

The Norwalk Patriot

Friday, May 10, 2024

Vol. 18 No. 15

14783 Carmenita Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

Bellflower physician admits to fraud

BELLFLOWER – The owner and sole physician at a Bellflower medical clinic has pleaded guilty to submitting millions of dollars' worth of false claims to a Medi-Cal health care program that provides family planning services to low-income and uninsured patients, causing more than \$2.5 million in losses, the Justice Department announced Tuesday.

Robert Eyzaguirre, 77, of Torrance, pleaded guilty to one count of health care fraud, a felony that carries a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

According to his plea agreement, Eyzaguirre owned and operated Dr. Robert's Medical Center, a Bellflower-based medical clinic enrolled as a Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment (Family PACT) provider run through the Medi-Cal public health program that California administered under Medicaid.

At this clinic, Eyzaguirre employed and supervised Gary Lee Didio, 54, of Huntington Beach, and Sandra Rios, 51, of South Los Angeles.

From at least December 2013 through January 2020, Eyzaguirre conspired with Didio and Rios to submit more than \$4.6 million in fraudulent claims to the Family PACT program for family planning services that were never provided.

Rios picked random names from an online phone-and-address directory and created fake patient files, including inserting fake vital signs and patient notes.

Eyzaguirre signed the fake patient files, falsely representing that he had provided family planning services to those patients. Eyzaguirre sometimes signed blank patient forms before the false vital signs and notes had been added. The fake patient files were then submitted to the Family PACT program for reimbursement.

The Medi-Cal program paid more than \$2.5 million on the fraudulent claims submitted by Dr. Robert's Medical Center.

Eyzaguirre also falsely certified in the fake patient files that laboratory tests were medically necessary. Didio and Rios then referred the names of fake patients to a laboratory in Northern California, which then paid an illegal kickback of \$30 cash for each referral.

In total, the laboratory paid more than \$372,000 in illegal kickbacks for the referrals of fake Family PACT patients from Dr. Robert's Medical Center.

When Eyzaguirre learned that law enforcement was investigating the fraudulent scheme, he attempted to conceal the criminal activity by instructing Didio to remove the fake patient files from Dr. Robert's Medical Center and hide them offsite.

Sanchez delivers \$1.6 million to Whittier YMCA

■ The Uptown Whittier YMCA is being renovated to improve accessibility and safety.

WHITTIER – Rep. Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA) last week delivered \$1.66 million in federal funding she secured for the YMCA of Greater Whittier through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which was signed by President Biden in March.

The funding will be used to make modifications to the Uptown Whittier Family YMCA Center to improve accessibility, safety and equity at the 40-year-old building.

"The YMCA of Greater Whittier has been serving our community and making lives better for over 100 years," said Sánchez. "Modernizing the Uptown location, will help it continue to fulfill its mission by giving families and residents of all ages access to a first-class facility and community



gathering place."

"Our vision for the Uptown Y is simple yet powerful: everyone deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential," said Curt Skotnicki, president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater

Whittier. "By creating facilities comparable to those in affluent neighborhoods, we ensure that our residents have access to high-quality programs and services that can truly enhance their lives and futures."

"Our work remains unfinished. The transformation of the Uptown Y is an ongoing journey, and we are committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential."

Housing advocates submit more than 410K signatures for homeless initiative

■ The initiative would repeal Measure H, the sales tax increase passed by voters in 2017.

NORWALK – A coalition of housing and mental health advocates, among others, submitted more than 410,000 signatures Tuesday to the county in hopes of placing a homeless initiative on the November ballot.

The measure, known as the Affordable Housing, Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Now initiative, would repeal and replace Measure H, a quarter-cent sales tax approved by county voters in 2017 to create a dedicated stream of revenue to address homelessness. Measure H is expected to expire in 2027, unless renewed.

Backers say the new initiative, which would increase the sales tax to a half-cent, would be a game changer for the county and its approach to addressing the homelessness crisis. Proponents have said the measure would produce \$1.2 billion annually.

The coalition -- including more than 80 organizations such as the L.A. County Federation of Labor, California Community Foundation, United Way of Greater Los Angeles, Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council, SEIU 721, among others -- worked together to draft, qualify, and aim to pass a "bold and new" approach to housing affordability and

homelessness, organizers said.

They aim to focus more funding generated by the half-cent sales tax to build more affordable housing, increase access to mental health and substance abuse treatment, and bolster accountability measures -- including a legal requirement to deliver results.

The proposed ballot measure notes that 60% of the revenue would cover costs for homelessness services and 15% of that would be distributed to cities based on the annual point-in-time count. Another 35.75% would support the L.A. County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency, which was created last year by the state Legislature to oversee homeless solutions.

Earlier Tuesday, hundreds of supporters rallied outside of the offices of the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office to submit the signatures. The county requires 238,922 valid signatures in order for the ballot measure to qualify.

"Today, we stand at a critical crossroads in our county's history," Yvonne Wheeler, president of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, said in a statement. "We have one of two options. Either we go about business as usual, or we can do something about it. Together, we can enact solutions to tackle the crisis head on, starting with the Affordable Housing, Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Now measure."

Pete White, a representative



of the Angeleno Project and executive director of the Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN), said rent is "too damn high." He highlighted that the proposed measure would uplift accountability with regular reporting, annual audits and performance evaluations.

"This measure was written by experts," Jessica Melendez, director of policy for T.R.U.S.T. South LA, a nonprofit, said in a statement. "Homelessness is the most extreme manifestation of poverty and community displacement. We won't be able

to address homelessness unless we do a much better job of helping keep those homes that folks already have."

She added, "We believe this measure goes much further than any previous attempt to do exactly that -- prevent homelessness before it happens."

According to the coalition, the county is expected to verify signatures within 30 business days and decide whether the measure qualifies to be placed on the November ballot.

Downey condo project approved

DOWNEY – A controversial condominium project that initially failed to gain Planning Commission approval finally got the go-ahead to move on to the city council.

The project, slated for the current site of an over 50-year-old church at 7360 Foster Bridge Rd., would bring 33 condo units — spread across four three-story buildings — each with a two-car garage and either a private balcony or patio.

The project has drawn criticism from residents of the Treasure Island neighborhood, who have voiced concerns over safety, privacy, limited parking, and traffic congestion.

At its meeting on April 17, the Planning Commission failed to take action on the project, only able to come to a 2-2 vote (vice chair Mario Guerra was out of state on Army business at the time). Because the item required action from the Planning Commission, it was placed on the agenda for the May 1 meeting.

The project again came before an incomplete dais, this time chair Carrie Uva being the missing member. Uva had voted against the project previously.

Uva's absence along with Guerra's presence made all the difference, as this time the project earned a 3-1 approval.

Commissioner Louis Morales, the sole vote in opposition, called it "a nice project," but sided with many of the frustrated neighbors, saying that there were "some issues that could have been worked out to make it a better project."

Guerra responded that "a good city planner or economic development personnel knows this is a very good project."

"This is a good project for the city, for our community and, yes, for the residents of Treasure Island," said Guerra. "Traffic mitigation is something the city needs to work on. Not in the future, but today."

"Yes, this is going to bring some traffic more in the mornings and in the afternoons, but I'd rather have a few extra minutes and have that corner protected by 33 families, living there just like the rest of us."

The project still requires City Council approval to move forward.

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Paging Dr. Frischer...

By Dr. Alan Frischer

A few years back I had a wonderful vacation in Japan. One of the many things that surprised me was how prevalent bidets were. I saw (and used) them in restaurants, hotels, and even train stations! Are bidets “better” than standard traditional toilets?

Bidets clean with a spray of water, and mostly eliminate the need for toilet paper. Note that bidets don't always come with all of the features I encountered in Japan, but some are equipped with heated seats, warm water, warm air, music, and a lid that knows when to open and when to close!

What are some of the advantages of a bidet?



- Washing with a spray of water is more hygienic than using toilet paper or wipes. Toilet paper only removes some urine and fecal matter – it doesn't remove tiny particles. A spray of water is gentle, and can help to minimize irritation.
- Bidets can help with constipation, and even hemorrhoids caused by straining. A gentle and firm stream of warm water can increase blood flow, relieve pressure, and stimulate the nerves.

- Bidets are kid-friendly. A bidet can make it easier for them to thoroughly clean themselves.
- Older (or disabled) adults may not be flexible enough to wipe properly. The bidet can help maintain independence.
- Bidets can help the environment by saving trees. (Note that some toilet paper may still be needed.) Less toilet paper can also mean fewer calls to the plumber.

What about the disadvantages?

- It's possible that a bidet could encourage a vaginal infection, because washing with warm water can affect the vagina's healthy bacterial balance.
- If the bidet is not kept clean, it could actually collect bacteria and spray them onto the genitals.
- Bidets come with a temperature control, and it is important to avoid water that is too hot.
- Bidets have been (rarely) known to cause fecal incontinence by over-relaxing the anal muscles and loosening the sphincter muscles. It is possible for excessive use to dry out the skin.
- A bidet will not work during a power outage. It is an electrical device plugged into an outlet where water is nearby, so a short circuit is possible. Safety features are usually built in.
- Bidets can take up more space, may need additional plumbing for hot water, and require an electrical outlet, which often does not exist near an existing toilet.
- A bidet is generally more expensive than a standard toilet. In addition to the upfront costs for purchase and installation, electricity and water bills will be higher.

What have I chosen for my own home? Ultimately, having to bring in electricity discouraged me and I haven't yet replaced my traditional toilets. However, bidets definitely remain on my wish-list!

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 10927 Downey Ave., Suite C, Downey, CA 90241.

With a stroke, timing is critical

■ Stroke is a leading cause of long-term disability in seniors; learn to spot the symptoms.

Contributed by Kaiser Permanente

With May being National Stroke Awareness Month, it's important to know the signs and causes of stroke that affect more than 795,000 people in the United States every year, resulting in serious long-term disability for many of those afflicted by this cardiovascular disease.

A stroke is damage to the brain that occurs when a blood vessel in the brain bursts or is blocked by a blood clot. Without blood and the oxygen it carries, part of the brain starts to die, and the part of the body controlled by the damaged area of the brain can't work properly. Brain damage can start within minutes of a stroke. But quick treatment can help limit the damage and increase the chance of a full recovery.

Knowing the signs of a stroke and understanding when to seek immediate medical attention can be the difference between life and death, according to Dr. Zahra A. Ajani with Kaiser Permanente Southern California, which operates Downey Medical Center.

“Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability, as it reduces mobility in more than half of stroke survivors aged 65 and older,” she said.

Because stroke can often be a debilitating disease, it's

important to know what symptoms to look for and when to seek immediate medical attention, Dr. Ajani said. She recommended remembering the acronym known as BE FAST and calling 911 if you or a loved one experience these kinds of symptoms.

B = BALANCE: Sudden change in balance or coordination.

E = EYES: Sudden vision loss or double vision.

F = FACE: Facial droop. Sudden uneven appearance of the face.

A = ARMS/LEGS: Sudden trouble moving or feeling arms and/or legs.

S = SPEECH: Sudden difficulty speaking or can't speak clearly.

T = TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST: Make note of the time the symptoms started. Call 911.

Seeking immediate medical attention often is the difference between life and death. Consider the following statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

In 2021, 1 in 6 deaths from cardiovascular disease were due to stroke.

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Every 3 minutes and 14 seconds, someone dies of stroke.

About 185,000 strokes—nearly 1 in 4—are in people who have had a previous stroke.

About 87% of all strokes are

ischemic strokes, in which blood flow to the brain is blocked.

Stroke-related costs in the United States came to nearly \$56.5 billion between 2018 and 2019. This total includes the cost of health care services, medicines to treat stroke, and missed days of work.

“Once you have a stroke, you are more likely to have another one,” Dr. Ajani said. “But the good news is that stroke survivors can take action to reduce their risk of having another stroke. And that begins with identifying what caused your stroke and learning more about all of your personal risk factors.”

According to the American Stroke Association, the following will help reduce your probability from suffering a stroke:

Brain Health: As you age, a healthy body is key to a healthy brain and sharp mind.

Healthy Eating: Healthy eating and cooking start with smart food choices.

Healthy Lifestyle: True health includes good sleep, practicing mindfulness, managing stress and connecting socially.

Physical Activity: Whether it's a structured exercise program or just part of your daily routine, all physical activity adds up to becoming healthier.

“It all comes down to knowing how to lead a healthy lifestyle, both mentally and physically,” Dr. Ajani said.



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MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

May 27, 2024 | 11 A.M.

Freedom Memorial
Norwalk City Hall
12700 Norwalk Blvd.

The community is invited to join us as we honor the brave men and women who served our country.

The event and parking are free to the public.

The City of Norwalk is not affiliated with the Department of Defense or any Military Service

Trump's critical VP pick: five criteria he must consider

Court ruling could allow local authorities across the US to crack down on homeless encampments

By Liz Peek

Liz Peek writes for *The Hill* and contributes frequently to *Fox News*, *the New York Sun* and other publications.

Between now and July 15, when the GOP convention kicks off in Milwaukee, presumptive Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump will pick a running mate. Oftentimes the vice presidential choice is not especially consequential; this time it is.

Trump can only serve one term. If you believe, like two-thirds of your fellow Americans, that the country is on the wrong track, you must agree that four years of Donald Trump will not suffice.

To fix our open border, restore law and order, unleash our domestic energy industries, bring federal spending under control and so much more, will take 8 to 12 years. That is what our nation needs and, with the help of his vice president, that is what Trump must deliver.

The former president gets it. More than once, he has said that his major criteria in choosing a running mate will be that the individual can serve as president.

This past weekend, the Republican National Committee convened important donors in Palm Beach. The gatherings showcased several potential VP candidates, including Republican senators Tim Scott of South Carolina, Marco Rubio of Florida, and J.D. Vance of Ohio. Governors Kristi Noem of South Dakota and Doug Burgum of North Dakota were invited as were congressional representatives Elise Stefanik from New York and Byron Daniels from Florida. Businessman and former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy was also at the fund-raising event.

Others apparently under consideration include former Hawaii Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, Arizona Senatorial candidate Kari Lake and – wait for it – former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley.

The buzz in Palm Beach was all about Tim Scott and Doug Burgum. Are they the finalists? No one knows; indeed, the vetting process, which can take weeks, has not formally begun. But the guessing-game is well

underway.

I judge the candidates on these five attributes:

1. Credible presidential candidate
2. Loyalty to Donald Trump
3. Well vetted, not likely to surprise
4. Helps with an important demographic, state and/or fund-raising
5. Aligns with Trump on abortion

We can rule out Kristi Noem. She not only shot a 14-month-old puppy, she shot herself in the foot. How the South Dakota governor could not have predicted that her revelation about puppycide would cause an uproar in our dog-obsessed nation is unimaginable; after all, the most damning thing most people remember about Mitt Romney was that he once traveled with his family dog on the roof of his car.

Former Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard is out. The one-time Democrat, who endorsed Sen. Bernie Sanders in 2016 and Joe Biden in 2020, is mostly celebrated for having switched sides. That's not compelling.

Also unlikely is Vivek Ramaswamy, who is too young and unpredictable, and who behaved like an insufferable jerk in the GOP debates.

The abortion issue sidelines some otherwise strong candidates, including Florida's Ron DeSantis, who has been an effective governor and in a recent poll of contenders, earned the highest approval ratings from both Republicans and right-leaning independents. For many, his signing of a 6-week abortion bill in Florida disqualifies him. Trump has enough problems combatting Democrats' right to choose campaign and eagerness to misrepresent his moderate stance on the issue without giving them extra fuel. Gov. Burgum argues abortion should be left up to the states, which is Trump's position. Burgum, a wealthy businessman who could help fund the campaign, has little name recognition but is otherwise a solid choice.

Choosing a female running mate could bolster Trump's standing with women, currently his weakest demographic. A recent Quinnipiac poll showing the race in a dead heat had Biden beating Trump with women 52% to 41%; narrowing that gap would be powerful.

But, many women in contention are strong anti-abortion campaigners, which will not help win over female voters in swing states. Arizona's Kari Lake, for instance, has complicated her credentials by flip-flopping

on abortion. Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who is popular with Republicans and right-leaning Independents and who is well vetted thanks to her stint as White House spokesperson under Trump, is similarly staunchly pro-life.

Ditto Rep. Elise Stefanik, the firebrand congresswoman from New York who came to prominence chastising university presidents for allowing antisemitism to blossom on campuses. She is not well-known and has been awarded an A+ rating by the non-profit Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America group.

The V.P. pick could also bolster Trump's standing with minorities. Senators Tim Scott and Marco Rubio could help with Black and Hispanic voters, respectively. Both are also relatively well-known; Scott, in particular, is popular. A recent YouGov poll assessing several V.P. candidates showed 49% of Republicans and right-leaning independents approving of Scott, with only 14% disapproving. (Rubio was not covered in that survey.) That's why oddsmakers put Tim Scott at the top of the contender list.

But Scott did not gain traction in the GOP primary race; he is viewed by some as having a wonderful life story but otherwise narrow credentials. Marco Rubio, on the other hand, has credibility on foreign policy and could bolster Trump's fast-growing appeal to Hispanics.

Mike Pompeo, Trump's former Secretary of State, has an impressive C.V., and clearly has the ability to occupy the Oval Office. J.D. Vance is not broadly known and probably, like Byron Daniels, too new to the national scene (in that recent survey 58% said they were "unsure" about the Ohio senator).

Many centrist Republicans would like to see Nikki Haley run with Trump, thinking she could attract women to the ticket and also moderate voters who dislike both Biden and the former president. It might work, but would require repairing what became a serious rift between her and her former boss. The former U.N. Ambassador angered Trump and his supporters by staying in the race even when she had no chance of winning; her approval among Republicans and independents who lean GOP is poor.

On the plus side, Haley's position on abortion aligns with Trump, and she is an excellent campaigner.

In the coming weeks, expect to see Trump road-test numerous candidates. For the sake of the country, let's hope he chooses a winner.

Defunding NPR would harm democracy

Student reporters are working to keep our elected leaders accountable to voters.

By Paul Haaga

Paul Haaga was chairman of the board of NPR from 2017 to 2020 and its interim CEO from 2013 to 2014.

I am a lifelong Republican. I am also a longtime NPR listener and supporter and, at times, have been a manager.

As you can imagine, I have a few thoughts about the firestorm set off last month when an essay in the *Free Press* by a now-former NPR senior editor laid out all the ways he has seen an increasingly liberal bias play out in NPR's coverage. Plenty has been said and written about the concerns he raised, so I will leave it to others to address the specific incidents. I am here to offer one conservative's intimate understanding of a frequently misunderstood institution, and explain why I strongly oppose the calls for Congress to defund NPR.

"National Public Radio" is somewhat of a misnomer — in fact, a better name for the system would be "Community Public Radio." NPR was not established as a top-down national network. On the contrary, a group of community and educational radio stations created NPR in 1970 as a jointly managed provider of shared services, after the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 had established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Other broadcast licensees have joined the system over the years so that there are now 247 NPR member organizations operating more than 1,080 stations.

The great majority of federal money that the CPB gives to public radio goes directly to qualified individual stations, partly based on their need for funding and the demographics of their audiences. Because rural and Native American stations face challenges in raising

money, the federal government steps in to provide around 25 percent of revenue for rural stations and more than 50 percent in the case of Native American stations, compared to as little as 5 percent of the revenue of the largest, urban stations. Stations pay dues to NPR; they license some programs from NPR but also from independent sources, including American Public Media, the Public Radio Exchange, and numerous cultural and music program producers and distributors.

Local public stations employ teams of excellent reporters and investigative journalists who cover local issues and civic affairs. (Stations with a music format, meanwhile, play an important role in celebrating and preserving musical heritage and featuring local artists.) And the widely reported death of newspapers in small and medium-size cities has often left the public radio station reporter the only journalist covering civic activities in a particular community.

I have long known that most of NPR's D.C.-based journalists are Democrats, and, while I wish there were a few more Republicans like me in the building, I have been fine with it. This is because I have always known that I was listening to people who were professional journalists first and Democrats only after that. Like others, I have occasionally pointed out pieces that could have been fairer, more objective or better balanced, and I have always felt that my comments were taken seriously. And although I haven't been privy to internal newsroom discussions since the *Free Press* essay was published, I feel certain that the author's concerns are being taken very seriously.

Furthermore, I know that NPR has structures in place to course-correct. For one, its public editor, Kelly McBride, is a vigorous ombudsman who has touched on many of the issues of bias in recent coverage. Across the country, NPR member stations doggedly report and dig deeply into important stories — covering Democratic as well as Republican strongholds. A WBUR investigation with ProPublica last year found that deep-blue

Massachusetts failed to achieve its goal to "significantly reduce" vacancies in public housing, even as the numbers of homeless families were rising; a 90-day push by the state had "barely made a dent." An investigation by Houston Public Media found last year that in Democrat-led Houston summertime temperatures at public bus stops often rose so high they were a threat to commuters' health.

Just as I would encourage the leadership at NPR to take seriously the concerns of those who believe a system powered in part by federal funding regularly excludes certain voices and ideologies, I would also encourage the network's critics to consider the true value of a system that serves communities all across the United States — including their own.

Defunding public media might feel good as a way to punish some inside-the-Beltway journalists for the occasional lapse in objectivity. (By the way, I am certain that a survey of the party registrations of member-station journalists would not be nearly as lopsided as one of the D.C. newsroom.) But the knock-on effect of defunding would be to further harm local journalism to the serious detriment of our democracy. We know what happens when local news goes away: Turnout in local elections declines, public officials can act with impunity and political discourse becomes more polarized. In certain rural areas, public radio stations are the only sources of local news and operate an essential public service by disseminating lifesaving emergency alerts.

NPR is one of the top American journalism organizations, and it is part of the public radio network that is essential to our nation. Let's protect it. As president and CEO, Katherine Maher is a new leader for NPR. I've met with her and strongly believe we should give her a chance.

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MAY 10 ON THIS DAY

1774: Louis XVI acceded to the throne of France, and his wife, Marie-Antoinette, became queen consort; later they both were beheaded during the French Revolution.

1818: American patriot Paul Revere—a folk hero of the American Revolution known for his dramatic horseback ride in 1775, warning Boston-area residents that the British were coming—died in Boston.

1865: Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, was captured by Union troops near Irwinville, Georgia.

1869: The tracks of the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific were joined at Promontory, Utah, to form the first transcontinental railway in the United States.

1872: American reformer Victoria Woodhull became the first woman to be nominated for president when the Equal Rights Party selected her as its candidate.

1924: J. Edgar Hoover was made acting director of the FBI and later in the year became director; he built the agency into a highly effective, if occasionally controversial, arm of federal law enforcement.

1940: After losing the support of many Conservatives in the House of Commons, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned his office and was replaced by Winston Churchill.

1940: Germany invaded Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands during World War II.

1962: Marvel Comics released the first issue of The Incredible Hulk; the towering muscle-bound antihero was created by writer Stan Lee and artist Jack Kirby.

1975: Sony introduced the Betamax videocassette recorder.

1994: Serial killer John Wayne Gacy—whose murders of 33 boys and young men in the 1970s shocked his suburban Chicago community, where he was known for his performances as a clown at charitable events and children's parties—was executed at age 52.

1994: Nelson Mandela, whose efforts to end apartheid led to his imprisonment and earned him a share of the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize,



The final episode of "Laverne & Shirley" aired on this date in 1983.

became president of South Africa.

1996: A blizzard struck Mount Everest, killing eight climbers.

1996: "Twister" starring Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton was released in theaters.

1999: Prolific children's author Shel Silverstein died of a heart attack at age 68.

2002: FBI agent Robert Hanssen was sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to spying for Moscow; he sold U.S. secrets to Russia for \$1.4 million in cash and diamonds.

2006: In a surprise, Chris Daughtry was voted off the fifth season of "American Idol;" he finished fourth, with Taylor Hicks winning the competition.

2016: Eighty-eight thousand people were evacuated from Alberta, Canada as wildfires spread through the community, destroying about 2,400 homes and buildings.

2021: NBC announced it would not televise next year's Golden Globes after complaints over its lack of diversity.

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

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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BIRTHDAYS

Sportscaster Chris Berman (69), rock singer Bono (64) and comedy actor Kenan Thompson (46).

PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

THE NEWSDAY CROSSWORD

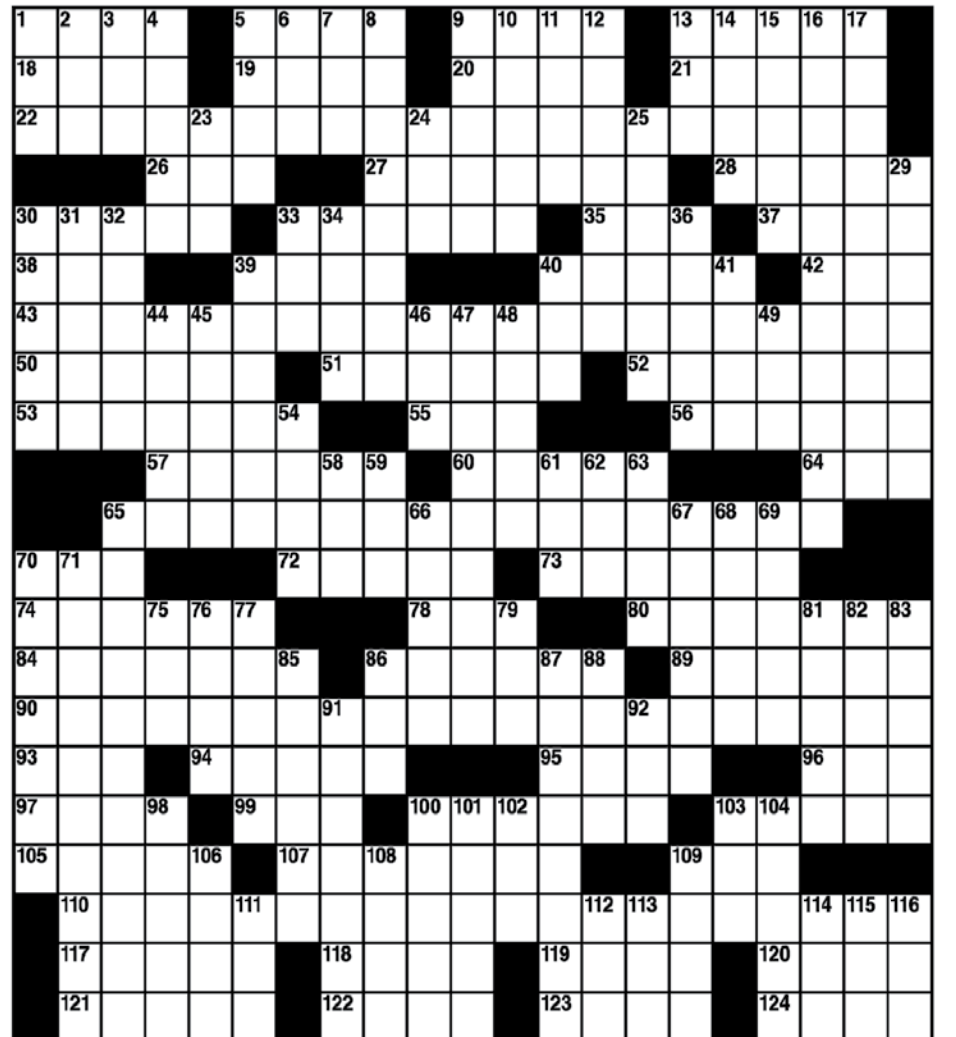
Edited by Stanley Newman (www.StanXwords.com)
IT'S A LONG STORY: The author talking about himself by S.N.

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.

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- ACROSS
1 Programs to download
5 Czech or Bulgarian
9 Cats or Phantom...
13 Workweek column headings
18 9-Across' stagehands
19 Metered car
20 Had on
21 Put ___ in (meddle)
22 Start of a memoir quote
26 Likewise not
27 La bohème hero
28 Serbian tennis great
30 Fence of bushes
33 Chalk remover
35 Opponent of Luther
37 Seized car, for short
38 Beverage on draught
39 Don't include
40 "Coffee, ___ milk?"
42 Laugh syllable
43 Part 2 of quote
50 Orbital extreme
51 Canadian country singer
52 Racetrack shape
53 Not quite a fortnight
55 What stamp pads hold
56 TV serial
57 Short poetic tribute
60 Clear, as a windshield
64 Double-curve shape
65 Author of Unmasked, the quote's source
70 Baseball great Gehrig
72 Window sticker
73 Temper, as titanium
74 Capital of Kazakhstan
78 Tie the knot
80 Birds with a shrill call
84 Small shorebirds
86 Highway access
89 Highway, for instance
90 Part 3 of quote
93 Compass pt.
94 Calculus pioneer
95 Cairo waterway
96 Henri's "here"
97 Deep affection
99 Sis or bro
100 Montreal university
103 Ship of 1492
105 Euro-filled fountain
107 Caterpillars' casings
109 Painter Vermeer
110 End of quote
117 Do ___ burn (seethe)
118 Faucet annoyance
119 Smooth out
120 Pins of violins
121 Limited-choice question
122 Seasoning for fries
123 Extreme anger
124 Office sub
DOWN
1 German "Darn it!"
2 Quid ___ quo
3 Temple bench
4 Playground fixture
5 Marquee topper
6 Washroom, so to speak
7 Wood-chopping tool
8 Shook rapidly
9 Nobel, by birth
10 Pay tribute to
11 Expressed out loud
12 What ducks walk with
13 Fannie ___ mortgage
14 Explosive sticks
15 Romantic hopeful
16 Nightclub rover
17 Complimentary tickets
23 Weed-chopping tool
24 Greek dawn goddess
25 Track down
29 Copier attachments
30 Starts on
31 78-Across on the run
32 County near Cornwall
33 Modern moody music
34 Chance of loss
36 Target competitor
39 Follower of orders
40 Hard pull
41 Job-related move, for short
44 ___ Heath (Hardy setting)
45 Check the sum of
46 Rival of Frazier and Foreman
47 Old Southwest outlaw
48 Tonally accurate
49 Southwest FL hub
54 Winter glider
58 Full-grown sheep
59 Close-attention letters
61 MRI regulator
62 To each her ___
63 USMC bigwigs
65 Tape player feature
66 Grassy yards
67 "Mind your manners!"
68 Ballet rail
69 Top-tier
70 Car seat holder
88 February 2 beast
91 Government-issued "Savings" vehicles
92 Entirely
98 Wicked ways
100 Exxon merger partner
101 Commandeer
102 African antelope
103 Launching place
104 Lacking skill
106 Pour ___ (exert oneself)
108 Italian "darling"
109 Major month for matrimony
111 Not a lot
112 65-Across musical heroine
113 Trip segment
114 Get a look at
115 GWTW studio
116 Clairvoyance: Abbr.

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- 71 Peace Prize city
75 "Bird" prefix
76 Hawaiian bird
77 Mythical many-eyed giant
79 "Dapper" dresser
81 Costner or Kline
82 Standing tall
83 Neighbor of Turkey
85 Repair, as film
86 Hockey great Bobby
87 Member of the clergy
88 February 2 beast
91 Government-issued "Savings" vehicles
92 Entirely
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Jerry Seinfeld's frosty view of modern TV



By Brian Lowry

"Seinfeld" premiered 35 years ago on NBC, becoming one of the most popular sitcoms ever and making Jerry Seinfeld and creator Larry David insanely rich. In promoting his directing debut "Unfrosted," Seinfeld has lamented the current state of TV comedy, in a way that identifies some modern challenges while ignoring the complexity of how times have changed.

Seinfeld voiced those remarks to the New Yorker

while making the rounds (he joked about the extent of that promotional tour on "Saturday Night Live") to support the movie, which looks back at the creation of the Pop-Tart in the 1960s. Yet the comic's views of where comedy went wrong have an unavoidable "Old man yells at cloud" quality, not because the observations were entirely wrong but because of everything they overlook in oversimplifying and romanticizing the past.

"It used to be you would go home at the end of the day,

most people would go, 'Oh, 'Cheers' is on. Oh, 'M*A*S*H' is on. Oh, 'Mary Tyler Moore' is on. 'All in the Family' is on," Seinfeld told The New Yorker. "You just expected, there'll be some funny stuff we can watch on TV tonight. Well, guess what - where is it? This is the result of the extreme left and P.C. crap, and people worrying so much about offending other people. Now they're going to see standup comics because we are not policed by anyone."

That's a lot to unpack, starting with singling out four of the best sitcoms ever, conveniently skipping all the lame ones that existed during those years. Similarly, people looking for something to watch when those shows premiered only received three broadcast networks and a handful of channels, before Fox, cable and premium TV, much less Netflix, streaming and a host of internationally produced imports.

Yes, greater sensitivity among various constituencies - or "PC crap," if Seinfeld prefers - has complicated the comedian's job. But one aspect of the past Seinfeld appears to long for is that people could be offended with little fear of consequences or reprisals because, well, where were they going to go? When the menu consisted of ABC, NBC and CBS, it's not like they had a lot of choices or alternatives.

The mass-appeal comedies that Seinfeld cites were indeed great shows, but they have given way to a wider variety of series aimed at narrower tastes, scattered across a vast array of outlets. The result has been fewer traditional multi-camera sitcoms but more single-camera shows, including the broadcast hits "Abbott Elementary," "Ghosts" and "Young Sheldon,"

the last of which (spun off from "The Big Bang Theory") will wrap its seven-season run this month.

That doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of cable and streaming comedies, animated shows, international series that now reach US shores, and acclaimed series labeled "comedy" that aren't really comedies at all, like "The Bear" and "Barry."

Even taking Seinfeld's argument at face value, "All in the Family" is the only one of the shows he mentioned that might have regularly run afoul of the comedy scolds to which he objects. As for standup comics, there has been an explosion of opportunities to get their material in front of the public he couldn't have imagined when he was breaking in sets on "The Tonight Show," including the barrage of specials spilling out as part of the "Netflix is a Joke" festival.

Granted, there's a long tradition of talent bemoaning how bad things have gotten since their heyday. Having recently turned 70, Seinfeld and the rest of the baby-boom generation have seen TV change in unrecognizable ways from the period during which he cut his professional teeth.

While it might not be "All in the Family" or "Mary Tyler Moore," there's still funny stuff to watch for a broader range of tastes, including those with the fortitude to sit through "Unfrosted." All that's required is knowing where to look, and maybe, opening your eyes.

Brian Lowry has been a media columnist and critic for CNN since April 2016.



John Krasinski, Rainn Wilson and Steve Carell in 'The Office.'

'The Office' reboot will center on reporters at a dying newspaper

■ A new version of "The Office" begins production in July.

Over a decade after viewers said goodbye to beloved NBC series "The Office," a new comedy set in the same universe as everyone's favorite paper company Dunder Mifflin is coming to Peacock.

"Ex Machina" star Domhnall Gleeson and Sabrina Impacciatore from Season 2 of HBO's "The White Lotus" will lead the ensemble cast in the still-untitled mockumentary series, according to a news release shared Wednesday.

"The documentary crew that

immortalized Dunder Mifflin's Scranton branch is in search of a new subject when they discover a dying historic Midwestern newspaper and the publisher trying to revive it with volunteer reporters," the logline for the new comedy series reads.

Greg Daniels, who adapted "The Office" for US audiences from the original UK series of the same name, will serve as the showrunner along with "Nathan For You" co-creator Michael Koman. Daniels and Koman will also produce the series with original "Office" creators Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant.

The American take on "The Office" first debuted in the US in 2005 and aired its final episode in 2013. It starred Steve Carell, John Krasinski, Jenna Fischer, Mindy Kaling, Rainn Wilson and BJ Novak, among many others. Many cast members became household names following the widespread and early success of the series, which won five Emmys throughout its run.

Like its predecessor starring Gervais, the series followed a mockumentary-style format with cast members breaking the fourth wall as a crew followed staffers around an office, capturing tedious day-to-day tasks, office romances and at-times outlandish behavior.

It is not yet known if any previous cast members will make cameos in the Peacock series, which is set to begin production in July.

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