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Teacher Arrested at Los Alisos Middle School for Lewd Acts With a Minor

By Brian Hews

Last Thursday, Middle School teacher Scott Waln was arrested by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as part of an investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor.

The Norwalk La Mirada School District sent out the following statement:

The District is aware of developments involving a teacher at Los Alisos Middle

School. On Thursday, May 12, 2022, Scott Waln was arrested by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as part of an investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor.

Mr. Waln was formally charged yesterday on Monday, May 16, 2022, and is currently on administrative leave. In order to protect the integrity of the investigation, the

[See **TEACHER** page 16]



CERRITOS HIGH DANCE TEAM WINS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

LARGE HIP HOP ABCUSD Board of Education recognizes the Cerritos High School Dance Team for winning the West Coast Elite National Championship in large hip hop with 20 plus students. The team also won two state championships.

Elections Have Consequences

Lynda Johnson Misses First Council Meeting, Forced to Recuse Herself at Second Meeting

By Brian Hews

Elections have consequences sometimes good, often bad. When HMG-CN learned that Lynda Johnson was running for Cerritos City Council, it fulfilled a prediction by this newspaper that she would eventually run after she got the job as Supervisor Janice Hahn's representative in Cerritos.

Now other predictions by this newspaper concerning Johnson are proving to be true.

The first was that Johnson would likely miss some City Council meetings because of her job with embattled LASD Sheriff Alex Villanueva.

It didn't take long as Johnson missed her very first City Council meeting, believed to be a first in Cerritos' history, to travel to the three-day Contract Cities Convention (Drinkfest/Foodfest) in Palm Desert to be with Villanueva; as predicted, putting her job in front of her constituents and the city.

HMG-CN sent emails to all City Councilpersons

asking their opinion about the absence, while asking Johnson if she was at the Palm Desert convention, no one answered.

It was an eventful City Council meeting, with the city recognizing four young residents who joined only 6% of the nation in becoming Eagle Scouts.

Johnson recusing herself when certain important City Council matters were on the agenda was another prediction by this newspaper.

That prediction occurred at the second 2022 City Council meeting last Monday.

Johnson works as a representative for L.A. Sheriff Villanueva; the L.A. Sheriff's have a station in Cerritos that the city funds through tax dollars.

Voters overlooked the obvious conflict of interest, voting Johnson in, setting up a conflict whenever the council considers anything concerning the Sheriff's station.

And that is what happened at Monday's special city budget meeting, Johnson, who had denied the conflict of interest during her campaign, recused herself during consideration of the city

[See **JOHNSON** page 16]

Newsom Proposes \$128.3 Billion for Public Schools

By Brian Hews

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced this week that the state plans to give schools \$128.3 billion and expand its per-student spending to nearly \$23,000 to give a boost to the state's education system.

The cash will fund school facilities, youth mental health and teacher training and recruitment, universal transitional kindergarten, and college savings accounts for all students, among other needs.

"The revised budget lifts up the most critical needs including funding for school mental health, recruitment and retention of teachers, and literacy strategies necessary to allow students to heal and recover after two very challenging years," State Superintendent of Schools Tony Thurmond wrote in a news release.

The state budget includes funds for reduction in class sizes, special education, teacher

[See **SCHOOLS** page 12]

Hawaiian Gardens Resident First Mexican-American in 'Majestic Miss' Pageant

By Tammy McDuff

Evangelina Romero will be the first Mexican American to participate in a pageant that has been around for ten years called America's Majestic Miss, and she lives in Hawaiian Gardens.

America's Majestic Miss be-

excellence, making a difference through community service, building confidence, improving speaking skills, and achieving their dreams.

Romero currently works at the ABC Unified School District in the Workforce Development Program, helping youth



FORMER MISS HAWAIIAN GARDENS Evangelina Romero currently works at the ABC Unified School District in the Workforce Development Program, helping youth.

gan in 2012 to empower young girls throughout the United States to develop lifelong success skills, including academic

'become accustomed to the real world' by gaining job experi-

[See **ROMERO** page 12]

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LA County Will Move Into the 'Medium' COVID Risk Level

(KNBC) Los Angeles County was in the CDC's "low" risk category, but that changed as expected yesterday based on rising COVID cases and hospitalizations.

County Health Director Dr. Barbara Ferrer announced the change during a briefing, when LA County reported 4,725 new cases

The change was expected after more than 4,300 new COVID cases were reported Wednesday in Los Angeles County, where hospitalizations are also on the rise after an encouraging decrease earlier this year. There were 363 COVID-positive patients in county hospitals as of Wednesday, up from 327 a day earlier

COVID hospital numbers had been dropping in recent months. The figure fell to 219 on April 20, but surged upward ever since.

Those key figures help determine health safety protocols in LA County. A sharp rise and widespread community transmission could trigger a renewal of mandatory indoor mask-wearing rules.

The change in category would not necessarily have an immediate impact. The county has already implemented the CDC's recommendations for areas in the "medium category, like masks on public transit, wide availability of vaccinations and guidance for improving ventilation in indoor settings.

But if there's another spike in COVID hospitalizations, that might push LA County into the "high" risk category and the indoor masking wearing rules that will likely come with it.

Is Los Angeles County in danger of slipping into the 'high' COVID risk category?

Under CDC guidelines, counties in the

"medium" category will move to "high" if the rate of new virus-related hospital admissions reaches 10 per 100,000 residents, or if 10% of the county's staffed hospital beds are occupied by COVID-positive patients.

The county's current rate of new admissions is 3.1 per 100,000 residents, and the rate of hospital beds occupied by COVID-positive patients is just under 2%.

Dr. Ferrer told the board earlier that the county is likely to move into the CDC's "medium" COVID risk category this week. She said she is confident the county will avoid sliding into the "high" category.

"While we are disheartened that the pandemic hasn't ended, I am reassured that with the tools at hand, we can continue to enjoy our time with each other and our participation in those activities that we love," she said.

The 4,384 new cases reported Wednesday lifted the county's overall total from throughout the pandemic to 2,922,210. The average daily rate of people testing positive for the virus, while still relatively low, rose to 3.2% Wednesday, up from 2.6% on Tuesday.

Ten COVID deaths were also reported, raising the cumulative virus-related death toll in the county to 32,055. Health officials have noted that most people who die from COVID suffer from various underlying health conditions.

Similarly, most hospital patients who are infected with COVID were hospitalized for reasons other than the virus, health officials said. Many only learned they were infected when they were tested upon hospital admission.

La Mirada Rotary Donates to LM High School



\$750 CHECK PRESENTATION: City officials, Mayor Ed Eng, and Councilmen Steve DeRuse and John Lewis with Rotary President Raymond Fernandez.

By Tammye McDuff

The La Mirada Rotary donated a check for \$750 to the Norwalk La Mirada School Board to assist in the first annual Matadors Matter event.

"We are very proud to support this new event helping students find their voice," stated Raymond Fernandez, La Mirada Rotary President.

This inaugural event will be loosely based on a Ted Talk concept. Ed Eng, La Mirada Mayor, stated that he wanted to build a safe environment for students to practice their public speaking skills, communications and public speaking.

"This forum will be a safe space for them to practice. The City of La Mirada and the Norwalk / La Mirada School district serves the same students."

Dr. John Lopez, NLMUSD Super-

intendent, is very excited about the opportunity, "First of all, partnering with the city of La Mirada and the students of La Mirada high school, that is the icing on the cake!"

"We will have some great speakers showcasing why 'Matadors Matter' to them," added Lopez. "We are working with our board members to put on an event to shine a light on the best that our students have to share."

The evening theme is 'Ideas Worth Spreading' and was held Thursday, May 19 at the La Mirada High School Little Theater. "I want to thank the City of La Mirada, Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, and La Mirada Rotary Club for sponsoring this pilot program," added Eng.

There will be monetary scholarships for first, second and third place.

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Norwalk Transit Village Project Advances



THE PROPOSED TRANSIT-ORIENTED eco community project would bring new affordable housing units, commercial spaces and green community spaces to Norwalk at the old California Youth Authority property.

Staff Report

Norwalk, CA – On May 17, 2022, the Norwalk City Council received an update on the Norwalk Transit Village project planned to transform the former California Youth Authority facility located at 13200 Bloomfield Ave. with new affordable homes, community-enhancing activation, recreational areas, and connectivity to the Metrolink Station and public transit for residents of Norwalk to enjoy.

“My fellow councilmembers and I, along with many members of our community are excited to see how this project has been progressing as it has been in the making for years,” said Mayor Rick Ramirez. “This development project provides the City with the opportunity to transform the vacant and deserted land into a neighborhood that beautifies our City and becomes another place for residents to enjoy. As we move through the State’s process, I am confident in our City team and consultants to address concerns that arise to ensure that this project benefits our entire community.”

Since the last update to the City Council on February 22, the draft conceptual plan has been refined after input from the community, key stakeholders, City Commissioners, and the Steering Committee. Key plan updates shared with the Norwalk City Council included:

- Commercial Component at Bloomfield Ave.: Commercial, dining, and hotel uses would be located on the non-residential portion of the site.
- Residential Component: Enhanced residential design features along with a comprehensive mobility and parking strategy.

Community Gathering and Open Spaces: A micro-forest and green buffer zones would be created for the community to enjoy and an at-grade pedestrian and bike connection to the transit center is also being considered.

Through this undertaking, the City has conducted robust community outreach since January 2022, meeting the community where they were at by hosting virtual Community meetings, attending the local Farmers Market, hosting an in-person Community Workshop open house and more.

The Norwalk community continues to be supportive of the project, understanding the benefits it will bring to the City.

Big themes that have been consistent since outreach began have been the community’s interest in affordable housing choices, healthy amenities and restaurants in order to keep dollars in the community, and greater connectivity to the Metrolink and public transit.

The community has also shared that public safety, site access and traffic, and sustainability should be factored into the project, which is being taken into consideration.

Next steps for the project team will be to begin the Environmental Impact Report and specific plan for the project. Entitlements are expected to be approved in mid to late Fall 2023.

The State would then be able to officially transfer the land to the City following project approvals.

Kaiser Downey Awards Community Family Guidance Center \$60,000; Helpline Youth Center \$75,000

Grants target teen and young adults mental health issues, grant also given to Bellflower High Club.

DOWNEY, Calif. – May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Since the pandemic began in 2020, millions of people, including teens and young adults, have been struggling with chronic stress, anxiety and depression.

Because keeping the communities healthy goes far beyond providing medical care, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center works hand-in-hand with partner organizations in Southeast Los Angeles County that are working to address the mental health needs in the community.

As part of its commitment to improving the mental health of the communities we serve, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center has provided \$60,000 for additional training to clinical staff at Community Family Guidance Center in Cerritos, which provides mental health services to under-served children and their families in 28 cities in Southeast Los Angeles County.

“Kaiser Permanente Downey’s support has helped us transform the lives of more than 1,700 young people per year,” said Bill Sinko, executive director, Community Family Guidance Center. “It has allowed us to provide excellent training for our clinicians, in turn improving the quality of service for children and youth we serve who are experiencing mental health challenges.”

In addition to the support of Community Family Guidance Center, Kaiser Permanente Downey helped expand access to mental health services at Helpline Youth Counseling, which provides counseling and assistance to at-risk, children, families and homeless individuals in Whittier, with a \$75,000 grant.

“The work done by these organizations to bring mental health and wellness out in the open creates a culture of acceptance and support,” said Payman Roshan, senior vice president and area manager, Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center.

“Kaiser Permanente is beyond proud to be a part of that because when we can make a positive difference in our homes, workplaces, schools and communities we all thrive.”

Kaiser Permanente Downey Medical Center also recently provided in-kind donations to Bellflower High School’s Mental Health Club, a student-led organization that raises awareness about and support for mental health stressors among students.

The health care provider that serves 4.8 million members in Southern California is also sponsoring this year’s Girls on Fire summer program, hosted by the City of Downey, which addresses challenges facing young girls led by female leaders in the community.



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BREASTIVAL! An Event About Breasts, Bodies and More



ORIGINALLY A PLAY of monologues with a through line of breasts and stories told by women for women, the play has evolved to increase the expression and mutual respect in the way that men and women communicate with each other.

By Tammye McDuff

An inspiring production went virtual for the first time, "Conversations 'Bout the Girls". Putting adolescent giggling aside this presentation explores women and their relationship with their own bodies. Breastival is an event about breasts, bodies and more. The opening night was

May 14th, 2022 and will continue to stream for 30 days. Tickets start at \$28 and are now on sale to the general public.

This new event honored the 17th anniversary of Sonia Jackson's controversial play "Conversations 'Bout The Girls" and serves as a fundraiser benefitting Susan G. Komen Foundation.

Grammy winners to best selling authors filled the cast featuring prominent women from a diverse range of backgrounds. The updated cast in this production included: Florence LaRue, original member of the 5th Dimension; Kayla Caulfield, actress; Bernadette Speakes, actress; Eunice El-loitt, comedian; Dr. Marissa Pei, author and journalist; Laurel Harris, award-winning producer, writer and actress; voice and speech coach, and Healthcare IT consultant, Debbie Lynn Carriger; Lily Shaw, motivational speaker and actress; professor and playwright, Madeline Puc-cioni and Sofia Élan, international singer-songwriter, composer, arranger.

The long-running stage play by Sonia Jackson (Speed, Jurassic Park III) reveals the way women look at themselves, their bodies, and their breasts. "Conversations 'Bout the Girls" is a play whose purpose is to provide an engaging way to entertain the public through provoking stories.

"Throughout history, breasts have always attracted attention, wanted or unwanted, and the messages women receive about their breasts are conflicting. We're told that our shape and size, and how much we choose to show or cover-up, makes us beautiful or shameful, nurturing

or sexualized. This show removes outside perceptions and brings to light the true conflicts and wonder that comes with the feminine experience of having breasts," stated Jackson.

The vision is to increase the expression of mutual respect in the way men and women communicate with each other.

Originally a play of monologues, the stories were woven together to tell the story of women. "Conversations 'Bout the Girls" second iteration was a solo show that took place in a bra shop, where the proprietor is restocking and training a new team member on the various bras and the women who purchase them.

Most recently, the play takes the bra shop idea and uses an ethnically diverse cast whose ages span decades to tell the tales of a woman's journey in life because she has breasts. The colorful company, with a range of sizes, weights, hues, and shapes, play the staff and customers in the store and tell their stories live or through flashbacks. The story culminates with the patrons returning to the store after hours for a Women's Circle of camaraderie and frank discussions of women's issues.

Jackson came up with the idea while performing "The Vagina Monologues" she states "I dawned on me that we talk about all sorts of things that happen to our bodies, and we needed to have a great understanding between men and women; women and women; between our bodies and ourselves."

The play gives women the opportunity to realize that they are not alone, that other women experience the same body image challenges across the board.

Proceeds generated will go to the Susan G Komen Foundation, the world's leading breast cancer organization.

To purchase tickets to the Breastival!
Please visit
<https://visionsofpossibilities.org/breastival/>

Cerritos Commission and Committee Applications Now Available

Recruitment is currently under way for service appointments to the City's various Commissions and Committees.

The Commissions and Committees serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council on various matters ranging from the selection and

placement of public art installations to technical urban regional planning matters.

Eligible individuals will serve two-year terms through April 30, 2024. Online applications are available on the city's website

The deadline for submitting an application has been extended until all positions are filled.

For more information contact the Office of the City Clerk at city_clerk@cerritos.us or (562) 916-1248.

Norwalk Council Approves COVID-19 Memorial Artwork

Norwalk, CA – At this past Tuesday's meeting, the Norwalk C Council unanimously approved an artwork project that will memorialize those whose lives were lost due to COVID-19 and will be placed within an existing round planter on the south side near the entrance to the Council Chambers.

The proposed artwork will be a six-to seven-foot-tall weeping willow tree constructed of metal. Encircling the base of the tree will be a metal memorial ring that includes language laser cut into the metal memorializing the loss of life. Leaves will be shaped as hearts dangling with links to allow them free movement with the wind in a variety of colors including some gold-colored hearts sprinkled throughout the tree. These hearts will mimic the yellow hearts utilized by the Yellow Heart Foundation, which remembers loved ones that were lost due to COVID-19.

"This is a great way for our City to memorialize all the lives lost due to

COVID-19, especially the lives lost within our own community," stated Mayor Rick Ramirez. "The City of Norwalk will continue to add art in public places for residents and visitors to appreciate and for future generations to be inspired."

The Art in Public Places Committee was tasked with working with an artist to recognize and memorialize these losses. The Committee, along with local area artist James Naish and City staff, selected the proposed artwork with the belief that it will thoughtfully recognize the sadness felt by families and friends who have lost loved ones.

The City's Art in Public Places Program provides a collection of permanent outdoor sculptures and artwork throughout the City. Developments having a project cost exceeding five hundred thousand dollars are subject to a one percent contribution to the program.

The project is estimated to be completed by late summer 2022.

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AAA Travel Alert: Many travel destinations have implemented COVID-19-related restrictions. Before making travel plans, check to see if hotels, attractions, cruise lines, tour operators, restaurants and local activities have issued health and safety-related restrictions or entry requirements. The local tourism board is a good resource for updated information. **For all offers, unless otherwise indicated:** Rates quoted are available at time of publication and are per person, based on double occupancy. Gratuities, transfers, excursions and/or non-air-inclusive offers, airfare taxes, fees & surcharges are additional. Advertised rates do not include any applicable daily resort or facility fees payable directly to the hotel at check-out, such fee amounts will be advised at the time of booking. Rates, terms, conditions, availability, itinerary, taxes, fees, surcharges, deposit, payment, cancellation terms/conditions & policies subject to change without notice at any time. Some rates capacity-controlled. Advance reservations through AAA Travel required to obtain Member Benefits & savings which may vary based on departure date. Rates may be subject to increase after full payment for travel is government-imposed taxes or fees and, except for air-inclusive offers, for supplier-imposed fees. Blackout dates & other restrictions may apply to certain offers. Other restrictions may apply, including but not limited to, baggage limitations & charges for first & second checked bags, standby policies & fees, passport validity and/or expiration dates, insurance purchase requirements & supplier & airline-imposed change/cancellation fees up to & including the price of the fare plus any applicable fare differential which may include pre-notification deadlines. Air component of packaged offers may be non-refundable; refunds are subject to supplier & airline terms & conditions. Supplier & airline fees & policies may vary. Contact your supplier & booking office for more information; for baggage fees & other details, see flights.aaa.com. Rates involving round-trip air transportation for travel sales or from gateways other than those advertised may differ. Not responsible for errors or omissions. The Automobile Club of Southern California acts as an agent for Pleasant Holidays[®]. CST 106202-00. To learn how we collect and use your information, visit the privacy link at AAA.com. Copyright © 2022 Automobile Club of Southern California. All Rights Reserved.

Pleasant Holidays

Downey Gives 300 Fruit Trees to Residents



EARTH DAY: A you Daisy assists in planting a fruit tree at Downey City Hall.

By **Tammye McDuff**

Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

In the decades leading up to the first Earth Day, Americans were oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health.

Rachel Carson's New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962 raised awareness for the environment.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, a senator from Wisconsin, had long been concerned about the deteriorating environment. Nelson announced the idea for a teach-in on college campuses to the national media, they organized and picked April 22.

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States EPA and the passage of a number of laws: the National Environmental Education Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act,

and the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act.

Today, Earth Day is widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world.

Downey celebrated Earth Day with a complimentary tree giveaway in late April. Working with TreePeople.org, the City provided over 300 fruit trees to residents.

The following Monday, Downey Mayor Blanca Pacheco and Councilmembers Mario Trujillo and Catherine Alvarez, helped by the Daisies and Brownies from Troop 71335, held a special tree planting at City Hall to celebrate Arbor Day.

It was a beautiful California spring day as the group dug holes, planted trees, and listened as Pacheco talked about the career opportunities in the arborist field.

The Arbor Day Foundation started at about the same time (1972) and has distributed 250 million trees for planting in all types of situations since that time.

Artesia High Grad Serving With TOPGUN Aviators

By **Megan Brown**

FALLON, Nev.-Lakewood native and 2011 Artesia High graduate David Chang is serving with the Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit Fallon supporting TOPGUN aviators at the Navy's premier tactical air warfare training center.

"Lakewood taught me to have respect for other people," said Chang. "That is important because everyone in the Navy comes from all walks of life. You never know where people came from so you need to give everyone an equal amount of respect."

Fifty-two years ago, TOPGUN was introduced with the mission of reducing casualties of naval aviators sustained during the Vietnam War. Within a year, this goal was reached with the United States having one casualty for every 12 enemy deaths.

TOPGUN is a prestigious program only open to the top one percent of naval aviators. Aviators who attend the course



PETTY OFFICER 2nd Class David Chang. Courtesy USN.

carrier at sea. With more than 5,000 sailors serving aboard these ships, aircraft carriers are self-contained mobile airports.

Chang and the sailors they serve with have many opportunities to achieve accomplishments during their military service. Serving in the Navy means Chang is part of a world that is taking on new importance in America's focus on rebuilding military readiness, strengthening alliances



TOPGUN celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, above, current TG aviators.

are trained in a variety of areas including air combat, jet maneuverability, enemy tactics and more.

The mission of NAS Fallon is to support carrier air wings prior to deployment, as well as other units during training and exercises. This goal is achieved through 300 clear flight days a year, four bombing ranges, an electronic warfare range and many other training facilities. The base is also home to a 14,000-foot runway, which is the longest in the Navy.

This year, the Navy is celebrating the centennial of the aircraft carrier and its importance to naval aviation. When the air wing is embarked on an aircraft carrier, the ship contains more than 70 attack fighter jets, helicopters and other aircraft, all of which take off from and land aboard the

and reforming business practices in support of the National Defense Strategy.

"The Navy protects the interest of our allies and ourselves through the sea lanes which is why it is important to national defense," said Chang.

"I am most proud of getting my Fleet Marine Force pin because there were a lot of mentors that pushed me to earn it," said Chang. "Getting that pinned on was a very proud moment for me."

As Chang and other sailors continue to train and perform missions, they take pride in serving their nation in the United States Navy.

"Serving in the Navy means always doing better than I did yesterday and always taking care of those junior to me," added Chang.

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The Teachers Association of the Norwalk- La Mirada area is looking for interested residents to attend an informational meeting for potential School Board candidates. The meeting will be held Tuesday evening, May 24th at the TANLA Office from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (A light dinner will be served)

If you are interested in attending, please call TANLA at (562) 868-6251 to RSVP by May 23, 2022



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Cerritos Couple Donates \$5 Million to LB Medical Center



HEFTY DONATION: Hing and Doris Hung (center) recently donated \$5 million to Long Beach Medical Center to help fund a new hybrid operating room. Photo courtesy of Long Beach Medical Center.

(LBBJ) After being forced to work on a labor farm amid the Cultural Revolution, Hing Hung escaped Communist China in 1974. He made his way to the U.S., where he would graduate from college, meet his wife and co-found a successful business in Long Beach.

Hung's road to the American dream gave him a "pay it forward" mentality—a mentality that led to a \$5 million donation toward a hybrid operating room at Long Beach Memorial Medical Center.

"The Hungs are shining examples of what can happen when courage, hard work and love are met with freedom and opportunity," Long Beach Medical Center Foundation President Rob Gunsalus said, "Mr. Hung's story in particular is better than anything Hollywood could produce."

The hefty donation to the Memorial-Care Heart & Vascular Institute helped

fund a new hybrid cardiovascular operating suite that features advanced technology and combines the diagnostic capabilities of a catheterization lab with the surgical functionality of an operating room, according to the hospital.

In 1992, Hung co-founded Mercury Security Corp., which created the technology behind badge readers at door entries. The business was sold in 2013 but remains located in Long Beach near Signal Hill. Hung remained active with the company until 2020.

The Hung's personal connection to Long Beach Medical Center dates back almost two decades. In 2005, Doris was diagnosed with breast cancer and received care at the Long Beach hospital. Today, she is cancer free.

Hing's mother battled ovarian cancer and received care at Memorial as well.

Artesia Recognizes Mental Health Month



ARTESIA recognized the LA County Department of Public Health at their May 9 council meeting for their mental health collaboration.

By **Tammye McDuff**

The Artesia City Council proclaimed the month of May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

Mayor Melissa Ramoso thanked the LA County Department of Mental Health for their services during the pandemic.

During the pandemic, Ramoso had inquired if programming concerning

mental health could be created, "The City was able to successfully implement weekly programs with the Los Angeles health department to combat the emotional and mental pressures brought on my CoVID-19," she stated, "We plan on continuing this relationship in the future."

For more information on programs available please contact Artesia City Hall at 562-865-6262.

Save on Buccaneer Bay Season Passes

Buccaneer Bay season passes are the best way to enjoy La Mirada's pirate-themed waterpark.

Purchase a season pass before May 30 and save up to \$15.

Season Pass holders will receive access to a preview event on Sunday, May 22 with the water park opening

to the general public on Saturday, May 28.

Buccaneer Bay will be open daily from Monday, June 6 through Friday, August 5.

Weekends through Sunday, September 25.

Season Passes are available for purchase at Splash!, the Resource Center, and online at splashlamirada.com.

For information, call (562) 902-3191.

Whitney High Club Cutting Pollution With Compostables

Staff Report

Did you know that ABC School District emits about 1481 pounds of carbon dioxide a day from plastic utensils? The passionate students of the Ecology and Wildlife Club at Whitney High School have decided to take action to reduce their school's plastic waste and fight the climate crisis at the same time.

Whitney's Ecology and Wildlife Club is partnering with the non-profit Grades of Green to bring compostable utensils to school cafeterias. Currently, the team has raised money and purchased compostable utensils to be used in Whitney's cafeteria. The students have also created a petition for students, parents, and faculty to sign. To sign the petition visit: [https://www.change.org/p/abc-unified-school-district-](https://www.change.org/p/abc-unified-school-district-reduce-plastic-waste-with-compostable-utensils-in-abc-unified-school-district-cafeterias)

reduce-plastic-waste-with-compostable-utensils-in-abc-unified-school-district-cafeterias. Plastic utensils are used every day by students across the district and are a large contributor to the ABC School District's carbon footprint. Aiming for districtwide change, the students will present their research on the environmental and public health impacts of single-use plastic utensils to the ABC Nutrition Services Manager.

ABOUT GRADES OF GREEN

Grades of Green is a 501(c)(3) non-profit whose mission is to inspire and empower kids and the broader school community to care for the environment.

Find more information and sign up your student team at www.gradesofgreen.org or email info@gradesofgreen.org.

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Chitty-Chitty Bang-Bang No Longer A Fictional Car

AeroMobil's vehicles are supercars that fly, light aircraft you can drive, transforming between aircraft/auto mode in less than three minutes.

BY LAURIE HANSON

At a rural England garage, two children, Jeremy and Jemima Potts, find a car formerly used for racing in Grand Prix races across Europe until it crashed and burned in 1909. When they learn the car is due to be scrapped, they beg their father, inventor Caractacus, to save it. He purchases the car and rebuilds it with a new name, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" for

the unusual noise of its engine. Through a series of scenes the car eventually sprouts wings and propellers and flies. Yes, that was the plot for Disney's imaginative movie Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, but a flying car is no longer fiction. Imagine you are cruising down the road, turning heads faster than you turn corners. And just when you feel the Earth tugging at its leash, you flick a button, and get lifted far above traffic communing with the birds. You soar above rush hour traffic in a flying car, landing at your destination relaxed and rested. Well, that concept is close, and it's called AeroMobil. AeroMobil's vehicles are supercars that fly, light aircraft you can drive, transforming between aircraft/auto mode in less than three minutes. Engineers and designers include luxury and supercar makers BMW, Aston Martin, McLaren, Mercedes Benz and Ferrari, and aerospace leaders

Lockheed Martin, Rolls Royce, Airbus, and Diamond Aircraft. "It's a technological breakthrough, the first commercially available true flying car," said CEO Patrick Hessel who has been with the company since 2016. "AeroMobil is about to revolutionize personal mobility. It is the very first production flying car following two market opportunities – 2-seater personal luxury vehicle and 4-seater ride-hailing service." AeroMobil is based in Bratislava, Slovakia, but the prototype was built in Central Europe in Bratislava, near Vienna. Its suppliers are in Germany, the United Kingdom and Israel. The company is led by co-founders Stefan Klein Juraj Vaculik, advised by inventor Dean Kamen. Conceived from a converted automobile, and in development for 20 years, the aircraft first flew in 2013.

work, including cellular signal in the air, to rest, in luxurious reclining seats, to play, with an on-board entertainment system or just to enjoy the view from 10,000 feet." It has a practical operating altitude of 12,000 feet with a 500-mile flying range and requires special operating permissions designed to be used within existing infrastructures. "We are certifying vehicles under the European Aviation Safety Agency and the Federal Aviation Agency rules," Hessel explained. "Owners will need a standard private pilot license." The company has designed the aircraft to lessen its impact on the environment. The engine uses standard unleaded gasoline, and is built with a specially selected clean aviation-certified engine technology which reduces CO2 emissions by up to 50 percent while eliminating 100 percent of toxic lead emissions compared with traditional aircraft engines, according to

FLYING CAR: Rest in luxurious reclining seats, play with an on-board entertainment system or just enjoy the view. The car has an operational altitude of 12,000 feet with a 500-mile flying range.

quota was set at 500 vehicles, with the first 25 orders planned as a "Founders Edition." AeroMobil will sell to regional transportation operators we partner with and perhaps others such

Hessel. "[We are] preparing to transfer to fully electric propulsion as soon as the energy storage technologies have reached the required power density levels, which we expect to occur within the next 4 to 5 years," he added.

With notable interest worldwide, the company believes a huge market exists for this new transportation product. North America alone has a \$70 billion total addressable market for rideshare services, according to Hessel.

AeroMobil could fit in with services much like UBER and is now targeting this business segment with introduction of their 4-seat model AeroMobil NEXT in 2025.

AeroMobil and has been taking preorders since 2017. A first edition production

as flying clubs," added Hessel. "We may also enter a joint venture with new or existing operators, or be our own operators, or both, to provide a regional ride service. [It would be] similar in concept to UBER but using flying cars."

"We see this segment developing in various cities around the world, providing a new regional transportation option

for trips ranging from approximately 200-400 miles," he said. "This market is in its very early stages of development, but we expect that it would be in the

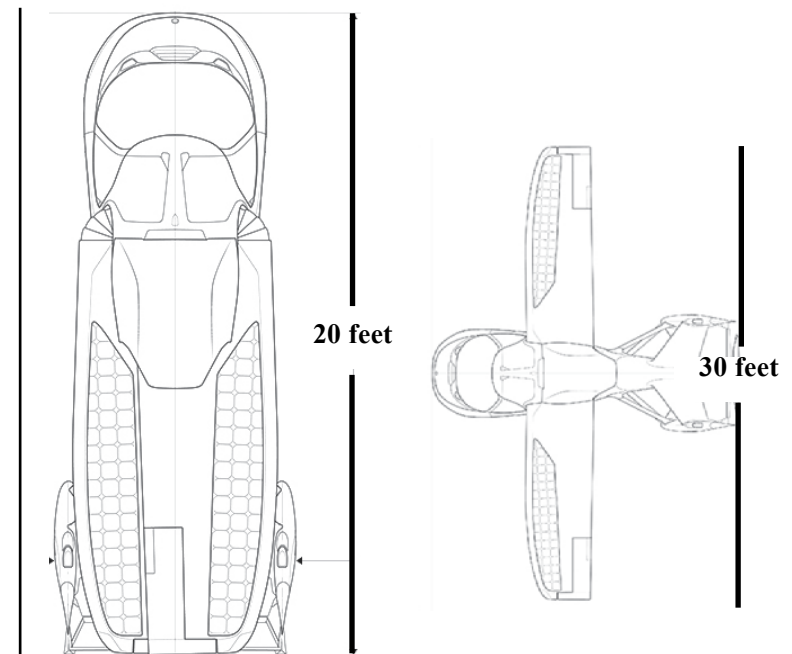
range of \$70 billion by 2030 based on various research forecasts we've seen."

The AeroMobil4 was brought to the U.S., with the company establishing a foothold in 2010. The first AeroMobil 2.5 prototype was tested in 2013, followed by their next prototype testing in 2014. Their most current prototype was tested just two years ago.

"[Since] the AeroMobil is in development, its final manufacturing cost can't be disclosed," Hessel added. "Final pricing has not been determined [but] our current estimate is in the range from \$1.7 million for the AeroMobil AM4."

Currently, all AeroMobil prototypes fly; the 4-passenger model, the AeroMobil NEXT, was announced in 2022 as part of a larger service, said Hessel.

Though the company prides itself on product safety, the AeroMobil3.0 prototype crashed in 2015 during a test flight at an airport near Janikovce. The aircraft entered a spin, and its

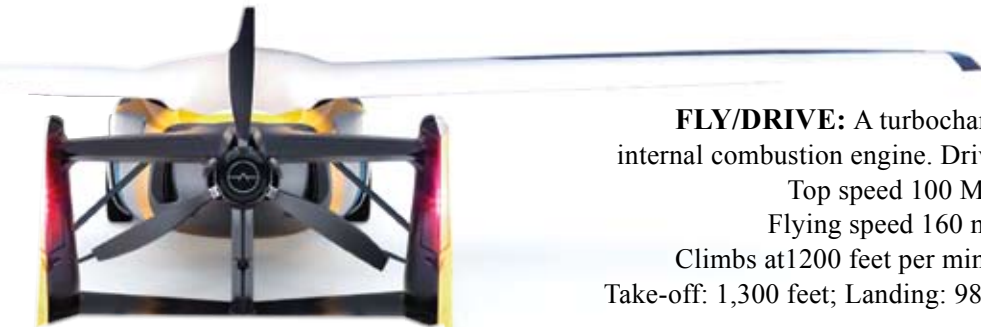


ballistic parachute deployed as it crashed on descent, suffering major damage. The pilot received only minor injuries and was able to walk away from the accident. A month later in June, the company indicated a new prototype was being developed.

Looking to the future, the company boasts of having reliable manufacturing and devel-

opment partners. Though they cannot disclose who they are, they say the partners have a proven track record in aviation manufacturing.

For more information about AeroMobil, please visit online at www.aeromobil.com.



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CIF-SOUTHERN SECTION DIVISION 3 BOYS TENNIS FINALS

Upset-minded Whitney unable to pull off one more surprise, falls to Flintridge Prep

By Loren Kopff
@LorenKopff on Twitter

CLAREMONT-No one predicted the Whitney High boys tennis team to advance to the CIF-Southern Section Division 3 finals. The odds were stacked against the unseeded Wildcats, the third place team from the 605 League, to knock off second-ranked Flintridge Prep, the lone freelance team in the division.

Both programs have been to The Claremont Club before with Flintridge Prep claiming the Division 4 title just three years ago while Whitney's last trip here was in 2012 when it was ranked second and fell to top-seeded Valencia High 11-7 in Division 3. But last Friday, the dream run ended for the Wildcats who went winless through the first two rounds and lost 15-3. Whitney ends the season at 15-7.

"It's been an awesome year; the way these guys fought together," said first-year head coach David Moorman. "All season long, we've been trying to figure out what would be our best lineup. These guys have been able to just work it through to the point where once we got to the play-off round, they were able to do their very best."

Moorman, who has been in the Whitney program for eight seasons, saw his team open the playoffs with an 11-7 win

against Del Rio League champion La Serna High 11-7, then double up fourth-ranked St. Margaret's High 12-6 in the second round. That would be followed by wins over Pacific View League champion Ventura High (10-8) and the No. 1 team in the division, Royal High, 9-9 (75-65 in games). Whitney had previously captured the 2003 Division V title when it was the top-ranked team in the division and knocked off Fairmont Prep 11-7. Two years later, the Wildcats, ranked third in Division 4, fell to Viewpoint High 13-5 in the Division V finals.

"All season long we believed we could do that," said Moorman of getting to the finals. "It's just that at times, it didn't happen. When we were playing in our league, we just felt like no matter what, we're going to learn from this experience, and that was our goal. What it did was fine tuning us, fine tuning us to the point where these guys were willing to take that flight and they did it on the court."

Whitney did not win a set in singles play and were blanked in five of those nine sets. The best chance of getting a win there came from freshman Arun Nambiar, who lost to No. 1 Matthew Wang 6-4. Flintridge Prep's No. 3 player, Will Lanstra, won a pair of 6-0 sets before being replaced in the third round where Luca Yeghnazar defeated senior Abhiram Putta 6-0.

Junior Gideon Choi, the No. 2 player, lost to Wang 6-2 and senior Neil Tendolkar, who replaced freshman Evan Wang in the third round, fell to Dilan Robbins 6-2. Also in the third round, senior Atreya Petluri, a replacement for Nambiar, lost to Alec Guthrie 6-2.

"You could just see the power the other team had," said Moorman. "That was something you could see throughout. If



PHOTO BY LOREN KOPFF

EVEN THOUGH it lost to Flintridge Prep 15-3 in last Friday's CIF-Southern Section Division 3 boys tennis finals, Whitney High proud to be hoisting the hardware that comes with advancing to the championship match. This the fourth time the Whitney boys tennis program has advanced to the finals, winning the Division V title in 2003 while falling in 2005 and 2012 before this season.

you look at their tournament [run]; where they've been through...you could see their scores and kind of have an idea they're going to come in strong. They kind of proved it in that first round. Sometimes you just have to realize that their players are stronger than yours at times."

Flintridge Prep had an easier road to the finals, crushing Mark Keppel High 17-1, Foothill Tech 14-4, Oxford Academy 14-4 and Orange Lutheran High 14-4. Mark Keppel and Oxford Academy were league champions.

Whitney was much stronger in doubles, winning all three sets in the final round and winning at least one game in every set.

The No. 1 duo of senior Nikhil Lingineni and freshman Mukilan Kamalavannan fell to Miles Cabrera and Ray Cabrera 6-3 and Leon Liao and Neel Satta 6-4, but defeated No. 2 Nico Stanton and Loran Baxter Mercado 6-0. Junior Krishan Parikh and sophomore Darshan Powers, the No. 2 tandem, lost 6-2 and 6-3 before defeating Liao/Satta 6-3 and the No. 3 pair of junior Kyle Phong and freshman David Vo lost a pair of 6-1 sets before knocking off Marcus Lin and Kazuma Hakushi 6-1.

Since joining the 605 League, the Wildcats have remained in the upper half of the league with powerhouse Cerritos High, which captured the Division 4 championship, and Oxford Academy. In 2019, the 'Cats went 8-2 with the setbacks coming to Cerritos 10-8 and 11-7. Last season, Whitney tied Oxford Academy twice and split with Cerritos, defeating the Dons 11-7 while playing to a 9-9 tie in the other match.

"I think it's going to build to the point where it's going to continue with that enthusiasm," said Moorman. "The next group, whoever comes in, are going to want to come in. My goal for them, like I've told them all season, is their key. Now it proves how important where their off-season play is where it gets us through this."

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: First, read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are found in all directions - vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once so do not cross them out. It is best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues you'll have a number of letters left over that spell out the WONDERWORD. To see the answer use the link below the puzzle.

I Want A Refund!

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S	D	E	S	K	S	H	I	R	T	E	A	E	T	O
Y	S	R	T	C	O	A	T	N	E	K	A	T	S	H
R	R	P	A	V	H	T	L	F	E	E	H	U	M	S
E	E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	S	P	U	S
L	C	L	E	A	N	H	T	O	S	G	A	M	B	E
T	A	R	S	W	K	O	G	I	L	K	C	O	L	R
U	M	A	R	W	E	E	I	I	S	S	O	C	A	D
C	E	E	O	A	E	J	R	S	L	O	I	O	T	K
M	R	G	S	R	S	S	E	S	S	H	P	N	B	C
Y	A	L	S	E	K	S	A	M	E	E	S	E	E	E
E	D	O	I	S	E	C	I	V	E	D	S	A	D	H
N	I	V	C	T	E	A	R	R	I	N	G	S	L	C
O	O	E	S	A	T	N	E	T	T	O	G	R	O	F
M	E	R	C	H	A	N	D	I	S	E	T	A	L	P

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CIF-SS Div. 1 SOFTBALL SEMIFINALS

Gahr's run through Division 1 playoffs ends with shutout loss to Roosevelt

By Loren Kopff
@LorenKopff on Twitter

Several things were going in favor of Gahr High's softball team entering last Saturday's CIF-Southern Section Division 1 semifinal game against visiting Roosevelt High. The Gladiators were riding the high emotions of a trio of big innings in each of their three playoff games, had scored seven runs in each of those playoff games, had been shutout only once this season and had won 14 of their last 16 games.

But on a hot early mid-May afternoon, Gahr would run into a buzzsaw named Priscilla Llamas, who scattered four hits and struck out three, and any chances of the program's first divisional championship were wiped out in a 3-0 loss. Gahr also stranded five runners on bases and only one of them would reach third base.

"It obviously hurts," said Gahr head coach Rey Sanchez. "These girls... they bought in to what we do, and they bought into the system; of Gahr softball, and they went hard every day. When you put everything you've got into it every day, it's hard when the end of the season happens. I told the girls going into this, our goals are always to win league and to win the last game of the season."

Early on, it looked as if the game would be a low-scoring game decided by a run. Gahr junior pitcher Jordan Cathey had faced the minimum through the first two innings, yielding just a leadoff walk to Llamas to begin the game. But courtesy runner Emily Garcia would be caught stealing. Two innings later, Jordan Elias was safe on an error but would be stranded at third.

Meanwhile, Llamas walked senior first baseman Amanda Ta'amu to begin the bottom of the second before a double play erased that chance.

The Mustangs, who won the Big VIII League and had lost three games, got on the board in the fourth inning when Kayla Lyon struck out but reached on a wild pitch. Another wild pitch put her at second and she came home when Ashlee Annett singled and moved up on an error. Roosevelt iced the game in the seventh when Emily Carr singled with one out and Cheyenne Castillo, pinch-hitting in the No. 9 spot, homered on a 2-0 count.

"I'm kicking myself a little bit because in both situations when they scored runs, we were in a 'walk them' situation," said Sanchez. "We had a base open and they got us. Their first run... we were trying to stay away from the girl, and we had a base open and we didn't execute a pitch. Sometimes it comes down a pitch, or two, and that's what it came down to in this game."

Even though they were down 1-0, the fourth time the Gladiators had trailed within the first four innings in the playoffs, they refused to go down without a fight. In the bottom of the fourth, senior second baseman Mika Huskey beat out an infield single before being erased on a double play. Ta'amu then doubled but the inning ended when sophomore designated player Marley Cortez, who replaced Cathey in the circle in the top half of the inning, was half a step out at first on a bang-bang play. Sanchez, and others, initially thought Cortez was safe and when the out was called, he immediately jumped up from his position at the third base box and had some words with the umpires. But evidence from the photographers up the first base line showed she was out.

"Anytime you're in a game like this and it's a tight game... blues pay a part," said Sanchez. "But it's part of the game; it is part of the game. He's umpiring for both teams and sometimes when you're in a game, you think they're favoring their more than ours. We view our game with our hearts a lot and so it's easy [to complain]. Initially, I had Marley safe. But my girls and myself and my coaching staff are going after it 100 percent. That's the only way to do it."

Llamas walked sophomore center fielder Natalia Hill to begin the fifth. A one-out single from junior right fielder Sophia Magcale and a fielder's choice from sophomore shortstop Rio Mendez moved Hill to third where she was stranded. In the sixth, a deep fly ball from Ta'amu with two outs was caught just in front of the right field fence and in the last inning, a two-out double from junior left fielder Hailey Sanchez was all Gahr would get. The Gladiators would have eight baserunners off Llamas.

"We talk about one pitch at a time, one inning at a time, one game at a time," said Rey Sanchez. "You put your heart and soul into that pitch. You put your heart and soul into that inning, and you try to win that inning. In games like this when you're playing top opponents; great teams, it comes down often times to a pitch or two, and that's what this game came down to."

"We had our chances; we definitely had our chances," he continued. "Not just those two opportunities, but we had some opportunities to knock girls in. Our girls, as they have all year have come through. But it didn't work out. It's okay; that's the game. We're playing such a tough game and you're facing such a tough pitcher and a tough team. I'm proud of the girls."

Rey Sanchez went on to say that the two San Gabriel Valley League games against Warren High prepared the Gladiators for the playoffs and because of that, he gives a lot of credit to Warren.

Gahr (23-9) began the playoffs with a 7-3 win over Westlake High with all seven runs coming in the bottom of the fifth. Against La Serna High, the Gladiators scored three times in the top of the fifth and twice in the eighth and two days before the semifinals, scored four runs in the top of the seventh for a 7-3 win.

"I'm proud of them," he continued. "They gave it a great run; beat three solid teams. Westlake is a good team. La Serna is another great team. Obviously, Orange Lutheran is one of the top teams."

There is still a slight chance Gahr's season may not be over as the Gladiators could garner a spot in the CIF Southern California Regionals, which begin on May 31. There will be 20 entries from the Southern Section and considering there are seven divisions, some of the semifinal losers could see their seasons extended.

"I would love that opportunity," said Rey Sanchez. "A lot of it hinges on girls going to [their] travel ball [teams]. There are some [travel] coaches out there that want their girls to do travel. I would love the opportunity, right? Because I think we were right there in this game and in every game we've played. It could happen. I'm hopeful; I'm going to prepare my girls for that."

CIF-SS DIV. 4 BOYS TENNIS FINALS

Cerritos doubles put together late wins to knock off Nordhoff, claim program's third title

By Loren Kopff
@LorenKopff on Twitter

CLAREMONT-The Cerritos High boys tennis program has made its way to The Claremont Club to play for a CIF-Southern Section divisional title four times. After tying Viewpoint High 9-9 but falling three games short in the 2007 Division IV finals, the Dons returned the next season as the top team in the division, and defeated Rowland High 10-8.

Cerritos was ranked first in 2009 when it crushed Laguna Beach High 15-3 and last Friday, as the No. 1 team in Division

run was going to be tough and the boys put up a good fight."

Cerritos was looking good through the first round, taking four of the if the first six sets. Senior Michael Rafael, the team's No. 1 singles player had as good of a performance as any tennis player can have. He swept all three sets over No. 1 Eric Schmidt, No. 2 Campbell Gaston and No. 3 Rowan Gillooly.

"It's amazing; it's a feeling I've never experienced before," said Rafael. "I'm just glad to be a part of this team."

"I just felt good throughout the day," he later said. "I just tried to go out there



PHOTO BY LOREN KOPFF

THE CERRITOS HIGH boys tennis team won the program's third CIF-Southern Section championship in four attempts, this time edging Nordhoff High 10-8 last Friday in the Division 4 finals. The Dons previously won the 2008 and 2009 championships after losing in the 2007 title match.

4, the Dons broke an 8-8 tie with wins from their top doubles team and their No. 3 duo to edge 10th ranked Nordhoff High 10-8.

"Words can't describe the experience right now," said Cerritos head coach Henry Ayesiga. "As a coach, it's my first time advancing this far. The closest I've gone was the quarterfinals last year with the girls. Adding on a championship right now goes beyond everything I could imagine."

"It's a very special moment for the players; it's a special moment for the team," he later said. "They have been really focused this whole season and they've put up a good fight in every run. It hasn't been an easy journey getting here. They really deserved this victory."

Cerritos was up 8-5 before Nordhoff won the next three sets. At this point, the Dons, who finished the season at 16-8, were leading 77-60 in games played. But, after going 5-4 in singles' play, the second place representatives from the 605 League had won three of seven doubles' sets and needed to win one more. That would come from the No. 1 doubles team of senior Angelo Andal and junior Matthew Phan, who defeated Nordhoff's No. 3 pair of Caleb Saucedo and Dylan Francis 6-3.

"We knew we had to win that one or else it went to a games score," said Andal. "We tried our best and at the end, we got the win. There were some iffy calls by the other team, and I think they might have messed up a few points."

The final set of the match came from seniors Arjun Ayyappan and Mathew George, who breezed past Robert Holdsworth and Lunchih Jamyang 6-2. It was the pair's second win of the afternoon, having previously defeated Saucedo/Francis 6-0 in the second set of the match.

"We kind of had a plan to concentrate on their number two and three at the end," said Ayesiga. "Their number one doubles was just a very good team. They have a very powerful server. We knew the last

and get every win and have faith that my teammates will have my back. Today they did and I'm just happy we got the win overall."

"When he goes on the court, he really has fun," said Ayesiga. "As far as this season went, he's one of the few players we didn't have to worry about. I love his confidence and he goes on the court and gets the job done."

Sophomore Hunter Vong, the No. 2 singles player, posted wins over Gaston (6-2) and Gillooly (6-3) while junior Thomas Pham lost his three sets by scores of 6-4, 6-3 and 6-4.

"We did have a strong start and as the match progressed, it started to become a little shaky," said Ayesiga. "Towards the end, the boys really had to fight their way through the championship. I won't say the last run was easy. At some point, it did seem like the odds were not in our favor. But the boys had to fight that last run."

The No. 2 doubles team of junior Chen Zhang and sophomore Brady Sugino posted a 6-3 win over Holdsworth/Jamyang and 6-1 over Saucedo/Francis before falling to the No. 1 duo of Cole Everett and Gavin Johnson 6-1.

The Dons, who dominated the Suburban League until moving to the 605 League at the beginning of the 2018-2019 season, had not been tested that much in the postseason prior to the finals. Cerritos defeated unranked Thatcher High 12-6 in the opening round, followed by wins over unranked San Dimas High (13-5), unranked Rancho Alamitos High (12-6) and fourth-ranked Heritage High (15-3).

"I think we were definitely motivated that we saw Whitney here and that Oxford, I think our bigger rival, got knocked out in the quarterfinals," said Andal. "It motivated us more to win this because they beat us in league."

"It was a lot of pressure and our first round against Thatcher was really tough," said Rafael. "They gave us a scare. But after that, we got into our rhythm, and we took care of business."

St. Irenaeus Parish Choir Celebrated Cinco de Mayo



ENJOYING DINNER: Pictured at the Cinco de Mayo Choir Taco Party at St. Irenaeus Church of May 5, 2022, are members of the Parish Choir. Standing at the back, near the center, is Fr. Binh Nguyen, Pastor of St. Irenaeus Catholic Church in Cypress. At right, leaning over the table area is Choir Director Anthony Kocal. Photo by Anna Watts, I.D. by Edna Ethington.

By Edna Ethington

Rev. Binh Nguyen, Pastor of St. Irenaeus Catholic Church in Cypress, and Anthony Kocal, St. Irenaeus Music Director, welcomed members of the Parish Choir to a Taco Party at the priests' Backyard behind the Rectory on Cinco de Mayo, May 5, 2022. Fr. Binh and Choir Director Anthony Kocal wanted to thank choir members for all the hard work they did learning the music for Sunday liturgies and especially for actively being a part of the traditional liturgies of Holy Week.

Choir members and their guests

were treated to chicken, beef, and pork tacos, rice, beans, quesadillas, water, tea, wine, and cookies for dessert. The delicious tacos were served by Alfonso, from Tamayo Catering. Everyone enjoyed the tasty rice, beans, and quesadillas, onions and hot sauces that were prepared by Tamayo Catering. It was a wonderful Cinco de Mayo Taco Party! Choir members appreciated Fr. Binh and Anthony Kocal's extra effort to provide this special time to enjoy friendship and fellowship with each other as part of Music Ministry at St. Irenaeus Church. Thank you, Fr. Binh and Anthony Kocal!

SCHOOLS from page 1

hiring school meals, an expansion of summer school and before and after school programs.

A partial breakdown of fund distribution: meals.

\$1.5 billion to fund community schools

\$2.1 billion to fight declining enrollment in public schools.

\$1.8 billion addition for school facilities.

\$2.1 billion to increase the statewide Local Control Funding Formula, which distributes funds to students in K-12 schools. That is on top of a \$1.1 billion cost of living adjustment.

\$8 billion in one-time discretionary fund schools can use to address student mental health, professional development, pension costs or other needs.

\$403 million to accelerate expanded day/summer school.

\$500 million to fund residencies and learning programs for school counselors and teachers.

\$612 million for universal school meals.

\$385 million for STEM professional development.

\$63 million for arts and music.

Newsom announced a framework to help Californians attain higher education. Statewide, leaders are aiming for a 70% statewide degree completion goal by focusing on access and alignment; tuition, housing, fees and other costs; closing equity gaps, increasing enrollment, and annual reporting.

"This budget helps more underserved students achieve timely graduation and increases financial aid for low- and middle-

income California students which, when combined with UC's significant existing investments in financial aid, will help more California students receive a UC education," Michael V. Drake, president of the University of California system, wrote in a news release Friday.

Newsom also announced the state spend an additional \$290 million to its youth health initiative.

The money will fund youth mental health services – including school and community-based crisis response, wellness and mindfulness programs, youth-led social media campaigns, community-based youth suicide prevention and outreach and career development and parental support.

ROMERO from page 1

ence. "I hire, train and recruit students from 14 to graduation. They are very inexperienced with so many things; some of them need to be told about personal hygiene, proper work attire, how to do their taxes and how to get their identification. Teaching them real tools for real-life" said Romero.

"It's an endless circle; you can't get a job if you don't have experience, but to gain experience, you must have a job. And that is what I do," she remarked. "We also teach and train them with skills to know how to deal with sexual harassment, reading the deductions on a paycheck All that kind of fun stuff that the kids call dull-dulting!"

Romero stated that the program director found her social media page, liked what Romero stood for and her ideals and convinced her to join the department." She is very inspiring to be around," she added.

Beginning her pageant career as Miss Hawaiian Gardens, she realized that some people see beauty pageants as sexist, "But some people don't see that these pageants offer tremendous scholarships and connections. The scholarships that I have received paid for my entire college tuition. I am graduating in less than a month with zero debt." Romero will be earning her degree in Public Health Administration with a minor in Environmental Health.

"Growing up low income, I had to learn to use the available resources to me," stated Romero, "my parents worked very hard, and my grandmother pretty much raised me. But I really grew through Pageantry. It helped me find my purpose. I don't do it for the crown or the fame, but this is all about self-reflection and how I can be a better person."

Determination has been a significant factor in Romeros' success. "Sometimes, you just have to jump into a situation and learn to swim along the way," she adds.

At a young age, Romero has faced down employee unions and won, impressed city council members, volunteered countless hours at the teen center, and even won a volunteer award for donating over 500 hours.

"I need to be my best self, not only for me but for my younger brother and my family. I want other young girls to see that your zip code does not define you even though you may be born into a low-income family. Your effort defines you." Romero says it is okay to cry when you are let down 'but just for five minutes.' "But when you are done, you have to keep going, plan your next step, and reach that next goal."

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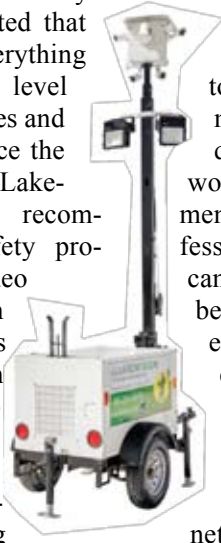
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Lakewood to Purchase Mobile Security Camera Trailers

At their Tuesday evening meeting, the Lakewood City Council approved the purchase of two video camera trailers that can be used to combat street racing and illegal dumping and provide other services.

Street racing and illegal dumping have increased recently across Southern California, including in Lakewood. The Lakewood City Council has indicated that it wants to do everything it can at the local level to combat these crimes and enhance the life in Lakewood. One tool recommended by professionals is mobile video cameras that can be moved to locations such as existing network of law enforcement security cameras that have proven very successful in identifying and locating wanted vehicles and suspects driving into Lakewood.

The two mobile camera trailers will cost \$83,000, with funds coming from the federal American Rescue Plan Act and the city's Neighborhood Safety Enhancement Plan.



Shoppers Going Out More, Hurting E-Commercs Sales

By Shira Ovide
New York Times

U.S. online shopping has hit a wall. This might feel surprising if you see Amazon delivery vans chugging through your neighborhood.

The e-commerce sag could be temporary as people and businesses adjust and then readjust to the pandemic.

Amazon during the first three months of this year posted its slowest sales growth in decades, and it warned of more of the same in the next few months.

This online shopping comedown isn't confined to one company, Etsy and Shopify, whose software powers online businesses for millions of smaller stores, also posted unexpectedly low sales growth or low expectations for the near future.

Facebook's parent company, Meta, said last month that online shopping companies are becoming less eager to buy ads on Facebook when their sales were under pressure.

And Meta said last week that it was slowing its hiring.

All of this cost-cutting and lack of confidence in the future would have seemed wild six months or a year ago, when Meta, Amazon, Google and other tech companies had stupendously bonkers revenue and profits.

The question this is raising is whether we mis-



judged the past two years of technology-driven changes in consumer behavior.

Yes, some of us who picked up the habits of shopping more from home and Zooming everything will continue to do so.

But there's been a return to 2019 behaviors, too. Last week, I shook hands with everyone at a business meeting and wondered what happened to the prediction that the virus would end handshakes.

We still don't know what "normal" looks like in the U.S. or elsewhere, and we probably won't for a year or more as our spending habits adjust to higher prices, ongoing difficulties with manu-

facturing and shipping, rising interest rates, continued coronavirus infections and a desire to frolic in the real world.

The new normal for shopping probably doesn't look like either the comeback for physical stores that we've seen in the past six months or the surge of online shopping from 2020.

It is difficult to predict the collective behavior of millions of Americans. And that is making all of technology shudder.

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Artesia Will Fly Intersex Progress Flag in June for Pride Month



By **Tammy McDuff**

In September 2021, the Artesia City Council adopted a Flag Display Policy which governs the display of certain flags on the city's flag pole. The policy outlines the inventory of flag poles in the city, which flags can be displayed on each pole and designates the flag pole at City Hall as the only location for the display of commemorative flags.

It also outlines the procedure by which the City Council may vote to display a commemorative flag.

The Pride Flag recently received yet another makeover to be more inclusive of intersex people. Intersex columnist and media personality Valentino Vecchietti designed the new rendition of the rainbow flag, which was officially unveiled by the advocacy group Intersex Equality Rights UK in and has spread virally on social media.

At a recent City Council meeting, Artesia Mayor Melissa Ramoso and Councilmember Rene Trevino have requested the Intersex Progress Flag be

flown from June 1- 30 in front of City Hall in observance of Pride Month.

According to the flag policy in order to do that, "the action at an initial meeting is for at least two council members to make a request for an item to be agendaized at the next regular council meeting for the council to vote regarding the display of a commemorative flag."

At their last meeting, the Artesia City Council voted unanimously to fly the flag for the month of June.

Flags have always been an integral part of the LGBTQ community. They are a visible representation of identity that people use in celebration, in protest, or even as a casual adornment. There have been many LGBTQ flags over the years. Some have evolved, like the original Pride flag created in 1978 by Gilbert Baker and flown at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day parade. While others are constantly being conceptualized and created, currently there are twelve flags that represent the LGBTQ community.

El Rancho School Police Raise Over \$3,000 for Autism

By **Tammy McDuff**

The El Rancho School Police would like to thank community partners, parents and students for helping the Department raise \$3,460, which will immediately go to the ERUSD Autism Focus Classes.

In recognition of Autism Awareness month which began April 1, 2022, the El Rancho Unified School Police Department along with the support of CSEA chapter 107, joined the na-



tionwide police patch campaign. The ERUSD School Police Officers wore a special commemorative patch on their uniform recognizing Autism Awareness month.

The goal of the patch campaign is to help raise funds to empower, educate, and advocate for those who are affected by Autism.

The hope through the funding of this project is that it will help to enhance the lives of people living with Autism to become more empowered,

independent and active members of our community.

During April, the ERUSD highlighted these support efforts and encouraged awareness and conversation among our community members.

According to the Autism Society, Autism is a 'complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years

of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a 'spectrum disorder' that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees." There is no known single cause for Autism.

To further raise awareness, these commemorative collectors patches were sold for \$10, with proceeds being donated to El Rancho Unifies School Districts Autism Focus Classrooms.

For more information about this post, please call the ERUSD Office at 562.801.7300.

Downey Mayor's Message

Hello Downey!

While the world has continued to change through the pandemic, our city has continued to grow through its business and residential developments.

Numerous developments have continued to come to our city to grow and prosper.

A new restaurant is coming to 10000 Paramount Blvd. The Chicken Koop will serve oven-roasted chicken with homemade dipping sauces. They anticipate opening this summer.

A new 43,905 square foot commercial building will begin construction at 12021 Woodruff Ave. This project will not only bring a brand-new development to the city but also bring new jobs. The anticipated completion date is summer of next year.

Another commercial development that will break ground will be at 9432 Telegraph Road. The 5,378 square foot building will be a multi-tenant commercial building that will bring new business to the northern part of the city. While housing shortages continue to be a concern nationwide, our city is doing its part to address the issue.

Three housing developments are currently in the works throughout the city. Once complete, the three projects will bring fifteen additional homes to Downey.

Now that we return to normalcy and we can hold events, I have requested for the city to bring back the Business Watch Program.

This program was developed to serve as a tool for businesses who seek information on reducing the chances of becoming

a victim of a crime. Through the Business Watch Program, merchants learn crime prevention techniques and strategies that help mitigate business-related crime.

The program also allows business owners to become familiar with the Downey Police Department resources available.

Quarterly seminars will be offered, and topics will include:

- Active Shooter Training
- False Identification
- Identify theft
- Fraud
- Robbery Prevention
- Credit Card Fraud
- Building Security
- Shoplifting Prevention
- Merchandise Display and Layout

I invite all Downey businesses to the next seminar on Wednesday, May 18th at 9 am at City Hall.

Come and learn how the Business Watch Program focuses on teaching employees how to be observant and aware. Trained employees are a front line and a great resource to deter crime.

Our Neighborhood Watch is active again, holding in-person meetings. The successful program works by creating partnerships with our residents and the Downey Police Department to address crime in our city to maintain the integrity of our neighborhood and our high quality of life. If you are interested in joining the Neighborhood Watch Program, please contact the police department at 562-904-2374.

The American Red Cross has been experiencing donation shortages since the pandemic. A blood drive will be held on Friday, May 27th, at the Barbara J. Riley Community and Senior Center. Donating blood is a vital way to help save lives. A

single donation can save three lives. For more information on how to sign up for an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org. T

This month we celebrate Public Service Recognition Week and National Public Works Week. Our Public Works staff is responsible for maintaining 214 miles of roadways, 276 miles of waterlines, 187 miles of sewer mains, 115 traffic signals, 6,600 street lights, 20,000 trees, 115 acres of parklands, and 237 fleet vehicles. Our various departments has served the 1.2 million visitors to our parks, the 89,727 borrowers for our library, the 40,000 calls received by our Police Department, the 10,000 service calls to our Fire Department, the 77,523 meals distributed to our seniors, and the 22,000 people who visited the counters at City Hall. Our dedicated city employees are truly extraordinary.

This month we also welcomed our new Interim City Attorney, Lauren Langer, who will be replacing our City Attorney, Yvette M. Abich Garcia, who has served

our city for the past 11 years. We will all miss Mrs. Garica's professionalism, legal expertise, and dedication to the City of Downey and wish her much success in her future endeavors. We also look forward to working with Ms. Langer, who brings a wealth of legal knowledge and experience to our city. I know she will do great in our city, and I look forward to working with her.

Lastly, our city is home to many service organizations and clubs. I encourage you to join a service club, volunteer at our city library, or work with our seniors at the Senior Center. Volunteering is fulling way to give back to your community and a way to meet your neighbors. If you ever have any questions about these programs or questions for me, please reach out to me at bpacheco@downeyca.or or 562-904-7274. Thank you, Downey, for the opportunity to serve you as Mayor. Please stay safe and be kind to one another.

Blanca Pacheco Mayor

JOHNSON from page 1

budget.

With that, Johnson put Yokoyama, who has always fought to keep the Sheriff's station, solidly in control of the four member council when considering the station budget.

Naresh Solanki and Bruce Barrows have always wanted to cut the station, their motives are clear; Mayor Vo is a Torrance police detective, now he is the swing vote, could he concoct a reason to cut the station?

Elections have consequences.

TEACHER from page 16

District is limited in providing specific information on the case.

However, the District has a zero-tolerance policy and is committed to the safety of our students and staff.

The District will work closely with law enforcement during their investigation.

The District has no further comment at this time but will provide further statements if and when appropriate.