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FIRST DAY TRAFFIC



—Gazette photo by Emily Thornton

Students with backpacks head for Lowell Elementary School on Wednesday while parents who had already dropped the students off cross Broadway the other way.

Guidance Center Marks 70 Years

By HARRY SALTZGAVER
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Something called the Long Beach Mental Hygiene Clinic opened its doors 70 years ago — in the basement of the since demolished Seaside Hospital.

Hidden away, much like the way society hid the problem the clinic was designed to help, the

clinic started treating children with mental health issues. Using therapies including individual, group, family and play sessions, the professionals persevered through several moves.

Today, The Guidance Center has its own large facility at 1301 Pine Ave. The bright green building offers a welcoming place for

children and families seeking help, according to CEO Patricia Costales.

"This building has had a very positive impact," Costales said of the facility, which the center occupied four years ago. "It's given us much greater visibility and we're in a high need neighbor-

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Big Fat Greek Festival Set To Dance Weekend Away

By EMILY THORNTON
STAFF WRITER

It's a big Greek festival.

"It's growing by the year," organizer Bobbie Soupos said. "It's one of the nicest festivals in Southern California."

She said she expects upwards of 10,000 people to attend the three-day festivities, running from noon to 9 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 3, through Monday, Sept. 5.

"Put on your dancing shoes and dance on down," Soupos said. "And bring your appetite."

The 68th Annual Long Beach Greek Festival and Cultural Event is at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church, 5761 E. Colorado St.

Speaking of church, Soupos said members begin preparing for the fest in June, baking and freezing Greek specialties, such as baklava, koulourakia (traditional cookies), kourabeithes (butter cookies dusted in powdered sugar), galatobouriko (Greek custard wrapped in filo pastry, sweetened with light honey syrup), dipsles (rolled pastry dough, crisped and drenched in honey, sprinkled with cinnamon and walnuts), and loukoumathes (pastry puffs similar to doughnut holes, with honey, cinnamon and walnuts).

"We have the finest bakers in the church," Soupos said.

Among the other popular dishes is the deep-fried calamari, she said, which is a

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FULL CASTLE IN SAND



—Gazette photo by Kevin Oules

The ASICS World Series of Beach Volleyball packed a temporary stadium last weekend at Alamitos Beach. Story, another picture on Page 12B.

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Happy Labor Day

Schools, government offices, banks and most businesses, including Gazette Newspapers, are closed Monday for the Labor Day holiday. There is no mail delivery, but trash will be picked up on schedule in Long Beach.

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Guidance Center

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hood. We have much more presence in the community.”

While the impact might not have been as visible before moving into the new home, The Guidance Center has had a strong presence in Long Beach and the surrounding communities for decades. It is contracted by the Los Angeles County Department of Health to be the primary youth mental health services agency in the area, and operates satellite clinics in San Pedro and Compton.

Collaborations with school districts including Long Beach Unified, Paramount and Lynwood connect The Guidance Center to students and referrals. The agency has about 150 professionals and support staff, serving nearly 3,000 students in the last year alone.

Work in the schools is particularly important, Costales said, because that’s where youngsters spend much of their time, and it’s where most referrals are generated. It can be a little easier reaching out there, as well, without as much stigma of dealing with “mental issues.”

“The school setting is less intimidating than the clinics,” Costales said. “Even welcoming clinics like ours downtown.”

While there are many success stories, it seems that the demand for The Guidance Center’s services only increases, Costales said. It can be a difficult reality for those providing counseling.

“The work we do is effective, and we really do change lives,” Costales said. “We celebrate those victories... It can be frustrating, though. It can feel like we’re putting our fingers in holes of a leaky dam. We often ask, how can we stem this flow?”

An increasingly violent society has added to the problem, Costales said, but people are fighting back. Long Beach officials, particularly through programs like Safe Long Beach, are working closely with The Guidance Center and other professionals to look for solutions.

One of the approaches from the city side is to work on prevention. While she would like to also focus on preventative care, Costales said, her contract with the county requires a more reactive service — counseling after a problem has been detected.

“We’re financed 96% by gov-

ernment contracts,” Costales said. “The other 4% is grants and fundraising. We’d really like to shift that ratio, because that would allow us to be more flexible.”

The most flexible revenue source, Costales said, is fundraising and private donations. That’s where the 70th anniversary Sunset Sip comes in.

“Sunset Sip is very important to us,” Costales said. “It’s our biggest fund-raising event, and it’s also important to allow us to make new friends. We want people to know we’re just regular folks.”

This year’s event, hosted by Los Angeles Kings alum and television color analyst Jim Fox, is from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10, at the Museum of Latin American Art. There will be a wine tasting contest as well as hors d’oeuvres and live and silent auctions.

Individual tickets are \$100 each, and couples can attend for \$175. There also are sponsorships available at several levels. Go to bit.ly/SunsetSip2016 for tickets.

For more information about The Guidance Center and its services, go to www.tgclb.org.



—Gazette photo by Harry Saltzgaver

OLYMPIC TALK. Mayor Robert Garcia talks with Olympic silver medalist Lucy Davis Monday before the Longines Masters press conference.

Longines

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“There’s the Queen Mary, here’s the lighthouse and a beautiful day. We’ll be bringing the show jumping here with the best in the world in riders and horses.”

Davis’s presence, along with 2008 Olympic gold medalist Will Simpson and 2012 Olympian Rich Fellers (a 2015 Longines FEI World Cup finalist), was indicative of the quality of competitors. Davis, a California native, said she is thrilled to be riding here, especially since her family, college friends and those she grew up training with will be able to see her compete in person.

“I’m based in Europe,” Davis said. “But the Masters being here has been fabulous, particularly for the West Coast equestrian community. I’ll be able to spend the fall here, basically because of the Masters.”

Mayor Robert Garcia welcomed the Longines Masters crew, noting that Olympians had been on Long Beach’s beach the past weekend at the ASICS World Series of Beach Volleyball. He said he followed show jumping at the Olympics because the Masters was coming to Long Beach.

“This is a great time for Long Beach,” Garcia said. “We’re thrilled to be hosting this inter-

national event. This is a growing sport, and we all were following it during the Olympics. Just 30 days from now, it will be here.”

The Longines Masters started in 2009 with an event in Paris, then added Hong Kong in 2013. It added Los Angeles in 2014.

In addition to the three Olympians here Monday, riders expected in Long Beach include Team France gold medalist Kevin Staut, Team Canada bronze medalist Eric Lamaze and Team Germany bronze medalists Christian Ahlmann, Daniel Deusser, and Meredith Michaels-Beerbaum. French superstar, World Number 2 and 2016 gold medalist Simon Delestre will also compete, appearing at the American competition for the first time after multiple appearances in Paris and Hong Kong.

Organizers with Longines Masters are promising four days of varied experiences going beyond the actual show jumping to gourmet cuisine, live entertainment and a chance to get close to horses and riders. Spectators will have a wide range of choices, from a VIP package to a Friday of activities for children.

Tickets are available now at the event website, www.longinesmasters.com. More information and a schedule is there, as well.

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Greek Festival

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traditional Greek item.

“And, of course, we have our chicken roasting on an open barbecue,” Soupos said. “It’s our signature dish.”

People can learn how to make edibles with cooking demonstrations.

To wash it all down, Greek wine and beer, ouzo and coffee will be on hand.

But, there’s more than food and drink.

The Olympians will perform throughout the weekend again, with modern and traditional Greek instrumentation.

“They’re back by popular de-

“The church is a big attraction. It’s very interesting.”

—Bobbie Soupos

mand,” Soupos said.

And there will be dancing lessons, she said, so people can learn traditional moves.

Complimentary tours of the church will provide a peek into Greek history and byzantine art and mosaic iconography being added, Soupos said.

“The church is a big attraction,” Soupos said. “It’s very interesting.”

With all the activities, planning

is quite a bit of work, Soupos said, but worth it. Festival proceeds go to the church, she said.

“It’s a fun time of year,” she said. “People look forward to it... I do it for the love of the church.”

Parking has changed this year, Soupos said. It will be free and at the Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare System, 5901 E. Seventh St. Free shuttle service to and from the festival will run from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. throughout the weekend, she said.

Admission is a \$3 donation and children younger than age 12 are admitted free.

For more information, visit www.lbgreekfest.org.

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