

# The Norwalk Patriot

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14783 Carmenita Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

## College to observe day of peace

■ Saturday's event will feature a parade, music and dance performances, guest talks, and more. It is free and open to the public.

**NORWALK** – Cerritos College will host an International Day of Non-Violence Celebration this Saturday, Oct. 1.

The day will begin with a Peace Parade around campus at 10 a.m., followed by guest speakers and performances in the College's Performing Arts Center at 11 a.m., and a luncheon at 1:15 p.m.

All are welcome to participate. Many parade participants will carry signs promoting peace, unity, and non-violence.

The parade will be followed by a two-hour program in the Performing Arts Center with guest speakers and musical and dance performances. Dr. John Haas, Cerritos College history professor and founder and director of the Global Consortium for Sustainable Peace, will give a keynote presentation on "Fostering Sustainable Peace in a Divided World."

Haas has interviewed and worked with many international leaders and received numerous accolades for promoting global peace, education, and understanding, including a commendation from the United States Congress.

The International Day of Non-Violence was established in 2007 by a United Nations General Assembly resolution to spread the message of non-violence through education and public awareness. The official observance is October 2, the birthday of political and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi, a pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.

"This is the first major public event made possible through generous donations to the Cerritos College Foundation to establish a Peace Center Endowment and a current-use fund for programming around peace, unity, and non-violence," said Carol Krumbach, executive director of the Cerritos College Foundation. More than 50 donors have contributed to date.

## New theater opening next month

**NORWALK** – "I Am Frida Kahlo," an original play written and directed by Cerritos College Spanish professor Froylan Cabuto, will debut Oct. 29 as the first public theatrical performance at the new Cerritos College Performing Arts Center.

"I Am Frida Kahlo" is a stirring surrealist performance that depicts the tumultuous life of one of the most influential female artists of the twentieth century.

The original program features live music, dance performances, and digital media elements. The play explores the creative process through which Frida Kahlo developed some of her most outstanding works of art while touching on current social and political issues.

Starring Fernanda Kelly as Frida Kahlo, the play is choreographed by Beatriz Eugenia Vásquez, with original music and musical arrangements by Otto Cifuentes.

Performances are Saturday, Oct. 29, at 8 pm; Sunday, Oct. 30, at 4 pm; Friday, Nov. 4, at 8 pm; and Saturday, Nov. 5, at 8 pm.

Pre-sale tickets are \$35. Tickets at the door are \$40, plus a \$4 ticketing fee.

## Cerritos mayor provides positive updates in State of the City address

■ Several economic development projects are either already underway or expected to begin soon in Cerritos.

**CERRITOS** – Cerritos Mayor Chuong Vo presented the State of the City address Sept. 21 at the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts.

Presented by the Cerritos Regional Chamber of Commerce, this was the first State of the City address in Cerritos since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It was great to be back and to see everyone's faces and feel a sense of community as we gathered together again," remarked Vo. "Through COVID-19, the health and safety of Cerritos residents and the community remained top priorities for the city, and we continued to move forward with various projects and improvements. I was honored to be able to share those at this year's event."

Vo discussed recent accomplishments of the city, including the following:

•**Online Permit Portal** – The first phase of the city's new online permit portal launched in late 2021 at [permits.cerritos.us](https://permits.cerritos.us). Various business license services are now available online. Funding for the new portal was provided by grants from the Southern California Association of Governments and the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

•**Revolve** – Remodeling of the city-owned property at 12616 183rd Street was completed in March 2022. Approximately \$6.3 million in one-time revenues from the sale of the city's former museum collection and insurance claim settlements was used to offset construction costs. The building is now being leased to Revolve Clothing, an online apparel, accessory and shoe company that ranks consistently as one of the top 25 sales tax producers in Cerritos.

•**New Businesses/Business Improvements** – Upgrades/remodels were completed at the Target on Bloomfield Avenue, the Target on South Street, Norm Reeves Hyundai Super Store and Christensen Shopping Center. Improvements were completed to the building formerly occupied by Toys R Us in January 2021, which is now an Amazon Fresh.

•**Pine Tree Reforestation**



Cerritos Mayor Chuong Vo delivered Cerritos' State of the City address last week. (Courtesy photo)

**Program** – In early 2021, the City Council reviewed the Pine Tree Reforestation Program and made a modification to prioritize the removal of a tree based on the extent of the damage it has caused. Last fiscal year, staff removed more than 100 pine trees.

•**Moon Festival** – The city held its inaugural Autumn Moon Festival on September 10 at Heritage Park, where lanterns were released in the water under the Harvest Moon. The community enjoyed music, food and fortune cookies at this free event.

The following upcoming projects and events were highlighted by Mayor Vo:

•**Kia** – The City recently extended its existing lease agreement with Kia of Cerritos for an additional 10 years through 2045. Kia is currently in a preliminary plan review process for a proposed remodel project designed to expand and modernize the dealership.

•**Cerritos Auto Square Documentary** – The city is currently working with the Cerritos Auto Square on a film that will tell the story about the success of the world famous auto mall and how it came to be. The piece is anticipated

to be released later this year. Approximately 57,500 vehicles were sold in 2021 at the Cerritos Auto Square.

•**Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts (CCPA) 2022-23 Season** – The CCPA is back with its first full season since COVID-19, and is celebrating its 30th anniversary. Tickets are on sale now for the new season for performers such as Jay Leno, Chicago, The Jacksons, Dave Koz, Paul Anka and Lea Salonga. Order tickets at [cerritoscenter.com](https://cerritoscenter.com).

•**City Website Redesigns** – The city is currently redesigning its main website, in addition to the Safer Cerritos, Cerritos Library, CCPA and Shop Cerritos websites. The CCPA website is expected to launch in December, with the remaining sites launching in May and June of 2023.

•**Santa Float** – The popular Santa's Holiday Float will return this year to bring season's greetings to Cerritos neighborhoods. The float will travel throughout the city in December.

•**Tribute to Public Safety** – The City Council approved the design for an art project that pays tribute to public safety services and will be placed in front of the Cerritos

Sheriff's Station. The sculpture is designed by artist Gary Alsum, with support from the design team of the National Sculptors Guild. The tribute will include a deputy sheriff, firefighter and K-9 unit sculptures; a 9/11 memorial; and a Department Memorial pillar to honor those lost in the line of duty.

•**Community Garden** – Sites are being considered for a potential community garden in the City of Cerritos that can be accessible and enjoyed by all residents. A community garden will provide a place for residents to grow fresh fruits, vegetables and plants as they bond and create social ties with their neighbors.

The city continues its recovery from pandemic-driven business closures that began in 2020. Sales tax receipts in Cerritos from January through March 2022 increased 26.8 percent compared to the same period in 2021.

Cerritos is forecast to receive \$46.7 million in sales tax revenue this current fiscal year, and ranks number 43 out of 539 agencies in California in total sales tax revenue collected for calendar year 2021.

## Weekend at a Glance

Friday 84° 

Saturday 82° 

Sunday 82° 

## THINGS TO DO



### Cars & Coffee

Saturday, 8 am - 1 pm  
Whittier Elks Lodge

A classic car show plus live music, 50-50 raffles (featuring Dodgers memorabilia), coffee, breakfast (menudo, pozole and breakfast burritos), and more. Proceeds to benefit the Boys & Girls Club.

## ON THIS DAY

**1791:** The opera "The Magic Flute" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart premiered in Vienna.

**1927:** Babe Ruth became the first player to hit 60 home runs in a single season; his record stood until Roger Maris hit 61 in 1961.

**1938:** The notorious Munich Agreement, in which Britain's Neville Chamberlain encouraged Britain and France to appease Adolf Hitler's demands in the hope of preventing World War II, was reached on this day in 1938.

**1947:** The 1947 World Series began between the New York Yankees and Brooklyn Dodgers. It was the first to be televised, to include an African-American player, to exceed \$2 million in receipts, to see a pinch-hit home run, and to have six umpires on the field.



**1949:** The Berlin airlift officially ended after the Western Allied powers delivered 2,323,738 tons of food, fuel, machinery, and other supplies to West Berlin, which had been cut off from the West during the Soviet blockade of Berlin.

**1954:** The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear-powered vessel, was commissioned by the U.S. Navy.

**1955:** American actor James Dean, who became a symbol of the confused, restless, and idealistic youth of the 1950s, died in an automobile crash as he drove to a car rally in Salinas, California.

**2005:** The Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten printed satirical cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, provoking violent protests by Muslims worldwide.

**2016:** Two paintings with a combined value of \$100 million were recovered after having been stolen from the Van Gogh Museum in 2002. The paintings were found in the home of an Italian drug trafficker.

## Birthdays

"The Nanny" star **Fran Drescher** (65), "Dharma & Greg" star **Jenna Elfman** (51), American gymnast **Dominique Moceanu** (41), "Party of Five" actress **Lacey Chabert** (40), hip-hop vocalist **T-Pain** (38), and actress and dancer **Maddie Ziegler** (20).



**MEET THE MAYOR:** Norwalk Mayor Rick Ramirez, right, hosted a "Meet the Mayor" event last Saturday at Don Knabe Golf Center & Junior Academy. Ramirez chatted with residents about local issues.

# Downey's mayor pro tem heads for recall election

Downey Mayor Pro Tem Catherine Alvarez will become the first council member in Downey history to face a recall election.

More than 4,500 residents signed a petition to recall Alvarez, who did not disclose she was arrested for shoplifting and welfare fraud before the November 2020 election.

By Alex Dominguez  
Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** — The Downey City Clerk confirmed Wednesday that enough signatures were collected and verified to send Mayor Pro Tem Catherine Alvarez to a recall election.

More than 4,500 signatures were submitted earlier this month in a second attempt to recall Alvarez, who was elected to the Downey City Council in November 2020, representing District 3.

Opponents of Alvarez said they are seeking a recall election because Alvarez failed to disclose her prior felony charges of welfare fraud and lying under oath — as well as stealing from the Michaels Store in the Downey Landing — when she ran for her seat in 2020.

This will be the first recall election in the City of Downey's history.

With the signatures verified, the

city council must now schedule a special election. Voters will decide only if Alvarez should be recalled — no candidates will be included in the recall vote.

In a statement posted to Facebook, Councilwoman Claudia M. Frometa said Downey residents "want stability and elected officials with integrity and values that represent all in Downey."

"Unfortunately, Catherine Alvarez does not represent the values District 3 residents want," Frometa wrote. "We cannot teach our children about character, honesty, responsibility, hard work and integrity when the Mayor Pro Tem of their city has a lengthy criminal record...This recall has nothing to do with political affiliation, or partisan politics (as is continually and wrongly stated). What Catherine Alvarez continually fails to admit is her lack of honesty, her constant harassment of many people (myself included, on the dais and on social media). This recall has always been about her lack of honesty and transparency."

Former Downey mayor Rick Rodriguez said the recall is "solely about the right of voters to know who they are electing to public office."

"Downey is a community that values ethics and good character, and we believe the election could have had a different outcome had residents known Catherine Alvarez was a convicted thief," he said.

The Committee to Recall Catherine Alvarez issued a

statement Wednesday echoing that voters deserved to know about Alvarez's criminal record before the election.

"More than 4,500 District 3 residents signed the petition to recall Catherine Alvarez because they know she is a liar and a bully who was unfairly elected to city council," said Mario A. Guerra, a former two-time mayor of Downey. "We pushed for this recall because she failed to disclose to residents her welfare fraud conviction, her two warrants for her arrest, and her shoplifting arrest at Michael's. Having all that new information, voters will now have an opportunity to determine if they want Catherine Alvarez as their city council representative."

Alvarez released her own statement, claiming the recall is political retaliation for her efforts to enhance rent control measures in Downey.

"I want to make something obvious. Regardless of what the recallers claim, this recall is happening because I have been pushing for rent control—a policy that the majority of the residents want but which the council does not," Alvarez said. "This recall is being pushed by the wealthiest, most privileged people in the City of Downey. People like Rick Rodriguez and his friend Mario Guerra. They have donated much money to remove me because they are landlords. They sit around being landlords while working families struggle to pay their monthly rent."



More than 4,500 residents signed a petition to recall Mayor Pro Tem Catherine Alvarez. Her fate will be decided in a special election early next year.

"When a working-class person —ME — pushed back, they didn't like that. But we won anyway."

"Even if this recall is successful, rent control is going to happen. No matter what Mario Guerra and Rick Rodriguez, and Claudia Frometa say, and even if I am removed, I'll come back. I am not going to give up fighting for my community. We are going to have rent control in the City of Downey, and we are going to

have a new council that cares for the entire community, not just for the landlords."

The first attempt to recall Alvarez fell 35 signatures short in February. This time, recall organizers said they were more careful in verifying the signatures they collected.

"Today is a great day for the City of Downey," said Dorothy Pemberton, who helped lead the

recall. "This was a grassroots effort led by concerned citizens who have Downey's best interests at heart. Catherine Alvarez deceived the residents of her district and now she will face them again in a true and honest election."

# SoCalGas successfully tests microgrid demonstration project in Downey

The Gas Co. built a 2,000 sq. ft. model home in Downey that is powered by clean, renewable hydrogen.

**DOWNEY** — Southern California Gas Co. on Tuesday announced that its [H2] Innovation Experience in Downey is now using renewable hydrogen that is produced onsite.

The project will demonstrate the resiliency and reliability of a renewable hydrogen microgrid that can power neighborhoods — just in time to kick off National Clean Energy Week.

The [H2] Innovation Experience features a nearly 2,000 square-foot home that can use reliable and clean hydrogen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, by drawing power from solar panels on sunny days and converting excess energy into renewable hydrogen, which can be stored and then converted back into electricity, as needed, via an on-site hydrogen fuel cell.

Hydrogen will also be blended with natural gas and used in the home's tank-less water heater, clothes dryer, and gas stove,

fireplace and BBQ grill. The home is being constructed to LEED Platinum standards.

The project's electrolyzer, which uses solar power to split water, has now produced its first full kilogram of renewable hydrogen — the first ever produced by SoCalGas — which is intended to power a fuel cell to provide power when solar isn't available. One kilogram of hydrogen, roughly equivalent to a gallon of gasoline, emits only water as a byproduct. The limited production of hydrogen at this site as part of this demonstration project is specifically intended to show the microgrid's effectiveness in terms of reliability and resiliency.

"The production of the first kilogram of renewable hydrogen by SoCalGas is a key milestone as we prepare to welcome visitors to our [H2] Innovation Experience in the coming months," said Neil Navin, Vice President of Clean Energy Innovations at SoCalGas.

"This project shows the essential role clean fuels like renewable hydrogen can play in meeting California's clean energy and resiliency goals and highlights our progress toward making net zero a

reality. And projects like this, along with efforts like those to develop a statewide hydrogen blending standard, have the potential to drive down the costs of renewable hydrogen, making it a valuable tool to help decarbonize California."

"On behalf of my council colleagues and myself, I would like to congratulate SoCalGas on this momentous achievement," added Downey Mayor Blanca Pacheco. "The use of green hydrogen could greatly reduce carbon emissions and help in our fight against climate change."

"By building on the benefits of using hydrogen generated by renewable energy, our city can continue to be at the forefront of technology and environmental sustainability."

SoCalGas is at the forefront of sustainability having announced its aim to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. It is the first large natural gas utility in the United States to do so.

SoCalGas has been at the forefront of clean energy innovation and is aggressively working to develop a suite of tools to help with those decarbonization efforts,



particularly in hard-to-electrify sectors: hydrogen, hydrogen blending, renewable natural gas and carbon management, to name some of the clean energy tools being developed and employed as part of its overall clean energy strategy.

That strategy is already in full motion. Earlier this month, SoCalGas partnered with UCI on a proposal to demonstrate how hydrogen can be safely blended into

existing natural gas infrastructure on the university's campus and take California a step closer to establishing a statewide injection standard for renewable hydrogen.

Additionally, in February, the company proposed developing the Angeles Link, a dedicated green hydrogen energy infrastructure system for delivering clean reliable energy to the Los Angeles Basin to serve hard to electrify sectors of the

economy like electric generation, heavy-duty transportation, and heavy industry and manufacturing.

SoCalGas research has shown that with clean fuels like renewable natural gas and hydrogen, coupled with carbon management, California can reach 100% net zero goals more affordably, more equitably and with less risk of power disruptions, customer conversion barriers, and technological limitations.

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# Iran has lost sight of its greatest asset: women

By **Firoozeh Dumas**

Growing up in Southern Iran and Southern California, I had the pleasure of having a father who loved to tell stories about his childhood in Iran. Most of his stories were funny, but there was one that always brought him to the brink of tears.

Of course, he never cried; he always changed the subject right at the breaking point. It was the story of his oldest sister, Sedigeh, the smartest sibling in their large family. Because she was a girl, she was married at 16, which was not unusual for Iranian society in the 1930s. Despite her intellectual curiosity, she never had a chance to finish school. My father made it clear to me that he considered this to be a crime. My aunt Sedigeh, now 99 and blind, made the most of her life, raised four successful sons who married strong women and raised successful children. As much as she relished her family, the rest of us wondered what she could have done with her life had she been given the freedom to prosper like her brothers, all of whom became doctors or engineers.

But even my aunt Sedigeh, with all the limitations forced upon her, did not as a young woman have to wear a hijab, the head cover that was made compulsory by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini after the 1979 Islamic revolution. The hijab has not always been a part of Iranian culture. Pictures of Tehran in the 1960s and '70s show women wearing Jackie Kennedy-inspired dresses, short sleeves and miniskirts. But more important than their freedom to dress as they wished, Sedigeh's generation witnessed the rise of women throughout Iranian society, in law, education and medicine, to name a few fields.

At the same time, there were many Iranian women, like many today, who willingly wore the hijab, or even the chador, which covers the entire body

but not the face. That was their choice. Once the hijab became government mandated, it no longer sprung from religious belief alone. It became a symbol of a basic human right that had been taken away. In Iran, the punishment imposed on women who defy hijab laws includes arrest, flogging or a prison sentence.

Iranian women today are risking detainment and worse for an unimaginably simple request: the freedom to go outside the house without a head covering.

We all know that Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old Iranian woman who died after Iran's morality police detained her for wearing her hijab in an "improper" way, did not die of a heart attack. Since Amini's funeral on Sept. 17, demonstrations, led primarily by women, have broken out in cities across Iran. Their grievances aren't limited to the laws dictating how they dress. The protesters are demanding freedom from all the suffocating strictures imposed by their country's clerical leadership. These demonstrations feel different from previous uprisings, all of which have been violently squashed by the regime. My aunt Sedigeh, blind but still a seer, said to me yesterday: "When I was a young woman, I had no idea that life was any different anywhere else. This generation knows that they deserve more; they want what I didn't have. I want that for them, too."

I am certain that if she could, my aunt Sedigeh would be protesting with them now.

When women are oppressed, no one wins. Iran today is full of educated, capable women who have risen to the top of their fields and whose bodies, paradoxically, are regulated by the government. Regardless of their education or contributions to society, outside their homes, every woman in Iran is at the mercy of the morality police. This is insulting, soul-crushing and not

sustainable.

These brave, determined women marching in the streets want the chance to live unencumbered and to regain rights taken by a government that treats them as second-class citizens. Their level of determination, their hunger, can lead to great things. I have no doubt that Iranian women, if given the opportunity to fully become who they are meant to be, could be making even greater contributions to society that would benefit all Iranians. Instead, they are asking not to be killed for showing their hair.

How did Iran get here? I weep for my aunt Sedigeh, who witnessed women rise in Iranian society, only to see their progress erased. Without some kind of compromise on the part of the government, Iran will be headed toward even greater unrest. Women cannot live under these unjust laws forever. Iran's clerical establishment must recognize that lifting the Islamic dress code is a necessary first step toward greater equality. Extending this most basic of human rights to women is not a complicated issue. The real issue is the mistaken belief that women's bodies need to be monitored and controlled.

My father, an engineer who helped build Iran's oil refineries, used to say, "If Iran hadn't had oil, the country would have truly prospered." Cursed with natural resources, the country lost sight of its future. Its greatest asset was never under the ground. Iran's greatest asset is marching in the streets right now.

**Firoozeh Dumas is an Iranian-American writer. She is the author of "Funny in Farsi" and "Laughing Without an Accent."**

# Want to phase out fossil fuels? We must fundamentally change our buildings

By **Joseph G. Allen, Parichehr Salimifard and Jonathan Buonocore**

Just about everybody understands that getting off fossil fuels is central to our climate goals. What few people understand, however, is that we won't be able to do it without fundamentally changing our buildings.

Buildings consume an average of about 40 percent of U.S. energy. And in some cities, that number is much higher — upward of 70 percent.

Local governments are attempting to address this by passing legislation that would require building owners to reduce emissions from their energy use. Local Law 97 in New York City, for example, requires them to reduce greenhouse emissions by 40 percent by 2030 and by 80 percent by 2050. Those who don't hit the target could face massive financial penalties.

These are worthy measures that will help to "electrify everything" — a strategy that will shift buildings away from dirty fossil fuels, such as natural gas, and toward the electrical grid. In the meantime, we can work to make the grid cleaner by expanding renewable energy, such as wind and solar.

The problem is, to make this work, we're going to need a lot more renewable energy. One model from Princeton University shows that a plausible path to decarbonization would require 590,000 square kilometers dedicated to wind and solar power, which would be about the same size as Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Ohio, Rhode Island and Tennessee combined.

Here's another catch: Our energy needs vary dramatically by season. In summer, it's dominated by electricity for air conditioning; in winter, it's dominated by heating demand, mostly from gas. So phasing out fossil fuels would mean shifting when we put the most stress on the grid.

To help visualize the issue, we developed what we call the "falcon curve." It shows that electrifying winter heating would reduce fossil fuel use, but this new extra electricity demand would be enough to shift the grid from summer peak to one that peaks in the winter. We call it the "falcon curve" because these new extreme peaks in December and January, when plotted out over the course of a year, look like the wingtips of a falcon.

Here's why it's such a big deal: If all buildings electrify their heating needs with the least efficient technologies on the market, we would need either 28 times more wind than we currently have or a staggering 303 times more solar to deal with the increase in electricity demands from using renewables.

But there are ways to flatten the falcon curve.

"Energy-efficient technology" might sound boring, but it is a powerful way for buildings to reduce energy needs especially during peak demand times. Healthy building tech, such as air quality sensors, can be used to deliver air only when and where it's needed, rather than haphazardly dumping air into empty conference rooms. We can also use what's called "energy recovery ventilation," which simply means that after we spend all that energy to heat or cool a building, we don't just exhaust it out of the building. That would be like heating your house in the winter and then leaving the windows open. Rather, the bad air goes out, but we first transfer that hot or cold air to the incoming air supply.

Meanwhile, climate tech, such as networked ground-source heat pumps, a technology being deployed in Massachusetts, can connect city neighborhoods to extremely energy-efficient geothermal energy. We can also develop and deploy long-term energy storage so that renewable energy captured at off-peak times can be used when demand spikes.

Altogether, efficient electrification can significantly reduce the need for renewable energy. Instead of having to multiply our current solar and wind power by 28 or 303, respectively, we find such technology would bring the need for solar and wind down to 4.5 or 36 times our current output. That's much more achievable.

Transitioning away from fossil fuels would also come with a big bonus: improved health for humans. Our analysis published last year found that from 2008 to 2017, the number of deaths caused by burning coal dropped from about 60,000 per year to about 10,000 per year. Indeed, with coal receding as a source of energy, the dominant source of health damage from air pollution now comes from fossil fuel combustion in buildings.

These problems are interlinked. If we don't get this right, we could very easily go down a path of inefficient electrification. That would force us to delay retiring fossil fuel power plants or to continue using fossil fuels in our buildings or other renewable energy sources, such as wood or biofuels, that might be carbon neutral but aren't health neutral. That could jeopardize any ambitious decarbonization plan and all the resulting health benefits.

But we can — and must — take a different path. The technology we need is already available to us. We just need to use it.

**Joseph G. Allen is an associate professor and director of the Healthy Buildings program at Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Parichehr Salimifard is an assistant professor at the College of Engineering at Oregon State University. Jonathan Buonocore is an assistant professor at Boston University School of Public Health.**

# My newspaper died

By **Jim Hightower**

My newspaper died. Well, technically it still appears, but even when it's delivered it has no life, no news and barely a pulse. It's a mere semblance of a real paper, one of the hundreds of local-journalism zombies staggering along in cities and towns that had long relied on their once-vigorous selves. Each one has a bare number of subscribers keeping it going, mostly longtime readers like me clinging to a memory of what used to be and a flickering hope that, surely, the thing won't get worse. Then it does.

Our papers are getting worse (at a time we desperately need them to get better) because they are no longer mediums of journalism, civic purpose and local identity. Rather, they've been reduced to little more than profit siphons, steadily piping local money to a handful of distant, high-finance syndicates that have bought out our hometown journals. The Austin American-Statesman, for example, was swallowed up in 2019 by the nationwide Gannett chain, becoming one of more than 1,000 local papers Gannett presently mass produces under its corporate banner, "The USA Today Network." But even that reference is a deception, for the publication doesn't confide to readers that it's actually a product of SoftBank Group, a multibillion-dollar Japanese financial consortium that owns and controls Gannett.

SoftBank has no interest in Austin as a place, a community or even as a newspaper market, nor does it care one whit about advancing the principles of journalism. It's in the profit business, specifically the business of extracting maximum short-term payouts from the properties it owns.

This has rapidly become the standard business model for American newspapering. Today, more than half of all daily papers in America are

in the grip of just 10 of these money syndicates. Indeed, only three high-flying hedge funds (SoftBank, Alden Global Capital and Chatham Asset Management) have captured your dailies in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Charlotte, Columbus, Des Moines, Detroit, El Paso, Fort Worth, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Louisville, Miami, Milwaukee, Nashville, Oklahoma City, Orlando, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Jose, St. Paul... and many more. Equally important, these profiteers are snatching up hundreds of weekly papers meant to serve neighborhoods, suburbs and rural communities from coast to coast.

Far from serving your news needs, they're strictly interested in diverting the income and assets of our local papers into jet streams of cash flying from our economies straight into their private wealth funds. It's called "financialization" of journalism, but that's a Wall Street euphemism for old-fashioned plundering, which they do by decimating staff (reporters, editors, et al.), closing news bureaus, outsourcing design and other production work, shrinking the paper's size and frequency, nationalizing and standardizing content, selling off printing plants and other core assets... and drastically jacking up the paper's price.

All of the above not only removes wealth (including important jobs) from our communities, but also basic information, connection and voice — transferring power from millions of us to a tiny circle of superrich speculators who don't give a damn about newspapers, our towns or us.

As a four-decade subscriber to Austin's newspaper, I can attest that the hedge-fund owners are as aggressive as airline monopolists at hollowing out their product and charging more for less. I hasten to add that this in no way faults the thousands of talented, dedicated journalists and production staffers

of recent years who've tried — against impossible odds of demoralizing ownership greed, ignorance and indifference — to salvage a smidgen of respect for what remains of the press. Rather than a failure of journalism, America has experienced the plundering of journalism. In a short time, piece by piece, our Austin paper has been financialized into the SoftBank American-Statesman.

—Our Saturday paper has been eliminated.

—Round after round of newsroom and production cuts keep coming.

—Final editing, design and page makeup are largely done by computers and assembled by understaffed, out-of-town contractors trying to rush out multiple papers each night.

—Worst is the Statesman's daily substitution of filler and puffery for articles of substance and timeliness.

—A recent editorial hailed newspaper opinion sections as "the treasured hallmarks of a democracy, a modern-day town square." Then, the same piece announced that Gannett was shutting down most of the Austin paper's town square!

To go along with the cheapening of the paper, SoftBank has raised its price. A lot. Subscriptions were \$48 a month when Gannett and bankers came to town three years ago. So far, they've doubled that to \$99.60 a month (over \$4 per paper), plus tacked on an annual \$5 "statement fee," charging customers for sending us a bill! Then they wonder why they're losing subscribers and can't attract new ones.

**Jim Hightower is a syndicated columnist and talk radio host.**

## Visit us at:

# www.TheNorwalkPatriot.com

# 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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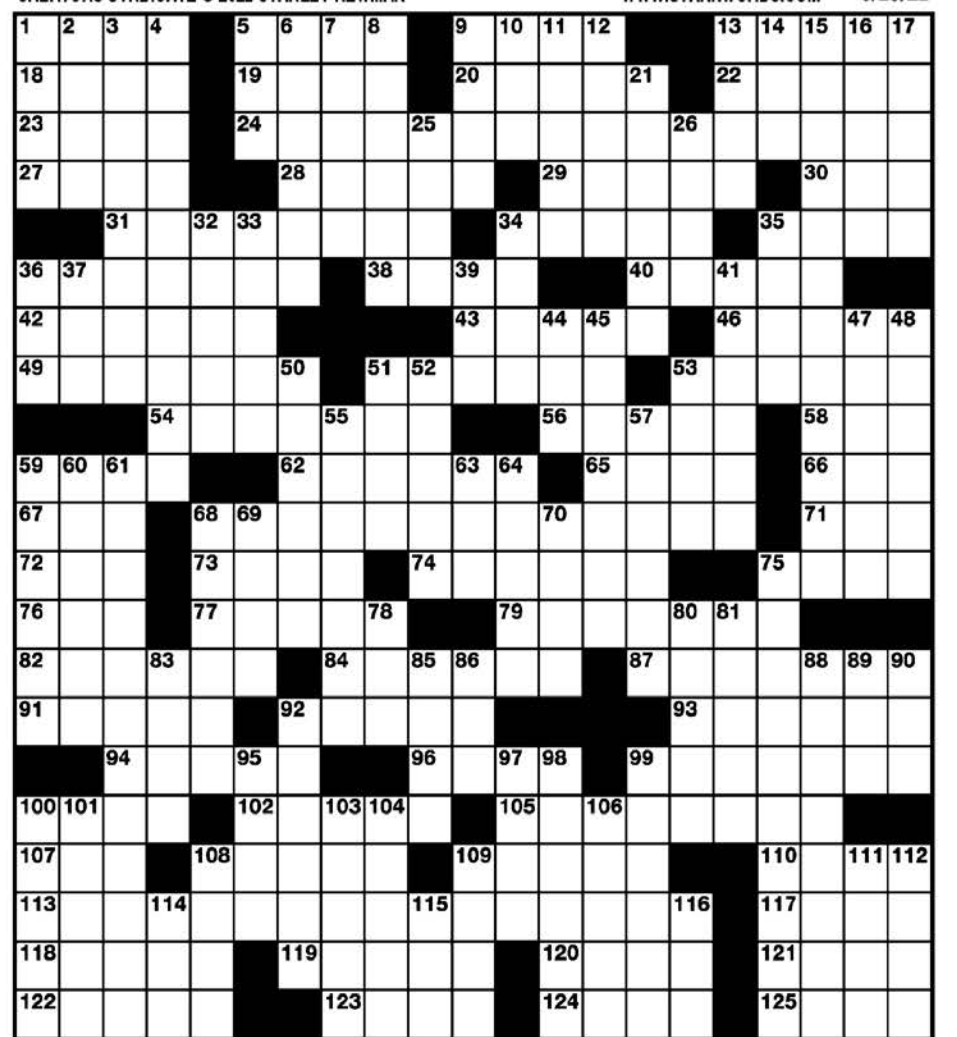
## PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

### THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)  
WHAT'S ON TODAY?: No, 11 Down TV  
by Gary M. Larson

- ACROSS**
- 1 Film research website
  - 5 Poor, as excuses
  - 9 Gave temporarily
  - 13 Not domesticated
  - 18 The Alienist author
  - 19 Creditor's claim
  - 20 Thundery weather
  - 22 Maytag alternative
  - 23 Celtic music superstar
  - 24 Cases with many plaintiffs
  - 27 Hunt for
  - 28 Indigenous Canadian
  - 29 Tetrad times two
  - 30 Kindled
  - 31 Took back, as testimony
  - 34 Contemptuous look
  - 35 Tolkien beasts
  - 36 Snail without a shell
  - 38 "Let's shake on it!"
  - 40 State-run numbers game
  - 42 Sportscaster Ahmad
  - 43 Babes in the woods
  - 46 Vocal self-praise
  - 49 Cookies-and-cream dessert
  - 51 Turkey appendage
  - 53 Deceived
  - 54 Took a stab at
  - 56 Less perilous
  - 58 Drink from a pot
  - 59 Lloyd Webber Broadway score
  - 62 Offered with the name of
  - 65 Certain reunion-goer
  - 66 Stipulations
  - 67 GI's time off
  - 68 Unintentional revelations
  - 71 Partake of a feast
  - 72 It's south of BC
  - 73 Measurement standard
  - 74 Gives form to
  - 75 IDs with dashes
  - 76 Lanka
  - 77 "Quit whining, dude"
  - 79 Pacific coast tree
  - 82 Hip locale
  - 84 Time-outs
  - 87 Minimally wide for driving
  - 91 Salk rival
  - 92 Fragrant spring flower
  - 93 Act testy with
  - 94 Light-colored beer
  - 96 Thomas Hardy girl
  - 99 Takes another stab at
  - 100 Rights activist Clooney
  - 102 Brief messages
  - 105 Everest, for instance
  - 107 Bugs' whirling adversary
  - 108 Miserly Marnier
  - 109 French greeting
  - 110 Cornfield invader
  - 113 Wiring issues
  - 117 Venerable electronics brand
  - 118 Interior courtyards
  - 119 Check writer, in legalese
  - 120 Actor Morales
  - 121 Frat letters
  - 122 Big name in home canning
  - 123 Mare fare
  - 124 Family rooms
  - 125 Escalator surface
- DOWN**
- 1 Tops with frosting
  - 2 Mare hair
  - 3 Type of markers for whiteboards
  - 4 Sedan stoppers
  - 5 Inc. cousin
  - 6 Under the weather
  - 7 Had in mind
  - 8 Came next
  - 9 Hurdle for future attys.
  - 10 Common list ender
  - 11 Preempted, perhaps
  - 12 Brief moment
  - 13 Like lightning
  - 14 Ostrich cousin
  - 15 Train track supports
  - 16 Prank
  - 17 Doesn't wear out
  - 21 Roadside stopovers
  - 25 Rice or fries
  - 26 Infamous emperor
  - 32 Gives it up (for)
  - 33 Autobahn autos
  - 34 Thin board
  - 35 Tribe met by Lewis and Clark
  - 36 "No seats left" letters
  - 37 Aural organ
  - 39 Hgt. above ground
  - 41 Air Force aerobats, for short
  - 44 Realtors' resource: Abbr.
  - 45 Snoopy's family
  - 47 Tennis great Edberg
  - 48 Raises a glass to
  - 50 Start gradually
  - 51 Fuse metal
  - 52 Ababa
  - 53 High jump
  - 55 Video sharing site
  - 57 Bay Area city, informally
  - 59 What Brits call potato chips
  - 60 Star tenor Bocelli
  - 61 Pioneers in a field
  - 63 Satisfied sound
  - 64 Bite between meals
  - 68 Beside oneself
  - 69 What vaccines may be made from
  - 70 Resorts with steam rooms
  - 75 Team owners' restrictions
  - 78 Non-amateur
  - 80 Nature photographer Adams
  - 81 Oscar de la
  - 83 Lab tube
  - 85 Tonsillitis treaters
  - 86 Ensign's assent
  - 88 Beekeeper
  - 89 Scot's denial
  - 90 UFO passengers
  - 92 Early round, for short
  - 95 Mideast leader
  - 97 Former Mideast leader
  - 98 Isolated
  - 99 Wicker material
  - 100 Starting lineup
  - 101 Nation near Sicily
  - 103 Asian gambling mecca
  - 104 Japanese metropolis
  - 106 Dude's bag
  - 108 End of seven UN members' names
  - 109 Three former UN members
  - 111 Toddler's scrape
  - 112 Small stinger
  - 114 Tech exec
  - 115 Imperative verb in Genesis 1
  - 116 Family nickname

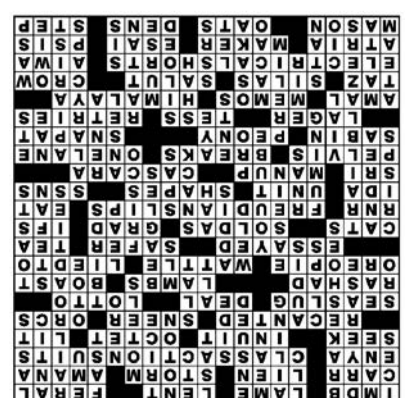
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You can contact puzzle editor Stanley Newman at www.StanXwords.com

named for him. for the fruit jars that came to be screw-on lid (patented in 1858) (122 Across) invented the metal American tinSmith John MASON (122 Across) invented the metal of cassette tape recorders. In 1964, the first Japanese manufacturer London production. Founded in even longer (21 years) in its original its original Broadway production, CATS (59 Across) ran for 18 years in



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# Cerritos College has that championship feeling

■ Cerritos College men's soccer easily handles San Diego Mesa, 5-1, improving to an 7-0-2 start.

By John M. Sherrard  
Contributor

**NORWALK** – With four California Community College Athletic Association State Championships in program history, the Cerritos College Men's Soccer team has that title feeling again, with another great start to the season for the Falcons.

The 7-0-2 start has the Falcons as one of only three undefeated teams in the state this season.

Cerritos, with its last championship just four years ago, defeated visiting San Diego Mesa, 5-1, last Friday, (September 23), to remain unbeaten in non-conference this season.

Only one non-conference game (Norco, Friday Sept. 30) is left before the tough South Coast Conference schedule begins Tuesday October 4 at El Camino (7-1).

"To our teams' credit, we haven't dropped a game because of our competitive mode, where last year our freshmen had

already dropped two games," Cerritos College Men's Soccer coach Benny Artiaga said. "This year our sophomores are making the adjustments and we're perfectionists here."

It took just thirty-two seconds for the Falcons to get the scoring started, as freshman forward Jason Alvarez passed the ball up to freshman midfielder Kobe Chavez who scored his third goal of the season.

"That was a beautiful play and was well-fabricated," Artiaga said. "We started our more offensive lineup. We figured we could get a goal or two early."

In the next 10 minutes, Chavez just missed a goal just over the top of the bar and took his third shot, but was offside.

Chavez would go on to score his fourth goal of the season later in the first half.

Opponents' goals are few and far between this season against a stingy Falcon defense, but for only the third time it happened and it was a quick shot and score in the 10th minute.

"What I'm a little disappointed in is the fact that we got a little casual and a little comfortable," Artiaga added.

"(Cerritos) felt like it was too easy. We have to do better and have more of a killer instinct.

"One of the defenders made a bad touch and gave the ball away."

Mesa freshman forward, David Virgen, who had just come into the game, split the defense with ease and evened the score at 1-1.

The goal would be the only shot of the first half for the Olympians.

The Falcons, who previously won state titles in 2006, '08, '14 and '18, outshot San Diego, 23-3 in the game, missed an opportunity to re-take the lead on three more shots before sophomore forward Pablo Caparelli gave Cerritos the 2-1 lead after he got a running pass from Chris Corona in the 32nd minute. Caparelli is 14th in the state in scoring with five goals.

"It's exciting, to be honest," Corona said. "For me coming off the bench, I get to see the game and I know what I have to do. So, just watching these guys and being able to do my job too, it's exciting.

"I think this team can take it all."

Chavez, after a missed goal attempt by sophomore midfielder Uriel Sanchez, added his second goal of the half, on a loose ball and scored in the 36th minute for the 3-1 lead.

Cerritos would add to its 14 shots on goal in the 67th minute with an unassisted goal from sophomore midfielder Antonio Negrete for the 4-1 advantage.

The Falcons, who have scored five goals, three times this season, finished off the scoring in the 74th minute on a goal by Diego Cortes (Caparelli) into the right corner.

In the second half, the defense kept Mesa on its side of the field nearly all of the half, except for two shots.

The defense is led by sophomore Jaret Rocha and kept the Olympians at bay most of the game.

"I feel like our mids (midfielders) are very important," Rocha said. "It makes me do less work.

"I'm very confident and once in awhile we slack off, but once we get the momentum going, we're unstoppable."

#### What the said:

Pablo Caparelli, Cerritos soph. forward: "I feel like our



Cerritos College forward Julian Vazquez (7) controls the ball as they play San Diego Mesa in their game at Cerritos College on Friday. Cerritos defeated San Diego Mesa 5-1. (Photo by Keith Durlfingler)

team is very good this year. We've been putting in the work and training.

We're all going at it. I always say, the midfielders win the game. What I was always told, the defense wins championships and forwards win games."

Christian Perez, Cerritos soph. forward: "Right now, we're a brotherhood. We can all trust each other.

Our defense is really solid. This is the mentality this year – we want to take it (championship)."

Benny Artiaga, Cerritos coach: "I'm a coach that focuses on the little details. We look past one or two plays. We're looking long-term and want this whole team to think alike.

Once we get into (South Coast Conference), it's going to get really tough."



Cerritos College midfielder Diego Alvarado (2) leaps for a header as they play San Diego Mesa in their game at Cerritos College on Friday. Cerritos defeated San Diego Mesa 5-1. (Photo by Keith Durlfingler)



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## Damien coach placed on leave after player assaulted

■ Football coach Matt Bechtel was placed on leave after an opposing player said the coach hit him after a game.

#### By City News Service

**LA VERNE** – Damien High School football coach Matt Bechtel has been placed on leave after a Bishop Amat High player filed a report with the La Verne Police Department alleging two men, including a Damien coach, battered him during a postgame fracas, according to a report published Monday.

Jesse Ramos, the father of Bishop Amat senior running back Aiden Ramos, told the Southern California Newspaper Group his son filed an incident report with the La Verne Police Department on Friday night, alleging two men left him with a bruise under his left eye.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which oversees both schools, issued

a statement Saturday saying "the person named in the report has been placed on leave pending the result of the investigation by the police department and the archdiocese" but the coach's name was not released.

The Southern California Newspaper Group reported Monday Bechtel was placed on leave, citing an email sent by defensive coordinator James Stewart informing parents that he has taken over as interim coach, replacing Bechtel.

There was no response to an email sent by City News Service to a media relations representative of the archdiocese late Monday night.

The La Verne Police Department issued a news release Saturday announcing it is investigating the battery report, at least one subject involved is a Damien football coach and no further details were available.

The elder Ramos provided

pictures of his son's face to the group, showing a small bruise under his son's eye, which he said was a result of the altercation.

According to his son, Jesse Ramos told SCNG words were exchanged and a coach grabbed his son's shoulder pads and ripped his helmet off.

"There was also another coach involved, but all the details will come out," Jesse Ramos told SCNG.

The archdiocese said it has also begun an internal investigation into the matter.

"The Department of Catholic Schools of the archdiocese is working with both high schools and fully cooperating with the police department as the matter is investigated," the statement said. "We appreciate your patience and understanding during this time as the matter is addressed according to archdiocesan policy and the Christian values of our Catholic schools."



Matt Bechtel

SCNG reported Bishop Amat coach Steve Hagerty refused to shake Bechtel's hand following Bishop Amat's 35-7 victory at Damien Friday night. Bechtel appeared to confront Hagerty about it as players were continuing to shake hands.

A few moments later, players from both teams began shoving and some coaches were in the middle of it, according to the SCNG.