021 season that resulted in a below .500 record of 6-15 overall and 2-6 record for a fourth-place finish in the Del Rio League, the team has turned it around with third-year coach Gay Brokenbough and is preparing for a run at the league title and a post-season berth in the CIF playoffs.

“Yes we are, that’s our goal, our big goal,” Santa Fe senior setter Alyjah Castaneda said. “It takes a lot of hard work at practice and we always have our goals in mind. We just work on everything we talk about.”

Brokenbough, who returns for a second stint as coach for the Chiefs echoed Castaneda with a big smile. “Ya, I mean we are aiming for it (CIF) and it’s on our radar.” Brokenbough was the coach from 2001 through 2005. She then was an assistant at Cerritos College from 2007 until 2016 when she decided to retire from coaching. She has taught Math at Santa Fe for the last 20 years.

Brokenbough, however, couldn’t stay away from the game she loved for long. She came back in 2020, but the Pandemic ended that season before it started, of course.

Enter the class of 2023

“I had a group of freshmen (class of 2023) in my honors geometry class who were on the freshman/JV team,” she explained. “They loved the sport, but were not learning anything. They looked athletic and the coach that got hired in 2019 did not finish his first season. So, I started thinking, ‘Should I go back?’

“I didn’t think I would ever go back to coaching. I was enjoying my time off, but a big piece of me felt I still had an obligation to these kids to learn the game I love. So, I applied for the position and got hired in February 2020. Well, March 2020 we got shut down due to COVID.”

Those freshmen that Brokenbough was doing this for would lose an entire season of touching volleyballs due to COVID.

“I knew their junior year was going to be a building year,” Brokenbough said. “They were all lacking experience. I spent so much time on rotation and skills, that I could not develop their volleyball IQ.”

Unfortunately, Club Volleyball, which can be expensive, was not possible for the players.

However, with the help of the Oasis Volleyball Club, they set up a team last summer and many of the girls played.

“This off-season it was easier,” said Brokenbough, of the training this summer. “I was now able to teach them the game and strategy.”

Certain pieces came together for Brokenbough along the way in the process for this successful season to happen.

“Alyjah (Castaneda) and Paris (Guzman) are the biggest reasons I came back to coach,” said Brokenbough, of her assist leader (Castaneda – 140 A), and (Guzman – 105 Digs, 25 Aces). “They were great students of mine and I could see their dedication.” Castaneda also has 17 aces, 106 digs and 33 kills.

Monique Cardona (35 Aces), a Libero, who leads the team in digs with 231, transferred in to Santa Fe from Los Altos in her sophomore



Santa Fe’s Alyjah Castaneda (12), left, is congratulated after scoring a point against Covina in their non-league girls volleyball match at Covina High School on Tuesday. Santa Fe defeated Covina 3-0. (Photo by Keith Durlfanger)

year.

“She gave me someone with a ton of playing experience,” Brokenbough added. “She has been playing club volleyball for many years already.

“Then I was fortunate to have Abigail (Cetina) and Camya (Bottorff) walk in the doors their freshmen year.”

Bottorff, an outside hitter, leads the team with 84 kills, while Cetina, a setter, has 120 assists, 20 aces and 78 digs.

Asked about the difference between the last two years, Cardona said, “Honestly, it was our defense and the coaching, because (she) is harder on us this year than last year,” Cardona said. “Our hitting has got a lot better. We’re all seniors.”

Actually, the team is made up of nine seniors, three juniors, three sophomores and one freshman.

“I knew the 2021 season would be a time for them to get used to a demanding coach, learn to work with each other, and learn what playing like a team means,” Brokenbough said.

“The result of this year is a culmination of everything I strive my players to be. Team first, work hard, and the reward will come. I have had special teams, but this team is very special to me. They have been through so much and their resilience is amazing. I am devoted to work hard for them and make up the lost two years the seniors had and I want them to go out with a bang.”

Winning streak continues

The Chiefs have won the last four matches in a row and six out of the last seven.

Their hot streak comes just in time, as Del Rio League action starts next week.

Santa Fe, along with Whittier,

El Rancho and Cal High all will be aiming to dethrone the four-time defending La Serna Lancers.

In fact, the last team other than La Serna to win the league title was Santa Fe in 2016.

The last appearance in the post-season for the Chiefs was in 2017.

La Serna, which has won 24 consecutive DRL matches, hasn’t lost a league match since the October of 2017.

You can bet, the four previously named teams will be aiming for the Lancers this season.

Chiefs sweep Covina, 3-0

Leading the way in the win over Covina was Bottorff and sophomore outside hitter Elizabeth Beltran with eight and six kills, respectively.

Castaneda (14 digs, 14 aces) led with 10 assists and Cetina had seven assists. She also had five digs and three aces.

Cardona added 10 digs and three aces, while senior defensive specialists Nadya Benitez had five service aces.

As a team, the Chiefs had 15 aces.

In the opening set, Santa Fe jumped out to a 14-5 lead and never looked back. Bottorff led with three kills in the set.

The team combined for seven service aces in the game, with an ace by Benitez to set up set point at 24-12.

Benitez served out the set for the last three points, which was the game-winner when Covina made a hitting error for the victory and the 1-0 lead in the match.

In the second set, the Chiefs again took a 7-2 lead on a service ace by Castaneda.

However, Covina came roaring

back due to a series of mistakes by the Chiefs and the game was eventually tied, 12-12.

Another big kill by Bottorff gave the Chiefs a late two-point lead, 16-14. That was the closest the Colts came after that kill, as Santa Fe finished the set on a 9-3 run, culminated with a set-winning kill by an excited Beltran.

In the third and final set, Covina would take its first early lead of the match, 3-2, but that was short-lived.

With Cardona serving and the Chiefs winning four consecutive points, they stretched the lead to 19-11.

Cetina would serve out the match with two consecutive service aces for the 3-0 win.

What they said:

Gay Brokenbough: “This group of seniors is one of the reasons why I came back. I have all of this knowledge. I do love this sport. I just wondered if I had the time and the energy to coach again and I just found it again.”

Monique Cardona, senior libero: “Honestly, playing on the team this year is exciting. We have hope for our league games. We’re doing really good. We came from down here to one of the best in league.

“I think the game against La Serna will be really close.”

Alyjah Castaneda, Senior setter: “In order for my position to be in play, I need a good pass and someone to get the ball up and it’s my job to get the set to the outside or the middle so that they can score a point for us.

“We have team goals and individual goals before every game and every day in practice.”



Santa Fe’s Ariel Romero (18) hits between Covina players in their non-league girls volleyball match at Covina High School on Tuesday. Santa Fe defeated Covina 3-0. (Photo by Keith Durlfanger)

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