



# The Downey Patriot



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Thursday, Oct. 3, 2013

Vol. 12 No. 25

8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240

## BREAST CANCER FACTS

•Breast cancer is a random and deadly disease

•The most significant risk factors for breast cancer are being female and getting older

•With respect to age, race, religion and socioeconomic status, breast cancer knows no boundaries

•Breast cancer typically strikes women during their most productive years both professionally and personally

•Breast cancer affects everyone, not just the person diagnosed. Cosurvivors (family, friends and coworkers) feel the effects, too

•Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer and is the leading cause of cancer death among women worldwide

•Every 23 seconds, someone in the world is diagnosed with breast cancer

•Every 69 seconds, someone dies from breast cancer

•Approximately 1.4 million women are diagnosed each year (At this rate, 34.5 million women will be diagnosed in the next 25 years)

•Approximately 456,000 women die from the disease each year (At this rate, 11.4 million women will die from breast cancer during the next 25 years)

•In the past 25 years, incidence rates have risen approximately 30 percent in westernized countries. This increase may be due to changes in reproductive patterns and increased screening

•Mortality rates have been stable or decreasing in some countries. This reduction in developed countries is attributed to early detection through mammography and improved treatment

•One in eight women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime

•Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women in the U.S. ages 40-59

•Breast cancer is second only to lung cancer in cancer deaths among women in the U.S.

•The five-year survival rate for breast cancer, when caught early before it spreads beyond the breast, is now 98 percent in the U.S. (compared to 74 percent in 1982)

•A woman is diagnosed with breast cancer every three minutes, and a woman dies of breast cancer every 13 minutes in the U.S.

•There are about 2.5 million breast cancer survivors alive in the U.S. today, the largest group of cancer survivors in the country

•Approximately 5 to 10 percent of breast cancers in the U.S. are due to inherited mutations in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 breast cancer genes (less than 1 percent of the general population)

•Approximately 95 percent of all breast cancers in the U.S. occur in women 40 years of age or older

•Recent studies suggest that many women are not following recommended guidelines for mammography screening by having their first screening later than recommended, not having one at recommended intervals or not receiving follow-up of positive screening results. This may lead to more advanced tumor size and stage at diagnosis.

Statistics provided by the Susan G. Komen for the Cure.



PHOTO BY GABRIEL ENAMORADO

Industrial designer Cristian Castro in his Downey studio with one of his robot sculptures (Black Widow) that will be showcased in his exhibition, "Bones of Steel." This exhibition will open during Stay Gallery's one-year anniversary celebration Oct. 10-11.

## BONES OF STEEL

• Cristian Castro will publicly display his entire collection of industrial robots for the first time.

By Eric Pierce  
Editor

**DOWNEY** – Cristian Castro was taking a stroll in Downtown Downey last December when Stay Gallery caught his eye.

Curious, Castro stepped inside and discovered the budding arts and cultural center that was barely two months old at the time. He was fascinated.

Little did Castro know that 10 months later, his own one-of-a-kind robotic creations would headline Stay Gallery's one-year anniversary, taking place next week.

Castro, 42, is a self-taught industrial designer at Ebus, a Downey-based firm that takes old transit buses and retrofits them into all-electric, hybrid and fuel cell models. As a child growing up in Argentina, Castro dissected and dismantled all toys and machines he could get his hands on to see how they worked.

Now an adult, Castro's playground is his workshop, where he assembles his prized

robots, pieced together with junkyard parts and trinkets before they are sandblasted and painted to a high gloss.

Castro is constantly combing through yard sales, swap meets, airplane graveyards and junk yards to find pieces for his sculptures. There is no blueprint for his work and Castro allows his imagination to run wild during construction of a robot.

"Only about 30 percent of the concept is in my head before I start," said Castro, who relocated to the U.S. from Argentina in 1999. "I just put the pieces on the floor and start to create."

The robots – or industrial sculptures, as he calls them – can be difficult to describe in words and photographs don't do them justice. Imagine the Disney animated character "WALL-E," but with missiles. Or Transformers, with sexy curves.

"I got the idea from watching cartoons," admitted Castro. "I've liked robots since I was a kid."

Castro currently has 14 robots in his collection, each vaguely similar in appearance but strikingly different in form and function. They all move and have workable parts. One robot, named "Black Widow," stands about three feet tall; its legs are recycled taillights taken off a 1969 Volkswagen Bug and its arms are

bundles of springs that could have been stripped off old recliners.

Another sculpture, "The Crab," is 11 feet wide and weighs 400 pounds. As its name implies, it resembles a giant red crab, with six legs and two outstretched claws. Its body is comprised of a Volkswagen car hood.

Castro has only publicly displayed his robots once before, at an auto show in Irvine. But next week's exhibit, titled "Bones of Steel," will be the first time Castro's entire collection has been available for public viewing.

"Bones of Steel" opens Friday, Oct. 11, at Stay Gallery from 8 p.m. to midnight. The event is open to the public with a suggested donation at the door.

Meanwhile, Stay Gallery will celebrate its one-year anniversary the day before, Oct. 10, with a 7:30 p.m. reception to thank its supporters.

"We are hosting our one-year anniversary event to thank the city of Downey, our sponsors, volunteers, staff, artists and everyone that has supported us along the way," said Valentin Flores, executive director of Stay Gallery. "It's thanks to our community that Stay Gallery has had a successful first year of operation."

After having to send her granddaughter with autism to a school in Orange County for education, Valenzuela says she hopes to reform services in Downey to better meet the needs of children with special needs.

With both children and grandchildren who attended DUSD schools, Valenzuela also hopes to phase in common core standards, lower class sizes, and

provide computer tablets for students in order to better prepare them for state exams and future careers.

"I didn't know how important the SAT tests were when I was in school. I was a latchkey kid that would've been out on the streets if it weren't for the parks and recreation programs," she said. "They make a difference and open up doors. We have \$8,000 for statues -- why can't we put that money into our children?"

Valenzuela, who attended Cerritos College and Cal State L.A., is perhaps most passionate about reopening Pace Elementary School.

"We should be opening up schools, not closing them down and transporting kids to other places," she said. "Why? If there's a school right there in their neighborhood?"

Before working for the LA County Office of Education, Valenzuela worked as a teacher's aide at the Los Padinos Juvenile Hall and served as a bilingual counselor on the streets of South LA and Watts where she helped establish neighborhood watch groups.

"I wanted to do something to keep kids out of jail," Valenzuela said. "I have a lot of friends that passed away from drugs and violence -- I want to do something for my grandkids and other kids to keep them off the streets."

She continued: "Instead of talking -- let's do something about it. They say there are no gangs in Downey, but they're all around."

Valenzuela, who has been married for 43 years and attends St. Dominic Savio Church, hopes DUSD residents give her a chance to speak for the community of Bellflower.

"I'm here for the children. I'm open for ideas and I want to put them all together," she said. "Let's start a new environment together."

The DUSD school board election, which takes place on Nov. 5, is the first since board trustees chose last August to forego at-large elections in favor of a seven-district, by-area voting system.

## DUSD needs change, claims school board challenger

• Bertha Valenzuela is challenging incumbents on Downey school board.

By Christian Brown  
Staff Writer

**DOWNEY** – Bertha Valenzuela admits her campaign mantra might not be original -- but the 60-year-old retired bilingual educator says its sincere nonetheless.

"I just want to make a difference," she said. "I don't want to argue or fight -- I don't want to say I'm better. It's just time for change and new ideas...and I have new ideas."

Despite her openness to work with her opponents in the future, Valenzuela must compete with them this November in a four-way race for an open seat on the Downey Unified School District board of education.

According to the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office, 20-year incumbent Barbara Samperi, 20-year incumbent Betty Monroy, Bellflower bank teller Leslie Valencia, and Valenzuela, who filed in early August.

Samperi, who has been on the board since 1993, represents Area 7, which extends from Imperial Highway beyond the I-105 Freeway over to the intersection of Woodruff and Rosecrans avenues.

Valenzuela, who retired as a bilingual educator with the LA County Office of Education sixteen years ago, believes it's time for a fresh perspective on the board.

"I want to make a difference for school and teachers," Valenzuela said.

A longtime resident of Bellflower, Valenzuela was an early supporter of by-area school board elections and hopes to champion improved special education services if elected.

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## Women's Conference returns for fourth year

• Oct. 18 conference features free health presentations, yoga, Zumba, meditation and more.

By Greg Waskul  
Contributor

**DOWNEY** – One of the favorite women's events of the year in Downey is almost here.

The Rancho Research Institute is presenting the Fourth Annual Women's Health Conference at Rio Hondo Event Center on Friday, Oct. 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. The Event Center is located at 10627 Old River School Road in

Downey.

"We have been working on this all year, and any woman who attended last year can tell you it was not only informative, it was a lot of fun," said Women's Health Conference Chair Dr. Yaga Szlachcic. Dr. Szlachcic, the Chair of Rancho's Department of Medicine and President of the Rancho Research Institute, has put together a free day of presentations from well-respected physicians, opportunities for the audience to try yoga, Zumba and meditation and even a free lunch.

"This conference will focus on all aspects of healthy aging, including mind, body and spirit,"

Dr. Szlachcic said. "Women who've attended each year have told me what a difference it has made in their lives, and so we put together our best Women's Health Conference yet for 2013."

"I wouldn't miss this event for the world," said Downey civic leader Beverly Mathis. "I learned so much about how to live a healthier lifestyle last year, and the doctors made it so enjoyable the day just flew by. I also loved being able to do the Zumba, which was my favorite. It's amazing how

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL ZIEGLER  
Dr. Yaga Szlachcic speaks at last year's Women's Conference.

Letters to the Editor:

Downey radio

Dear Editor:  
 Congratulations to Mark Curran and radio station KRCT, RocketOldies106.com, that is based in Downey. ("Downey Gets Its Own Radio Station," 9/26/13)

We have had another program originating in Downey for some weeks now. It is on emixla.com at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday nights and is titled "Real Talk with Fr. John," who is the pastor of St. Raymond's Catholic Church.

Check it out, also.  
**Frank Myers**  
**Downey**

Dear Editor:  
 It was interesting to read that Downey was getting its own radio station and that music would be featured. That is, until the line where it said it would be "oldies but goodies" from the 50's and 60's. For some of us who were part of or bordered on Tom Brokaw's greatest generation, the 50's and 60's marked the end of great music.

Les Paul was a great guitarist, but did he realize what he was starting when he plugged that damn thing into a wall socket and connected an amplifier? Today's bands have more electricians than musicians. TV didn't help. Appreciating music used to be strictly an auditory experience. Now it's visual. Great musical arrangers like Glenn Miller, Nelson Riddle or Don Costa couldn't find work today. They're replaced by a staff of choreographers. It used to be that the only reason for watching a band perform would be to study Tommy Dorsey on trombone to see if you could tell when he took a breath.

Digital music? That used to mean what you heard when fingers flew across the keys of a clarinet or saxophone. By the way, have you even seen a clarinet or saxophone in a band, except perhaps at the Hollywood Bowl? And vocalists? Mention the name Dinah Shore today and kids think you're talking about a giant reptile. But there was also Jo Stafford, Helen O'Connell, Lena Horne and many others. Peggy Lee never had to take her clothes off to sell a song. Of course it didn't hurt that she looked so good in them that she inspired the imaginations of a few million young men. Female vocalists on TV today seem to be trying to give new meaning to the term "boob tube."

And male vocalists. Guys who sang songs so that you could not only understand the words but allow your kids to repeat them. Perry Como, Andy Williams, the Eberle brothers, Buddy Clark, Steve Lawrence and a host of other great singers who had the misfortune of being contemporary with Frank Sinatra. The ageless Tony Bennett and Barry Manilow are simply reminders.

In the Big Band era, you got your kicks from the music, not from the chemicals being passed around the audience. That there's even an interest in the chemicals is a sign that the band isn't providing fulfillment.

Tom Brokaw labeled the generation that matured in the late 30's and early 40's "The Greatest Generation." At least they got rewarded by the greatest generation of popular music.

**David Mathews**  
**Downey**

Founding fathers

Dear Editor:  
 Thirty-four percent seems to fall a little short of the "founded on" principle, no? ("American History," Letters to the Editor, 9/26/13) Seems they had a 64 percent silent majority back then also.

I'm guessing about 34 percent of our presidents had slaves and made moonshine. At least 50 of the 55 founders were running away from the church when they landed here.

If you want to go looking, you can find all kinds of stuff and support all kinds of things. Our founding fathers were farmers, slaveholders, moonshiners...half the United States was. By our standards today, our great founding fathers would all be in prison. I think at least 34 percent of them today should be for one reason or another.

Nice try,  
**Gary Baker**  
**Downey**

Firefighting C-17s

Dear Editor:  
 It's not too late to stop the Boeing C-17 plane from continuing to be built in Long Beach. ("Knabe Statement on Closure of Boeing C-17 Facility in Long Beach," 9/26/13)

I suggest we convert them internally to huge water retardant-dropping tankers to fight wildfires in our nation by creating a super U.S. Air Force fire-fighting armada to fight, control and extinguish wildfires, wherever they may occur in America. These planes can carry a huge load of fire retardant fluid to stop wildfires. Not one or two, I think we need about 50-100 C-17 tankers to stop wildfires from advancing into our residential and forest areas.

This could be a good peacetime use of our Air Force personnel by using reserve and retired pilots in conjunction with freighters on the ground. It could be called our U.S. Air Force Firefighters.

Think about it. A massive armada of retardant-loaded C-17s covering a huge area in one drop, then going back for a refill with more retardant, until the wildfire is completely stopped or controlled, not going on into days, weeks and months, as has happened recently.

We fight everything else in this world, so it is about time and way overdue to use our peacetime pilots to do good for America in a new way. Funding can be accomplished by cutting foreign aid money we send to yo-yo countries that hate and want to destroy U.S. infidels.

We waste more money taking care of the rest of the world that it's high time to take care of number one, the United States of America.

**Joe Cvetko**  
**Bellflower**

**The Downey Patriot**

STAFF

Jennifer DeKay	Publisher/Adv. Director
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Henry Veneration	Staff Writer
Christian Brown	Staff Writer
Dorothy Michael	Display Advertising
MaryAnn Sourial	Display Advertising
Linda Larson	Classified Advertising
Cristina Gonzales	Legal Advertising
Jonathan Fox	Production

TEL (562) 944-3468 | FAX (562) 904-3124 | Hours Monday-Friday 9a.m. - 3p.m.  
 8301 E. Florence Ave., Suite 100, Downey, CA 90240 | www.thedowneypatriot.com  
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What Congress needs to do about NSA

By Lee Hamilton

Washington is beginning to debate the proper extent of government eavesdropping powers in the wake of Edward Snowden's revelations about the NSA. It's hardly as robust a discussion as it should be, but it's a desperately needed start.

The colossal effort to monitor Americans' communications has been going on for at least seven years, under two presidents. It constitutes an expansion of government power without precedent in the modern era. Yet while some members of Congress were informed about it — and all had the opportunity to learn — none saw an urgent need for public discussion. This is astounding. It took the actions of a leaker to spur any real airing of the matter on Capitol Hill.

Even now, it seems unlikely that Congress will make significant policy changes. That's because all the nation's key actors and institutions appear to approve of the surveillance programs. By its silence, Congress clearly supported them. Presidents Bush and Obama backed them. The intelligence community, a powerful voice on national security issues, has resolutely defended them. The courts that are supposed to keep them in line with the Constitution have been deferential to national security authorities, raising a few questions from time to time, but in the end approving all but a handful of tens of thousands of data-gathering requests.

And the American people, by their lack of widespread outrage, have signaled that in this one case, at least, they believe the government can be trusted to keep us safe.

In short, Congress — the forum where issues of such national importance should be hashed out — missed its chance to lead a reasoned national debate over how extensive we want surveillance over Americans' communications to be. It's unlikely that genie can ever again be forced back into its bottle.

Yet even the director of national intelligence, James Clapper — who once denied point-blank to Congress that the government collects data on millions of Americans — now sees the need for some sort of change. "We can do with more oversight and give people more confidence in what we do," he said in a mid-September speech.

Yes, indeed. Here's the problem: once given power, the government

rarely yields it. So you have to think not only about its present use, but how it will be used a decade or even more from now. Even if you concede that the current administration and its intelligence leadership have been responsible stewards of the powers they've been given — and I don't — that is no guarantee that the people who follow them, or the people who come after that, will be equally trustworthy.

This means that Congress has some challenging work ahead. It needs to restore the proper balance between effective intelligence-gathering and intrusion into Americans' privacy. It needs to demand more thoroughgoing accountability from the intelligence community. It needs to exercise greater oversight and insist on more transparency, more information, and more constraint on surveillance programs — defining what is truly relevant to an investigation, creating more stringent definitions of which communications are fair game, and finding ways to assure Americans that protecting their privacy and civil liberties need not mean the wholesale vacuuming-up of every domestic phone and email record in existence.

There is no place for the timidity Congress has shown so far on these issues.

Our system depends on a vigorous Congress. The administration argues that it can provide rigorous intelligence-gathering oversight, but it has yet to prove it can do so — and in our system of checks and balances, it's not enough to have one branch of government overseeing itself. Congress, the courts, and the presidentially appointed Privacy and Civil Liberties Board all have to step up to their responsibilities.

Americans should demand action to strike a better balance between privacy and security. In the past, the congressional overseers of the intelligence community have been captivated, if not captured, by the people they're supposed to be supervising. Same with the courts. And the administration has hardly been forthcoming. That means it's up to the American people to insist that our leaders do their jobs. It's no less true today than it was at our founding: the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

Lee Hamilton is Director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Hate crimes in L.A. County continue to drop

The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations (LACCHR) today released its annual account of hate crimes reported throughout Los Angeles County. In 2012 hate crimes declined 6% from 489 in 2011 to 462 this year. The number of hate crimes in the County has continued a downward trend since 2007.

Similar to past years, four groups constituted 86% of all hate crime victims in 2012: African Americans, lesbians and gay men, Jews, and Latinos. Hate crimes targeting each of these four groups changed little from the previous year, but crimes against most other ethnic and religious groups declined.

Despite the good news, there was an increase in the overall rate of violence occurring in hate crimes. The rate of violence for sexual orientation crimes grew from 71% to 79% and the violence rate of racial crimes grew from 54% to 61%. There were seven persons who were victims of attempted murder.

"We are encouraged that for several years in a row the number of hate crimes in L.A. County has been about half of those reported in the late 90s and early 2000s," said Robin Toma, LACCHR Executive Director. "However, there are several persistent areas of concern that require heightened attention, namely the number of anti-black crimes committed by Latino gang members, and the continued high rate of violence experienced by the gay, lesbian, and transgender communities." The report cites LACCHR's efforts to prevent and reduce hate crime, such as deploying staff to areas of the County to build collaborative projects to reduce racially-motivated gang violence. The Commission

has also trained youth at several middle and senior high schools to stand-up to homophobic bullying through its No Haters Here! network.

"While we are heartened by the relatively low numbers, we need to continue to educate members of the community to report if they are victims of hate crime," Commission President Kathay Feng remarked. "Far too often victims suffer in silence and are too frightened or ashamed to contact law enforcement or others for help."

"I was lucky that people driving by decided to help me when I was being beaten because of who I am, a transgender woman," said Ms. Sabel Samone, who was brutally attacked in Los Angeles in April 2013. "I'm not just a statistic. Unfortunately, I know of too many other hate crimes against transgender people like me that are never reported to the police."

"I prosecuted hate crimes earlier in my career, and even though the numbers are declining, 462 hate crimes are 462 too many for our county," said District Attorney Lacey. "I will continue to make hate crime prosecution a priority for our county."

Hate crimes occurred throughout the variety of regions of Los Angeles County, but the largest number took place in the Metro region (stretching from West Hollywood to Boyle Heights). When accounting for population, the Metro region tied with the Antelope Valley for the highest rate of hate crimes.

To view the complete report including hate crime maps, graphs and tables, visit [www.lahumanrelations.org](http://www.lahumanrelations.org).

Guantánamo Bay prisoners a danger to U.S.

When was the last time you read, saw or heard much from the media about the Guantánamo Bay prison? Eric Wentz, a 26-year veteran of the U.S. Navy who worked as an interrogator and linguist at the prison, says it's no mistake if you haven't.

"I remember when there were Guantánamo stories on a near-daily basis — that was when President Bush was in office. But there have been comparatively few Gitmo stories during President Obama's tenure," says Wentz, a former intelligence officer and author of a new Readers Choice Award-winning novel based on his experiences, "Killing Sharks: De Profundis," ([www.ericwentz.com](http://www.ericwentz.com)).

"The United States is still holding more than 160 prisoners at our prison in Cuba and, while critics here and abroad have protested their indefinite detention without charges or trials, they represent a real risk to our national security," Wentz says.

"Americans should be well-informed when these debates arise, and they simply are not."

Wentz reviews five things the American public should know about Guantánamo.

• **Letting go of detainees is not a good option.** Al-Qaeda's current No. 1 and No. 2 leaders in Yemen were once prisoners at Guantánamo, and the terrorist group's No. 1 in Libya also came from the prison. In Southern Russia, a number of former detainees went on a rampage, killing more than 100 innocents during a single afternoon of attacks. In fact, these outcomes after detainees are released have become so common, Wikipedia has a page devoted to it: "Lists of former Guantánamo Bay detainees alleged to have returned to terrorism."

• **The potential for diplomatic chaos.** It's not hard to ruffle the feathers of other world powers, which often compromises U.S. relations globally, as witnessed in the aftermath of Edward Snowden's leaks of NSA spying and the Syrian crisis. Imagine the blowback onto the United States if one of its military bases frees a detainee that later assassinates another nation's leader or government official.

• **Gitmo: the misinformation campaign.** During Wentz's time at the prison, there was absolutely no indication that torture of any kind ever occurred. "To my knowledge, only four terrorists were ever waterboarded — and that was done by the CIA, and not at Guantánamo," he says. Yet reporting insinuates that torture is a common occurrence there. "I once read a headline: 'Guantánamo Detainee, Who Was Waterboarded, Tells Int'l Community ...' It doesn't say where the waterboarding occurred,



but the insinuation is there." Such misinformation campaigns are among the tactics outlined in the Manchester Document, also known as the al-Qaeda Handbook.

• **The International Red Cross says Gitmo is well run.** The prison is well-run and should be a model for the treatment of prisoners worldwide — this is according to an assessment from the International Red Cross. This good news regarding the prison is likely something you've never read. Americans have been fed a steady stream of only bad news about the prison, but there are good reasons for its existence.

• **Consider the source — the lawyers of detainees and their plea to the public.** The only news coming out from Gitmo recently has involved the detainees' hunger strike, which has had some success in its original purpose: to build sympathy. One of the lawyers for the detainees has also represented, in past decades, members of the Irish Republican Army, who used the same tactic while imprisoned by the British. The hunger strike came shortly after the lawyer's visit, Wentz says, and it's not coincidence. Additionally, while the British didn't use feeding tubes, the U.S. military has, which is something detainees have come to count on, he says.