STRAIGHT TALK MAGAZINE

Community & Television Show News

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Volume 9 Number 6

November/December 2013

The Nutcracker

The Long Beach Ballet will delight audiences this December with multiple performances of *The Nutcracker* at the Long Beach Terrace Theatre on **Saturday and Sunday**,

December 14 &15 and December 21 & 22. This 31st Anniversary production will burst with special guest performances and additional surprise treats for the entire family.

The Long Beach Ballet's Artistic Director **David Wilcox** pulled out all the stops for this 31st Anniversary production of the classical tale. The production boasts a full symphony orchestra, a flying sleigh, a real live horse, on-stage pyrotechnics, and a cast of over 200. The enchanting scenery was created by former



The Breathtaking Flying Sleigh

Disney designers **Elliot Hessayon** and **Scott Schaffer**, the detailed costumes designed by Australian artist **Adrian Clark**, and special effects by renowned magician **Franz Harary**.

Returning to perform this year is **Melissa Sandvig**, finalist in season five of *So You Think You Can Dance*. Guest performers also include **Seth Orza** and his wife **Sarah Orza**, principle dancers from the Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle

This year, the enchanting production once again incorporates the **South Coast Children's Chorale**, under the direction of **Emily Dyer**.

(Continued on page 3)

Congressman on Straight Talk



Alan Lowenthal Congressman, 47th C.D.

U.S. Congressman **Alan Lowenthal** will be our guest to provide an update on the latest session of Congress and the challenges it faces, including the growing federal deficit and raising the debt limit.

He will also discuss the bill he has introduced, "Let the People Draw the Lines Act of 2013," which would require each state to establish an independent redistricting commission which would develop a redistricting plan for the state in accordance with specified criteria. This would remove the redistricting power from the political parties and place it in the hands of citizens, thereby eliminating gerrymandered districts and resulting in more competitive elections.

While a State Assembly member, and as a founding member of the Assembly's Bipartisan Caucus, he paved the way for creation of California's first ever independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, which took the power of redistricting out of the hands of politicians and gave it back to the people.

Congressman Lowenthal will be our guest on the Straight Talk Show airing the weeks of December 21 & December 28.

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ACURA (1)



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On Gratitude

In this season of Thanksgiving, it is appropriate to focus on gratitude and the many things for which we have to be thankful.

The Thanksgiving holiday is my personal favorite, as we gather with family and friends and rejoice at the sense of togetherness and count our many blessings. But I have found that the attitude of gratitude is so powerful that it really should be embraced throughout the year. I believe that those who have a deep and abiding sense of gratitude lead much happier lives than those who don't.

Happiness has little to do with money, fame or power. A person of modest means can be very content if he or she is grateful for their blessings, and is not envious of those who have more. And many of us know, or know of people of considerable wealth or fame who are not happy and at peace with themselves. In fact, some are quite miserable.

I would suggest that the difference is really one of attitude. If you are grateful for whatever you have, however much or little, you are likely to be happy. And if you don't have the attitude of gratitude, then no amount of money, fame or power will create contentment.

One of my favorite aphorisms goes as follows: "Before you bemoan the things you don't have that you want, think of all the things that you don't want that you don't have."

Let's consider some of the things for which we can all be grateful:

- We live in **America**, a unique country which, for all of its imperfections, is still "the greatest hope for mankind."
- We live in California, a beautiful state which, despite its traffic jams and political challenges, has great climate and topography, a magnificent ocean, top universities and is a center of creativity.
- We live in **Long Beach**, a special city with a big heart, that has a community that really cares about one another, is host to a great university, and has first rate medical facilities. Long Beach has been aptly called "the biggest small town in America."

On a more personal note, Straight Talk is now celebrating its 22nd year on air and we recently taped our 500th show. I am most grateful for the continued support of our sponsors, guests and most importantly you, our viewers.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Art Levine, Publisher

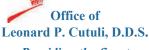
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Thought of the Month

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— Sir Winston Churchill



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Nutcracker (continued from page 1)

Southern California residents will see and hear The Nutcracker exactly as Tchaikovsky wrote it, with angelic young voices blending harmoniously with full symphony

orchestra. The Long Beach Ballet Orchestra also is one of only two ballet companies in the country to use two harps for their production of The Nutcracker to ensure the performance sounds exactly as Tchaikovsky intended it to.



King and Queen of the Snowflakes

"The Long Beach Ballet's production of The Nutcracker is one of the best in Southern

California and we are honored to host this annual event at the Terrace Theater," said Dan **Spellens**, Director of Theaters & Entertainment for the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center. "It is such a wonderful way for the entire family to enjoy and celebrate the Holiday Season."

Saturday show times are at 2pm and 7:30pm, and the Sunday performances are at 2pm. Tickets can be purchased through the Long Beach Ballet "Hotline" at (877) 852-3177, at all



Harlequin and the Columbine Doll





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Belmont Shore Christmas Parade

The 31st Annual Belmont Shore Christmas Parade will step off on **Saturday**, **December 7** at 6pm.

This year's theme is *Christmas by the Sea*. The Parade is also on December 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, so the

theme will support our troops, honor our veterans and remember Pearl Harbor

The Grand Marshal of the Parade is Long Beach City Councilmember **Gary DeLong**. The Belmont Shore Business Association wants to honor him as he completes his eighth and last year in office.

The Belmont Shore Christmas
Parade will march down East
Second Street to the beat of over a
dozen local marching bands. Featuring over 100 entries, including
floats designed by Long Beach
businesses and associations, march-

ing bands, and local personalities and dignitaries. And of course no Christmas Parade would be complete without an appearance by good ole St. Nick!

The parade route is along East Second Street and begins heading east from Livingston Avenue to Bayshore Avenue. Entries return to Livingston Avenue heading west along the north side of East Second Street.

The start time will be at **6pm**. Second Street will close to traffic at **5pm**, at which time spectators may set up chairs and blankets for a front row seat to the parade.

Parade entries are \$400 for BSBA members and non-profit organizations. Bands and other entries are \$500.

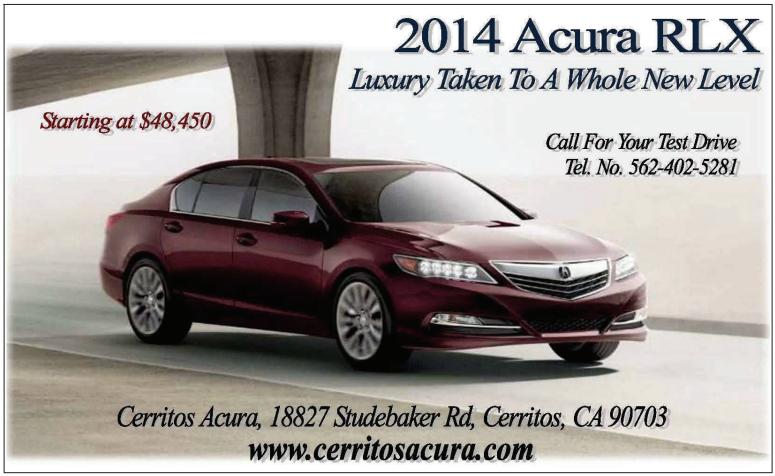
This year's Parade is Presented by "Chill" at the Queen Mary and Sponsored by The Port of Long Beach.

For more information or to get an application for the parade, visit www.belmontshore.org/events or call (562) 434-3066.

Belmant Share

Belman

The Parade will again be televised by **Charter Communications**, and will air on Charter Channel 101 Sundays in December starting December 15.



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Police Chief on Straight Talk



Jim McDonnell **Chief of Police** City of Long Beach

Long Beach Chief of Police Jim McDonnell will join us to provide the latest crime statistics and an update on the work of the Long Beach Police Department in making Long Beach as safe a city as possible

The discussion will cover the new Policy Academy Class, the public safety budget, and the use of technology in making the fight against crime as effective as possible. The Chief will also share how citizens can assist the LBPD in doing their job, and will discuss the work of the Long Beach Police Foundation.

The Long Beach Police Foundation is a recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization which provides support to the LBPD in the areas of training, technology and community outreach focusing on youth programs. The goal of the Foundation is to help make Long Beach an even safer city. For further information, visit www.lbpolicefoundation.org.

Jim McDonnell was appointed 25th Chief of Police for the Long Beach Police Department in March 2010. Chief McDonnell is responsible for a department comprised of

1,500 employees and a \$200 million budget.

McDonnell served with the Los Angeles Police Department for 29 years and held every rank in the department, ultimately serving as Chief of Staff, second-in-command of the LAPD. He has received numerous community and department awards, including the LAPD's highest award for bravery, the Medal of Valor.

Chief McDonnell serves on numerous Boards of Directors that focus on furthering the interests of local youth and leadership in the policing profession on a local, statewide and national level. He serves as a Commissioner and Chair of the California Commission on Peace Officers' Standards & Training (POST) and is the current president for the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs Association.

Chief McDonnell holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Southern California. He is also a graduate of the FBI's prestigious National Executive Institute, the Senior Management Institute for Police, and has completed Executive Education programs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government

Chief McDonnell will be our guest on the Straight Talk Show airing the weeks of December 7 & December 14.



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Thanksgiving: An Evolving Tradition by Rabbi Steven Moskowitz

We all seem to have a variety of ways for celebrating the holiday of Thanksgiving: a family reunion around a table piled high with turkey and all the fixings; the treat of watching football during the middle of the week; a hike in the woods to cleanse the soul (and shed the calories); immersion in the childlike indulgences of the Macy's Day Parade. How did all these customs develop? For what exactly are we giving thanks? And to whom?

For a holiday that seems to so thoroughly capture the nation's attention, its origins can be elusive. Even the location and date of the very first Thanksgiving in America have been subject to debate.

Texans claim that the first Thanksgiving in America actually took place in San Elizario, a community near El Paso, in 1598 -- twenty-three years before the Pilgrims' festival in Massachusetts. For years they have staged a reenactment of the arrival on the banks of the Rio Grande of Spanish explorer Juan de Onate, who held a big Thanksgiving festival after leading hundreds of settlers on a grueling 350-mile long trek across the Mexican desert.

Another contender for the title of the first Thanksgiving is **Virginia**. Virginians claim that the first Thanksgiving in the New World was held at the Berkeley Plantation on December 4th, 1619. It's not the Mayflower we should remember, insist Virginians; it's the Goode Shippe Margaret, which brought 38 English settlers to the plantation in 1619. Upon reaching shore, the settlers dropped to their knees and gave thanks to God for their safe passage. The Berkeley Plantation's claim as the site of the first American Thanksgiving was ratified in a proclamation by President Kennedy in 1963.

However, probably like for most of you, the first Thanksgiving on American soil evokes for me an image of Pilgrims, black clothing, steeple hats, Native Americans, buckles and blunderbusses on the shore of **Massachusetts**. Okay, so conceding that: the Pilgrims' clothing consisted of reds, yellows, purples, and greens at least as much as blacks and greys; their hats were soft and peaked; buckles did not come into styles until later; and blunderbusses did not show up on American soil until about fifty years later...we're still left with Pilgrims, Native Americans, the shores of Massachusetts and a celebration with a clear provenance and date. Right? Not quite.

The original text documenting the giving of thanks sometime during the fall of 1621 was a letter written that year by Edward Winslow to a friend in England commenting on that year's good harvest: "God be praised, we had a good increase...These things I thought good to let you understand that you might on our behalf give thanks to God who hath dealt so favorably with us."

The following year Winslow's letter was, without his approval, printed in a pamphlet called Mourt's Relation. That document, lost during the Colonial period and not rediscovered until 1820, was not republished until 1841. By that time various states as well as the Continental Congress had proclaimed the importance of celebrating a Thanksgiving, though the nature of the celebration and even its date varied.

In 1863 **President Lincoln** declared two national Thanksgivings: one for August 6 celebrating the victory at Gettysburg and a second for the last Thursday in November.

In 1939 **President Roosevelt** altered tradition by proclaiming observance of Thanksgiving on the fourth rather than final Thursday of November. His purpose was to give merchants an additional week for pre-Christmas sales. Congress ratified that change in 1941.

Whatever may be the mixture of fact and mythology that constitutes Thanksgiving, there are **a few enduring elements**:

- The original celebrants embarked upon a perilous journey to escape religious persecution and to express themselves in an environment of freedom.
- They joined themselves to one another through a democratic charter of mutual accountability.
- They gave thanks to a Divine beneficence for their good harvest and the fulfillment of their sacred enterprise.

However we may celebrate the great courage and legacy of those early pioneers, let us take a moment to commit ourselves anew to the democratic enterprise they bequeathed to us.

Rabbi Moskowitz is the Rabbi at Temple Israel in Long Beach.

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Let's Misbehave Opens ICT Season

T nternational City Theatre will open its 2014 Season with Let's Misbehave: The Music and Lyrics of Cole Porter on Friday, January 24 at the Long Beach Performing Arts Center.

In the California premiere of this de-lovely musical conceived by Karin Bowersock and Patrick Young with book by Bowersock, over 30 classic songs by Cole Porter are woven together to tell the story of three single friends in 1930's New York who make a pact to find true love. Their quest is all in good fun until two of the women, Alice and Dorothy, find they have eyes for the same man. It's clever, funny and irresistibly romantic, featuring songs like Night and Day, Begin the Beguine, and Anything Goes from one of America's most beloved and prolific musical theater composers.

1CT's 2014 Season will focus on plays that embody uniquely American stories:

Flyin' West (March 14 - April 6)

In Pearl Cleage's powerful historical drama set at the turn of the twentieth century, four African-American women journey west to an all-black town in Kansas to seek the freedom promised by the end of the Civil War.

Other Desert Cities (June 6 - June 29)

The manicured life of an actor-turned-politician and his im-

peccable wife is upset when relatives arrive at their Palm Springs home for the holidays --including daughter Brooke who's about to publish a tell-all memoir.

Trying (August 22 – September 14) A poignant, poetic and powerful story about the friendship forged between 81-year-old Francis Biddle, U.S. Attorney General under President Roosevelt and Chief Judge at the Nuremburg trials, and a tenacious 25-year old woman from the Canadian plains.

Glorious! (October 10 – November 2) Based on a true story, this hilarious comedy invites us into the world of Florence Foster

Jenkins, a New York socialite of great passion, considerable wealth and zero talent who fancied herself an opera diva.

For tickets or further information, call (562) 436-4610 or visit www.ictlongbeach.org.



Straight Talk



Panel Moderator **Art Levine** introduces guests on the Keynote Panel, *Ask the CEO*, at the opening of the World Workplace Conference of the **International Facility Management Association** (IFMA) at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia.



OC Weekly Editor **Gustavo Arellano** addresses the audience at the fascinating *Conversations in Place* lecture series at Rancho Los Alamitos.



The "Pumpkin Patch" is always a Fall Harvest favorite for kids of all ages.



Art (c.) served as Moderator of the Keynote Panel, consisting of five top executives of multi-billion dollar companies in the field of facility management at the IFMA World Workplace Conference.



LaVerne Duncan, (l.) was one of the recipients of the *Gene Lentzner Human Relations Award* at the CCEJ 50th Annual Dinner. She is pictured here with her mother **Luetta Samuel** (c.) and daughter **Rhea Duncan** (r.).



Sherry Kuhn and her daughter **Samantha** enjoying their visit to the Pumpkin Patch.

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Around Town



Former California Governor **George Deukmejian** reflects upon his life and his distinguished political career to a rapt audience at **Temple Israel** as part of the Temple's *Future Focus* lecture series.



Long Beach City Manager Pat West, Rabbi Moskowitz, Governor Deukmejian and Long Beach City Councilman Gary DeLong gather prior to the Governor's remarks.



A talented artist completes her picture on the sidewalk at the **Belmont Shore Art Walk** & Sidewalk Chalk Art Contest.



Future Focus Moderator Art Levine and Temple Israel Rabbi Steven Moskowitz are pictured with the Governor.



Governor Deukmejian joins a few of the many appreciative audience members at the Reception following his remarks. Pictured (l. to r.) Nan DeMeyer, Tari Hirsch, Diane Levine and Ana Moskowitz.



One of the many striking portraits created by sidewalk artists as part of the Belmont Shore Art Walk.

50 Years Later



In Fond Memory
John F. Kennedy
November 22, 1963
The Truth Shall Set Us Free

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Help support our wounded servicemen and women on their road to recovery! Receive a free 3' by 5' American Flag as a thank you for every donation of \$10 or more.

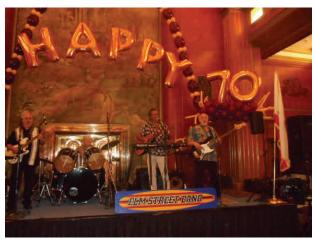


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Photo Focus: Don Knabe Turns 70



The wonderful **Elm Street Band** performs at the *18th Annual Oktoberfest Birthday Celebration* for LA County Supervisor **Don Knabe** aboard the Queen Mary. Don turned 70 this year.



Los Angeles County Sheriff **Lee Baca** offered his congratulations to Don for his birthday and for his many years of distinguished service to the community.



Don got a surprise visit from the USC Trojan Marching Band, thoughtfully arranged by long-time staffer Gail LeGros.



Long Beach Chief of Police **Jim McDonnell** served as Master of Ceremonies at the Celebration held in the Grand Salon aboard the Queen Mary.



Supervisor **Don Knabe** expresses his deep appreciation to the many friends, guests and supporters for the opportunity he has been given to make a real difference in the lives of so many.



Don with his grandkids, who are regular attendees at this Annual Celebration.

Sponsor & Community News

Cerritos Acura

Once a year, **Matt Browning**, Vice President of the Browning Auto Group, puts his hobby to good use by riding with a few employees from Acura Corporate and **Cerritos Acura** in the **Bike MS Coastal Challenge**. The Challenge is a two-day 160 mile fundraising ride around Ventura and surrounding areas. All money raised goes directly to provide services, treatments and research for the 2.1 million people worldwide who are affected by MS.

In October, the Browning Auto Group participated in its fourth consecutive event and raised over \$23,000. From bake sales, countless lunches, off site events, pancake breakfasts and offers of shaved heads, the Associates of the Browning Auto Group demonstrated that they care deeply about the well being of others. Local business owners and members of the community also showed their support by donating items to be raffled and by participating in the fundraising events

Gelson's Market



Gelson's Long Beach will open on **Thursday**, **November 7.** Located on the corner of 2nd Street and Pacific Coast Highway, their elegant store is a welcome addition to the community. Gelson's offers the best cuts of meat, freshest seafood and finest produce. This store features a full service deli, salad bar, and hand carved sandwiches for take-out or dine-in. Enjoy a coffee or lunch on their beautiful second story balcony overlooking the Alamitos Bay Marina.

McCarty's Jewelry

McCarty's will have their biggest sale of the season *Miracle on 2nd Street*, **December 14th - 24th.** Don't miss this opportunity to find that special holiday gift at a special price.

Naples Rib Company

Family-owned and operated, the Naples Rib Company will be celebrating their anniversary in November by donating 20% of all dine-in and take-out sales to 30 local and national charities. The program runs **November 1 - 30** at both Naples Rib Company in Long Beach and Newport Rib Company in Costa Mesa. The business is celebrating its **30th Anniversary** and expects to raise more than **\$40,000** for the designated charities.

Performance Plus Tire & Automotive Superstore

Performance Plus is having its 16th Annual *Thanksgiving Food Drive & Hot Rod Happening* on **Sunday, November 24**. With the help of customers, suppliers and other local businesses, last year they provided more than 1800 boxes of food feeding more than 950 needy families. This year the goal is to provide support for 1000 families. The Food Drive is coordinated with the Hot Rod Happening on Sunday, November 24 from **8am to noon** at the Performance Plus Superstore, 3910 Cherry Avenue. Enjoy food, music and classic cars while you wrap Thanksgiving gift baskets. It's an experience you will long remember. Call **(562) 506-0917** for more information.



Performance Plus owner **Hank Feldman** at a past Hot Rod Happening.

Phil Trani's

Enjoy the holidays at Trani's with some of Phil's special dishes, from herb-crusted Chilean sea bass to center-filet Cabernet steak. Live music every Friday and Saturday night. Open Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve with a special fixed-price menu. Be sure to make Trani's warm, inviting atmosphere part of your holiday plans.

Russo's Ristorante

Russo's is offereing 1/2 off desserts for the entire month of November. Don't forget to book your holiday parties. Their private banquet room as well as offsite catering is available. Open early for dinner on Saturday, December 21 with valet parking for the Naples Boat Parade. Join them for Christmas Eve, or New Year's Eve with your choice of a fixed prix or regular menu.

Storyteller Competition

Long Beach Searches has searched for the greatest storyteller all year long. Contestants are invited to share a true story from their life on any subject in no more than **five minutes**. Following earlier rounds in the spring, summer and fall, the two top storytellers from each competition will meet in the Final Round on **Sunday**, **December 29** at 7pm at the Long Beach Playhouse. Tickets are \$15. Since the Finals tend to sell out, it is recommended that you purchase your tickets early. For tickets, go to **www.lbplayhouse.org**.

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A Problem in Need of a Solution By Dr. Marcy Zwelling

No one would argue that Americans get the best health care in the world. At the same time our expensive archaic healthcare delivery system is in desperate need of major reforms. That said, would anyone suggest that the government should be in charge of those reforms? Legislative debate is not an opportunity for problem solving and Congress is not inclined to find definitive workable solutions.

Health care should be available to anyone who wants to purchase it. Americans can walk into any restaurant and buy food. Restaurants are open. Healthcare, on the other hand, by virtue of a variety of obstructions injected by the government and insurers is not open for purchase. The reforms that have been made into law under the ACA are about providing an expensive and often unneeded benefit package for Americans. It is not about their right or ability to purchase healthcare or even legitimate health insurance. Moreover, the ACA makes all healthcare more expensive, making it more elusive for those most in need.

Let's find a solution and not make laws that make the problem worse. Let's agree that the last person or institution who should be interfering with our most private decisions is the government. The first law we should pass is that the government cannot stick its over-reaching paws into our healthcare decisions. Then, let's work on how we can undo the unwieldy, non-working parts of the ACA and build something that gives every American the opportunity to own their own lives and buy their healthcare from a professional physician whom they trust.

The **first part** of this solution is simple and free. Every physician, facility, or vendor in the healthcare market place

must post their retail price. Once patients know the cost of a service, they can better make an informed purchase.

The **second part** of this solution is to meet our ethical obligation and see that every American has the dollars to purchase legitimate insurance, that actuarial bet that will protect them from financial catastrophe should an illness overwhelm them. That insurance is affordable: for those young and healthy it is as little as \$50.00 per month. Those older and or burdened with an illness may pay a little more but not more than what is affordable. Note that under the ACA, the only purchasable "insurance" is not insurance at all. It is a very expensive benefit package with expensive mandated benefits that many don't find valuable, like fertility care for a young male.

Third, a health savings account must be available to all, funded either by the individual, their business, their family, or the government for those in need. The dollars put into the HSA would come, to a degree, as a tax credit or deduction. That HSA will be owned solely by the beneficiary and may not be lost in a bet or lawsuit or assumed by the government. It may be passed down to family when the HSA owner dies. The funds plus interest earned would be available to spend for health and medical care, insurance, or long term care.

There it is. A market based solution. A simple solution. A working solution. An economically sound solution. Once again making the point that everyone needs a doctor for quality health care. The government should stick to fixing pot holes and protecting our borders and our freedoms.

Dr. Zwelling is the former president of the LA County Medical Association and has a fee for service practice.

Straight Talk Magazine

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Papalucci's	(562) 434-4454
Phil Trani's	(562) 426-3668
Russo's Ristorante	(562) 433-1616
Special Events	
Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach	(562) 981-2600
Supermarket	
Gelson's	(562) 430-6042
Theater	
International City Theatre	(562) 495-4595
Long Beach Playhouse	(562) 494-1014
Musical Theatre West	(562) 856-1999
Palm Springs Follies	(760) 327-0225
Tires/Wheels/Service	
Performance Plus Tire & Auto Superstore	(562) 988-0211
Travel Agency	
Seaside Travel	(562) 433-0917
Utilities	
Long Beach Water Department	(562) 570-2300

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Gelson's home for the Holidays



Gelson's is where you go when it counts.

When it has to be good, customers put their holidays in our hands — for the premium level of quality meats, seafood and produce, the most professional service, and Gelson's legendary service deli, headlined by restaurant-quality recipes created by Gelson's Executive Chef.

Of course, this is the kind of appetizing thinking that makes Gelson's an everyday mecca, too. Customers know exceptional standards are the rule around here. Reasons to celebrate come all the time, for every reason, and we show our understanding of this simple human fact every day, with fresh surprises in every aisle.

As always, order early and abundantly for your holidays. We look forward to seeing you in our brand new Long Beach location, ready to serve you!

Long Beach Grand Opening!



Opens November 7

6255 East 2nd St. • Long Beach, CA 90803 (at 2nd and PCH) 562-430-6042



NEW BRIDGE. NEW JOBS. NEW HEIGHTS.

The new Gerald Desmond Bridge—now under construction through a partnership between the Port and other agencies—was designed and engineered to be a stunning addition to our skyline. It will also add thousands of jobs to the economy, expand a world-renowned bicycle infrastructure, and improve safety for all who cross it. Because we're not just taking in the view, we're looking to the future.

polb.com/GeraldDesmondBridge

Thinking outside the docks

Suzanne Plezia Deputy Chief Harbor Engineer, Port of Long Beach

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