

# Site sought for Brea landmark

## Durkee home rescue moves ahead

By Brian H. Greene  
DSP Staff Writer

BREA — A "last-ditch" effort to save the 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home has come close to completion this week.

City Maintenance Services Manager Bill Higgins and his wife, Pam, were given the home by the current owner of the land, Mercury Insurance Co., and now are negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to find a new location for the historic Brea landmark.

In 1918, Brea pioneer J. D. Sievers built the 10-room home located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway. The tall trees which shade the house have grown to such a size that they have almost become landmarks themselves.

"We're currently negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to buy our house and we're hopefully going to be able to afford to move the house to another piece of property," Bill Higgins said.

"I feel this is a last-ditch effort because if we can't pull it off, the house will be destroyed," he said. "If we can't move it, I don't think there's enough time for someone to go through the same process."

Higgins said he's been negotiating with the agency for the last eight weeks.

Mercury Insurance plans to use the land under the home as a parking lot for its offices located across the street from the home. Higgins will coordinate moving the home with the building con-

tractor for Mercury.

"The way I understand it, they are going to try to keep at least one of those tall trees, and maybe both (trees)," Higgins said of the large trees which frame the home.

Higgins must now finance moving the home and restoring the structure, which Higgins

estimates could cost \$150,000. The Higginses own a home on Brea Boulevard in a redevelopment area and have been negotiating the sale of the land to the agency.

With the money gained from the sale of their home, the Higginses and the Redevelopment Agency are attempting to pur-

chase a site for the house.

"My wife and I both grew up in Brea and, yes, we've been tracking this for a long time," Higgins said. He said his wife has distant relatives who once lived in the home.

"The original thought was that the city would move this and  
(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

HOME SWEET HOME — Bill and Pam Higgins, lifetime Brea residents, are close to completing plans for moving the Sievers-Durkee home. The 69-year-old Brea landmark was close to being destroyed because Mercury Insurance Co. acquired the land and plans to build a parking lot on the property. The Higgins must now find a new site for the home.

make it a historical building." But when the costs of moving the home and maintaining it on a yearly basis were calculated, the city bowed out of attempting to move the landmark.

Higgins chaired a task force to determine the home's destiny which, apparently, has left him as the last person interested in moving the structure.

At this time, Higgins said he is "80 percent sure" relocating the home will occur.

"We may have to move the house off the land to a temporary location and, in order to move the house, they'll have to cut it in half," Higgins said. He explained the expense of moving the home to a temporary location does not cost much more than if they move the house once.

"It's no more expensive, it's just like parking a truck someplace," Higgins said.

He also said vandals have shattered windows of the home and taken door knobs and accessories out of the home. He believes this has occurred because people think the home will be demolished.

The Higgins family can chart their own family path in Brea history. Bill, 38, and his wife Pam, 36, grew up in Brea and were married in 1967. Higgins said his mother has lived in Brea 40 years and Pam's grandparents met in Olinda before Brea existed. Pam's grandfather worked most of his career for Standard Oil. The Higgins now live in the home Pam's grandparents once occupied.

The Higgins children, Joe, 19, and Jennifer, 16, will also have a role in refurbishing the new home.

"They're excited," Higgins said. "They helped us build a family room on the back of our house and a new kitchen. We've added 550 square feet to our home."

J. D. Sievers, original owner of the home, has a street named after him in Brea. He was a member of the School Board and director of First National Bank of Brea.

His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a vacant Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design stands on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been restored by its current owners.

Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when an oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the home, according to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident. Remarkably, the home survived the blaze. As a settlement for the property destroyed by the Union Oil fire, the oil company agreed to buy the home from Sievers.

The property has experienced several owners until the Durkee family acquired the home sometime in the 1950s. Florence Durkee, the last owner of the home, died in February 1986. Her heirs recently completed the sale of the property to Mercury Insurance for a price believed to be in excess of \$1 million.

Higgins said he hopes to finalize all aspects of the move and sale of property at the first City Council and Redevelopment Agency meeting in June.

"It's a part of Brea history and it may not be the most beautiful mansion, but I'm sure a lot of people don't want to see it destroyed," he said.

# Durkee home reminder of bygone era Land in 'landmark' lures developers

EA — A Brea landmark is escrow with the sale esti- mated to be in excess of \$1 million by one of its co-owners. It the deal isn't being consu- med because of the structure of the site. The developer wants land under it.

located at the corner of Berry et and Imperial Highway, Durkee house stands as a reminder of an era gone by. And, escrow on the property enters final stages, the destruction of the 70-year-old home appears imminent.

The whole place is in escrow now," said Maxine Vander- g, a niece of the last owner of home, Florence Durkee, who died in February.

We have offered to give the home to the city, to the Brea Historical Society and to the Brea Foundation, but no one has cash to move the house," Vanderburg said of the 5,000- square-foot structure.

Bill Higgins, chairman of a task force to determine the home's destiny, recommends the city buy the property and retain the house as a museum and park. He believes the house has more historical significance if left on current site.

"It's a landmark where it is," Higgins said. "It's sad when you see something like this go. You can never replace it."

To move the home and reconstruct it on another site would cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000, Higgins said. Annual maintenance could run \$62,000 a year, he added.

Because the property is in escrow, Vanderburg couldn't discuss the fate of the 2.2-acre parcel located across the street from the Mercury Casualty Insurance office. But she said the prime piece of commercial real estate will probably sell for "over \$1 million."

"Our property doesn't include the house. Our property is only one acre," said Dave Scott, a broker with the Vanderbuilt Group in Irvine. Scott's company owns a 1-acre strip of land adjacent to the Durkee house running along Imperial Highway.

"We wanted to buy it (the Durkee property), but we ended up spending so much time talking, somebody beat us to the punch," Scott said. "I'm a little upset we didn't get it."

He estimated the price of the land would be \$10 to \$12 per square foot and that it would be even more if it were a complete corner parcel.

"Everybody's interested," said Glen Fullertwider, trustee for the estate in which his wife, June, and her sister Maxine Vanderburg are heirs. "But when we start talking value, suddenly you find out (the house) is not quite suited to their needs."

"We have to determine how big of a priority this is to the community," City Manager Ed Wohlenberg said in late summer. "This is a piece of real estate with real economic value that has nothing to do with its histori-



The historical Durkee home on Berry Street has become the focus of attention for developers and preservationists.

(Star-Progress photo by Brian Greene)

## Durkee home reminder of bygone era

# Land in 'landmark' lures developers

BREA — A Brea landmark is in escrow with the sale estimated to be in excess of \$1 million by one of its co-owners.

But the deal isn't being consummated because of the structure on the site. The developer wants the land under it.

Located at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway, the Durkee house stands as a reminder of an era gone by. And, as escrow on the property enters the final stages, the destruction of the 70-year-old home appears imminent.

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(Star-Progress photo by Brian Greene)

## SIEVERS HOUSE

cal aspects. It's not an insignificant undertaking."

The history of the home is unique, not only to Brea, but for the North Orange County region.

It survived an oil fire that destroyed surrounding citrus groves; weathered the 1933 earthquake; had been the home to a Basque boxer; and the location of wild parties and festive weddings.

Potential buyers have included a female attorney planning to turn the house into offices; a Texas oil man looking for a home; and several developers seeking the land for industrial uses.

The entrance way to the grand home, unique among the modest dwellings built to house Brea oil workers, is now covered with pine needles that have fallen from the two trees that arch more than 10 feet above its sloping roof.

The trees shade the house, helping to keep its interior cool during the 100-degree weather that bakes Brea during the summer months. The noise of Imperial Highway traffic creates a constant whirl through the rooms of the house, which were emptied soon after Florence Durkee's death.

Four eucalyptus trees stand guard over the winding gravel

driveway that leads from Berry Street to the house's front door. The gardener mows the lawn once a week and a tenant in the guest house waters the overgrown gardens, once the pride of Florence Durkee and previous owners.

The large foyer that leads into the 10-room house is cool. There are cedar-lined, walk-in closets; and walnut floors, staircase and moldings. There's even a secret compartment where former residents hid their valuables, behind a wooden panel in the dining room near the kitchen doorway.

The faded floral wallpaper appears to be original, echoing the post-World War 1 years when the house was built.

According to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident and a member of a 10-man consortium that eventually bought and divided the property, J.D. Sievers built the house around 1918.

Sievers, who had a street named after him in Brea, was a member of the school board and director of First National Bank of Brea. His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design sits on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been refurbished by its current owner.

The Sievers lived in the Berry Street House until 1926 when a oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the house, Millen said. The blaze, touched off when lightning struck two Union Oil underground storage containers, missed the Sievers home.

The Sievers settled with Union

Oil when the petroleum giant agreed to buy the house and property. Union Oil then found itself in the farming business, running about 2,300 acres of avocado, lemon and orange groves, Millen said.

For a short time, the Bastanchury family assisted in the farming operations, occasionally using the home to throw elaborate parties. In 1931, Union Oil enlisted the help of Joseph Neuls to run the orchards. Neuls moved into the home with his wife and three children.

Neuls bought the home in 1940 when a group of 10 Brea businessmen divided up 460 acres of Union Oil land, including the property on which the Sievers House — which became known as the Neuls House — was located. Neuls acquired title to the house and about 12 to 14 acres of land.

Neuls' only surviving child, Dale Hodkins of Brea, remembers life on the ranch as lonely. As a teen-ager, Hodkins said, she longed to live in town with her friends.

"Fifty years ago it was more country," she said. "There were no street lights and orchards all around. There were just a few houses up on the hill on Imperial and nothing across the street from us."

Unlike other Brea residents, who romanticize about the state-ly home with its rich history, Hodkins said she doesn't care what happens to the old house. She passed up a chance in 1948 to buy the home from her father for \$45,000.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," said Hodkins, who was married in the house.

# Old Home May Become Historical Society's New Home

Story and Photos  
By DAVE TAYLOR  
News Tribune Writer

BREA — What has become known as the Sievers or Bell house may become the new home of the Brea Historical Society if an agreement can be made with its present

owner, Miss Florence Durkee, a distant relative of the famed salad dressing makers.

Miss Durkee said, "I would be sick" if the home had to be torn down to make way for an industrial building. It is located at the northwest corner of Imperial Highway and

Berry Street.

She is hopeful an agreement can be reached with the city and historical society to preserve the 5,000 square foot, 10-room home.

The home on nearly four acres is located just south of the industrial area along

Berry Street which includes Russell C. Rucker, Jackson Bros. Cabinet, Leffingwell and Ameron, among others.

## HISTORY REVIEWED

The history of the home was recounted recently by Warren "Griff" Griffith, former planning commissioner, who has interviewed a number of long time residents including James Grewco and others supporting his own memory.

Griffith remembers the house as large and new. He had to go past there twice a day on his way to work on the oil company tank farm.

At the time the home was built, it cost an estimated \$3.25 per square foot, but later one owner bought it for \$47,000. It was the first home in Brea wired for electricity.

The three acres on which the home was built was part of extensive holdings owned by J. D. Sievers.

He and his brother William had a machine shop in Whittier, J.D. was a director of the First National Bank of Brea.

In 1916 William built a home in the hills where the Gemco store stands at the northeast corner of Harbor Boulevard and Imperial Highway in Fullerton. You can still see the palm trees.

## SUPPLIES BOUGHT

J.D.'s home was constructed in 1918. Miss Durkee provided an order form for the

NEWS  
OF

BREA

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page

\$930 in supplies to build the home.

It was dated May 26, 1917, from a lumber company in Los Angeles, offering "less 2 per cent in 30 days."

Miss Durkee says that while she was a late arrival, although a longtime area resident, she said the Brea Republican Women had a gala there four years ago honoring President-Elect Richard M. Nixon and other successful GOP candidates.

She was told by Mrs. Leo West that in earlier years there had been a number of church socials held there since the previous owners were active in the Brea Congregational Church.

The home while built in 1918, was remodeled in 1926 and has been rewired several times.

Its 10 rooms include a living room, dining room, work

room, library, kitchen and garden room on the first floor.

The furniture belonged to Miss Durkee, and her brother-in-law and sister, the late Mr. and Mrs. John Randolph Bell. He was with the Southern California Gas Co. Miss Durkee recalled that he was active in the Kiwanis Club and local area athletics.

Mrs. Ruth Bell, John Bell's wife, was a Fullerton Public Library librarian until her retirement.

Miss Durkee was a county employe for 22 years, having been clerk to Judge Halsey Spence in justice court then continued with the municipal court in Anaheim after the justice court and municipal court were consolidated.

She, her sister and brother-in-law bought the house in 1954, after selling property on Brookhurst Road in Fullerton with part of the converted funds.

## LONG MEMORY

Griffith remembers the house when he arrived in 1922 or early 1923, nearly 50 years ago.

Later, in 1928, the property was bought by Union Oil Co., and was empty, being the resident of several caretakers including a fellow who was scared of being alone, a historical researcher said, and used to take more than a few naps."

In 1927 or 1928, it was occu-

pied by Bastanchury Family after new citrus groves were planted.

## TRAINING CAMP

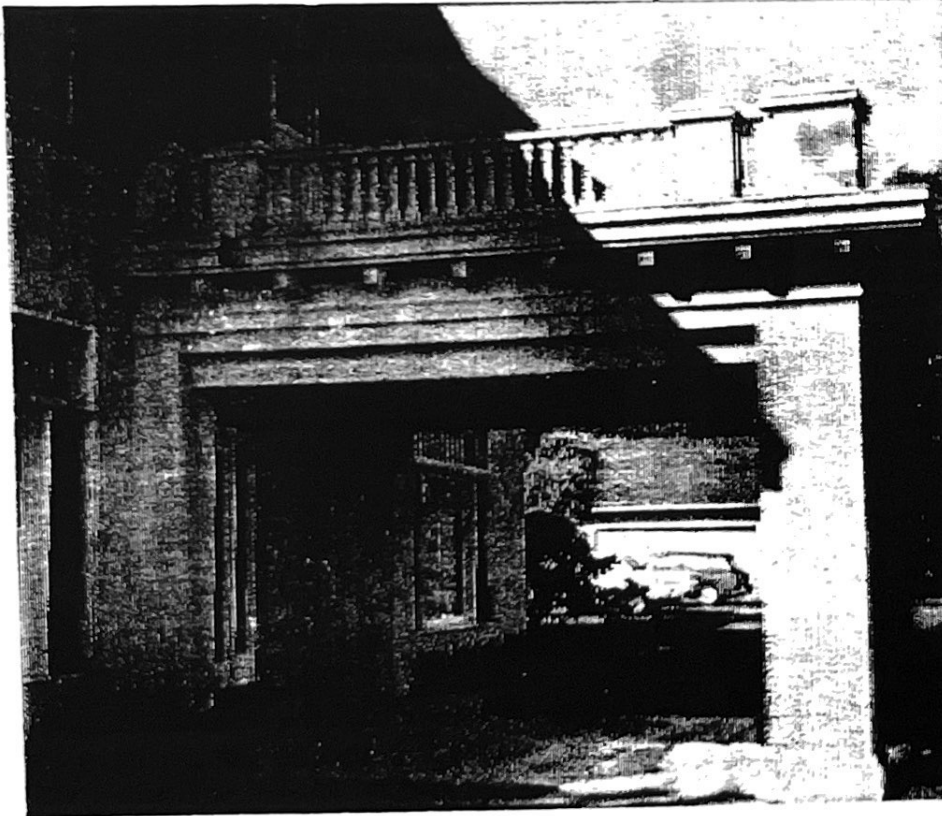
The house figured briefly in the heavyweight boxing history of the late 20's and early 30's when Paulino Uzcudun, like the Bastanchury family derived from the Basque area of Spain, trained there.

Then the property came under control of J. D. Neuls,

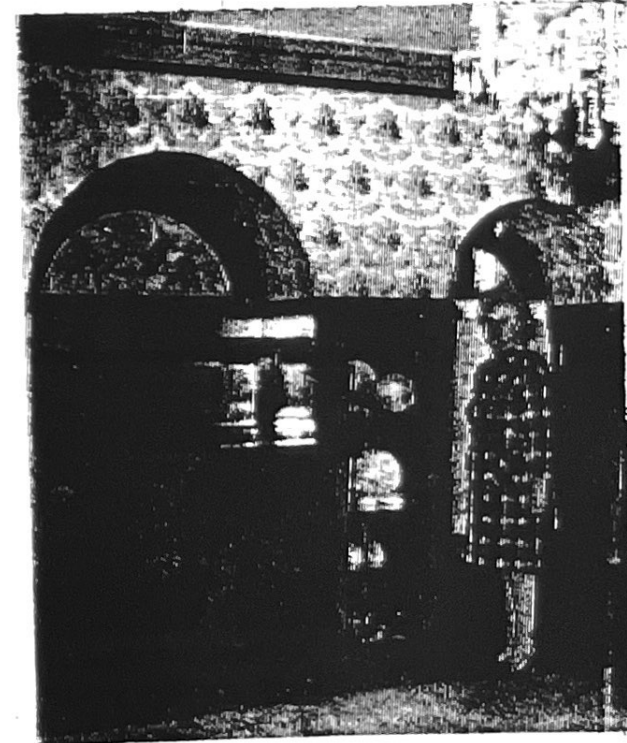
who had the home from 1932 to 1954 when the Durkee sisters and Bell bought it.

J. D. "Joe" Neuls' two daughters, one of whom was Mrs. Bud Hodkins then Dale Neuls, were married in front of the fireplace at the old home.

They don't build houses quite like this any more — it would be a shame if it would have to go, officials said.



TIME RESTS EASILY UPON ONE OF BREA'S OLDEST HOMES  
55-Year-Old House is at Imperial Highway and Berry Street



MISS FLORENCE DURKEE  
Current Resident in Dining Room

... Burrell, of Chiksan, is vice-president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce.

# CUBS STAGE BIG JAMBOREE AT B-O HIGH

It was Cub Scout night at the Brea-Olinda high school auditorium, Monday night, beyond any question of doubt!

The Cubs and their leaders, Den mothers, parents and friends, nearly filled the seating capacity of the high school auditorium.

The two-hour program consisted of skits by various Dens participating in the event and the program concluded with a trick roping act by a troupe which donated its services to the Cub Scouts.

Program Chairman Melvin Mc-Mechan acted as master of ceremonies and kept the program moving along nicely. The orchestra furnished specialty numbers and accompanied some of the acts.

Congratulations and praise for providing such a program for the Cub Scouts to all Cub leaders and Den mothers. These boys are being entertained in a constructive manner and are getting acquainted with Scout principles.

Guest Dens from Yorba Linda, La Habra, Anaheim, and ... attended this get-together.

# Robert D. Close Slightly Injured

... at Shaffer ... following a 24-hour ... resulting ... at the plant last

... by a bucket on ... truck ...

of the "Our Gang" comedies. Since he has outgrown that role he has appeared in many movies.

Also on the big anniversary stage show is Tanya, straight from Hollywood, with her sensational dance routine.

# John D. Sievers Dies At Whittier

John D. Sievers, 75, one of Brea's early citrus and avocado ranchers, died last week at his home, 1302 Beverly drive, Whittier.

Mr. Sievers was prominent in Southern California banking, manufacturing, and fruit growing circles. He was a former director of the First National Bank of Brea. He was also president of La Habra Valley bank and director of the First National Bank of Whittier.

Mr. Sievers was born in Denison, Iowa. He came to California in 1910 and settled in Brea where he developed citrus groves. He was one of the earliest avocado growers in this region.

In 1913 he founded the Security Engineering Co., one of Whittier's largest single industries. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Louise Sievers; two sons, J. Paul of Los Angeles and William E. of Long Beach, and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday at the White-Emerson Co. chapel in Whittier.

# Bertha E. Keppler Dies In San Bernardino

Word has been received of the death of Bertha E. Keppler of San Bernardino on Jan. 29, 1950. Mrs. Keppler was the wife of Joseph A. Keppler and they resided in Brea, at 230 Redwood St. for ten years. Mrs. Keppler leaves six children, thirteen grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

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well No. 1 down 2200 feet. Some sand showed at this depth and indications are good for a well before much more drilling is done.

Whitley No. 2 Spuds In.  
At Whitley No. 2 the rig has been moved, the rigging up work completed the new well spudded at 300 feet of hole made. At No. 3 the drill is down 2300 feet. At this depth some gas is showing.

United Well Looking Good at 2600.  
At 2600 feet the United's No. 1 on the Citrus Grove Heights property is drilling in a shale that is showing considerable oil.

Amalgamated Leases Butterworth Ranch.  
The Amalgamated Oil Company will develop property near the Union Oil Company's Myer lease in the development of the Butterworth ranch. The rig is up for Butterworth No. 1 and the drilling is to start at 2000 feet.

Union Has Meyer No. 4 Up.  
The Union Oil Company has a completed rig for No. 4 on the Meyer property ready to be rigged up. Meyer No. 3 continues to put better than 100 barrels of 35 gravity oil in the tanks every day.

Union Spuds In at Whittier.  
The Union Oil Company, a very recent entrant into the Rideout Heights district, spudded in on Gregg No. 1 early in the week and has 550 feet of hole down. The Union's property is across the road from the United Oil Company's well, now looking very encouraging at 2600 feet.

Bell of Montebello Causes Stir.  
Striking a large quantity of gas under pressure the Bell of Montebello caused another stir in oil circles Sunday. The depth of the hole is now close to 3000 feet and is getting down to the point where its backers are looking very hopefully for oil.

Allied Petroleum Cements.  
At 2725 feet the Allied Petroleum Company has set a string of 10-inch pipe on Germain No. 1. Prior to cementing the well was drilling in a rather nice looking shale.

McKinley Discovers New Well.  
Walter McKinley announces the location of No. 12 on his Montebello property. At No. 12 an effort is being made to wedge out a string for casing. The work is going slow. No. 8 casing is being run on waiting for a new well to be built and a

# THE HOUSE ELECTRICAL

Magnificent Country Home of J. D. Sievers, Brea, Electrically Equipped Throughout. Alladin's Lamp to the Discard. A Wide Range,

A quarter of a century ago a man dreamed of what electricity would do in the house and pictured his home to reporters that he "was fixin' up with electricity." But after all his "dream" extended little further than ringing bells, incandescent lights, burglar alarms, and a few trifles. Could he visit a home here in Brea today he would find his "dream" but a tallow candle compared to the reality.

Learning from an outside source that probably the most completely equipped home from an electrical point of view in the state of California was right here in Brea. The Progress sent a representative to "inspect" it.

Mr. Sievers has a home that is beautiful, architecturally and otherwise, and notably so. In a section that is famous for its beautiful homes. But it is of the part that Mr. Sievers has made electricity play in his scheme of things that we wish to speak now.

Mr. Sievers no doubt as a boy read the Arabian Nights and probably wished that he possessed Alladin's lamp with its wonderful powers. Today, as a man, he does control a wonderful genl and with less trouble, for he has only to touch a button. Through its aid his house is lighted, not with harsh, glaring flames, but the soft, white, diffused light that is not only a comfort but a delight to the artistic eye. More than that, each hall and room can have that scheme of lighting best suited for its particular purposes. Perhaps, though, the women are more delighted in what this genl does in the kitchen and dining rooms. Well, it does practically everything, but specifically there are toasters, percolators (now, food the coffee, um, um) kettles, warming irons, chaffin dishes and the like so clean, so quick, so serviceable that it makes cooking a pleasure. There are heating pads and appliances that make you comfortable on chilly days. This Monday it banished from the home for there are the elec-

## CALIFORNIA WEEKLY INDUSTRIAL REVIEW

Be loyal to every state industry great and small. Payrolls mean bread and butter, shelter, schooling and comfort for every family.

San Jose—Jugo Slav colony to establish chain of Pacific coast bars from Los Angeles to establish and \$150,000 school for crippled children. Sacramento makes record shipment of nuts, consisting of two cars valued at \$30,000.

Vacaville—Diamond Match Company purchases entire holdings of Chamber Lumber and Supply Co.

Union Oil Company of California has started development of its oil and gas holdings with first well now being drilled in southern fields of Colusa. In all, the company now has 15 wells drilling and 18 more are expected to be started before January.

Fortuna—Local man planning to manufacture bean flour.

San Pedro—Southwestern Railway resume operations after suspension of five weeks.

Sacramento—Active campaign being conducted to make Sacramento center of livestock and breeding industry.

Visalia organizes \$100,000 building company to relieve housing conditions.

Willits—Southern oil men lease 1000 acres, local oil drilling to start.

Sacramento—Virden Packing Company to announce location of new plant between November 15th and 30th.

South San Francisco—Virden Packing Company and Moran Consolidated, making \$5,000,000 company.

Oroville—Butte and Yuba counties vote in favor of irrigation district comprising 45,000 acres.

Merced—San Francisco men planning to spend \$1,500,000 on Yosemite valley improvements.

Ventura—Bids for highway construction to Saugus ordered, estimated at \$125,000.

Corcoran—Every effort being made to rush construction of cotton gin.

Arcata—New concrete building added to state normal school.

San Francisco—Construction of 1000-gun warehouse to start.

Newark—Japanese colony to build \$500,000 school for Japanese children. Doer workers called on by vote of 5 to 1 to support the state.

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#### McKinley Locates New Well.

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**Montebello Crude Has Softer Drilling.**  
After drilling for 10 days in a hard gray sand in which only two feet could be made in a four the Monte- bello Crude struck a shale at 2230 and now better time is being made drill- ing.

#### Two Wells Drilling on Baldwin.

On the Standard's Baldwin Hills two wells only are now drilling. No. 44 is making hole at 2365, and No. 45 is testing out water conditions at 2070. Temple No. 11 stands cemented at 1755 feet, and No. 12 is being drilled deeper, the depth now being 2032.

#### St. Helen's New Work Advancing.

The St. Helen's Petroleum's new work is showing up at Montebello. Nutt No. 1 has the boilers set and the rig is started building. A location has been made for the location of a well on the Pluma-Hriana.

#### Stocker Oil Will Be Dehydrated.

Water in the oil produced by the Stocker No. 2 well is giving some trou- ble in getting a separation. An elec- tric dehydrator is being installed to clean the oil.

#### New Well at Newport.

Seemingly the Interstate Oil Com- pany must have a good showing in its No. 1 well drilled to 2500 feet and now standing cemented, as a rig is go- ing up for a second well.

### BIG VICTORY FOR HOME PRINTING

Due to the determined stand of Stanley B. Wilson, past president of the Los Angeles Typographical Union No. 64 and at present a member of the State Board of Education, hereafter all books printed in the public free school of California will be printed in this state. This was decided upon at a meeting of the State Board of Education held in Sacramento last week.

Wilson was ably aided by State Superintendent of Education W. W. Woodworth for in his elec- tion of the State Board of Education. The Board of Education will be in session in Sacramento next week.

...does in the kitchen and dining rooms. Well, it does practically everything, but specifically there are toasters, per- colators (how good the coffee, um, um) grills, waffle irons, chafing dishes and the like, so clean, so quick, so service- able that it makes cooking a pleasure. There are heating pads and appli- ances to make you comfortable on a chilly day. Blue Monday is banished from this home, for there are the elec- tical washing machine and mangle. A touch of the button and what was once a wearisome sewing task be- comes a pleasant one as the sewing machine purrs its tireless little motor. All this power to be controlled by the turn of the button. Then there is the heating of each room electrically, and the heating of water for home use. A stationary vacuum cleaner is lo- cated in the basement and each room can be cleaned with slight labor. He not only uses this power for pump- ing water for household purposes but for irrigation as well. Then he has power for grading walnuts, etc.

Viewing this home we can quite un- derstand Mr. Stevers' enthusiasm for things electrical. As he explained to our reporter.

The electrical home is becoming an institution in California. There is no limit to the use to which electricity can be placed in the home. As soon as a seeming obstacle is reached in- ventive ingenuity surmounts it. To- day women are cooking, ironing, washing, cleaning and making them- selves more beautiful with electricity. Electricity in the home has turned within the last two years from a lux- ury to a necessity. Coal is almost unobtainable, gasoline and fuel oils are soaring in price. Electricity has remained staple. The rates are gov- erned by the State Railroad Commis- sion. People have also learned that electricity has solved their servant problem, and in a hundred and one ways can be put to use in the home. The reason for the popularity of elec- trical appliances, at present, is that women are making the discovery that they can completely furnish their homes electrically, for the price of the cheapest automobile on the market and that the service rendered by it is immeasurably greater. It is not only possible to complete the electrical work in the home, but it is also possible to complete the same work in the office. The Census Bureau plans to complete the same work in the office and

...Corcoran Every effort being  
to rush construction of cotton  
Arcata - New concrete build-  
ing added to State normal scho-  
San Francisco - Construction  
000 Gunst warehouse to start.  
Newcastle Japanese colony  
ing \$2000 school for Japanese  
Stockton - Dock workers  
called off by vote of 5 to 1  
Isleton - Bay Side Cannine C  
to erect large asparagus canne-  
Placerville - El Dorado Water  
pany to spend large sum on im-  
ment of system.

### NATIONAL SWEETS INDUS

A Chicago paper recently stat- ed 90 per cent of all the sugar in our country went for candy and drinks.

Reliable statistics from the Division of the food adminis- tration show housewives use 70 per cent of the sugar in their industries 20 per cent.

Of this 20 per cent, only 8 per cent has gone into candy. The 22 per cent goes to bakeries, canneries, soft drinks, cordials, ice cream, jams, jellies, etc.

When the food administration is to pile up a sugar surplus, it is a great headway until the houses are reduced from unlimited supply to two pounds per week.

This restriction increased the demand for candy, proving it a food substitute, especially when also made up from nuts, fruit, late and milk products.

National prohibition has in- creased consumption of candy. In the western states alone \$100,000,000 this year.

The capital invested in the manufacture of candy in the states the Mississippi aggregates 500,000,000; persons employed, 1,000,000; federal taxes paid, \$6,250,000; state taxes, \$5,000,000.

The demand for confectionery grows by leaps and bounds, and the use of alcoholic stimulants decreases.

Every census has disclosed that there are more men in the States than women. In 1914, the year the last census was taken, there were 276,000 manufacturing establish- ments. The Census Bureau reported about 200,000 establish- ments in 1910. The numerous machines

B. S. Jan 30, 1919

# 10,000 Home of J. D. Sievers

One two-acre corner of the large citrus and walnut acreage of Mr. J. D. Sievers, one of the directors of the La Habra Valley Bank of Brea is to be improved with as fine a home and landscaped grounds as may be seen this side of Los Angeles.

Several carloads of lumber are now on the ground and under the supervision of Architect H. H. Whiteley of Los Angeles, will soon be erected into a beautiful 10-room strictly modern home, the cost of which is estimated at \$10,000.

The grounds will be landscaped under the supervision of Paul Howard of Los Angeles, this work to cost about \$2,000 and to cover about two acres on the corner of Cypress and the new proposed road east of Brea.

The Sievers sons are not going to be overlooked as one part of the large garage being built to accommodate three machines will be built and furnished as a well-equipped club room.

Eight acres of walnuts on the Sievers grove which were set to citrus three years ago will be taken out this year adding another eight acres of citrus adjacent to Brea.

# Last bid fizzles; Durkee house leveled



By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

All that's left now at 285 Berry St. is a dusty, empty lot.

The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee house that stood at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway was leveled last week after last-ditch efforts to save the local landmark fizzled out. One of the two towering pine trees which grew together in a curtain above the 10-room home now stands alone on the site in the midst of yellow landmovers and lumbering bulldozers.

The Mercury Insurance Co., which operates in a building across the street, will pour asphalt on the site and use it as a parking lot.

City officials and residents alike mourn the loss of the home, built in 1918 by J. D. Sievers, a Brea pioneer. But for one Brea couple, the destruction of the dark green house went a little deeper than disappointment at the disappearance of a piece of local history.

Bill and Pam Higgins, both Brea natives who grew up and married in the city, tried tirelessly for months to save the Durkee house. The couple worked with the Brea Redevelopment Agency, the City Council and Mercury insurance officials to save the home, according to Carol Richardson, the city's public information officer.

The Higgins had to move anyway, since their home was in the downtown redevelopment area and would be torn down to make way for another lane on Brea Boulevard. They decided to fix up the old house, which a distant relative of Pam's had lived in long ago, and move it to another location, Richardson said.

There began a long trip down bureaucratic boulevard, a journey which would end in disappointment for most involved.

The huge costs of renovating the home and moving it to another site, in

addition to time constraints, made relocation of the home impossible. The Brea Historical Society couldn't afford it, and neither could the Higgins family in the end.

The Higgins began their effort to save the Sievers-Durkee house in July of 1986, when Bill Higgins, a Brea maintenance division manager, was asked about the cost of relocating the home.

In March of 1987, Redevelopment Agency staff members told Higgins they were interested in purchasing his Brea Boulevard home, to make way for street widening. Faced with a move, the Higgins family decided to live in the local landmark. A letter from Pam Higgins to Mercury Insurance prompted the firm's president, George Josephs, to offer the home to the Brea family, provided they could find a suitable site within a short time frame. The insurance firm had already planned a parking lot for the site and had dealines of its own to meet.

Higgins approached the Redevelopment Agency in May of 1987 about the possibility of trading his Brea Boulevard home for other property within the city, property to which he could move the big house. Although three locations were suggested, none were deemed suitable for the Sievers-Durkee house.

Richardson said Higgins wanted to move the house to the corner of the city golf course at Madrona. But problems with zoning codes couldn't be ironed out and this proposal, like many others, fell through.

Higgins then went door-to-door in the city, seeking two adjacent sites to purchase for the house. In early July, he found two properties on Walnut. The Higgins family, the property owners and Redevelopment Agency staff haggled over the land until late July 10, but could not come up with an agreement. But on July 13, the owners indicated they would sell, but time had run out, Richardson said.

IT'S GONE— The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee house that stood at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway was leveled last week after last-ditch efforts to save the local landmark fizzled out.

—Photo by David Carlson

# Family may preserve historical Brea house

By Anne MacDonald  
Special to The Register

The old green house at the corner of Berry and Imperial seems to defy the changing times. Older residents of Brea say it's been around about as long as the city, which was founded in 1917.

The branches of two huge stone pine trees bend inward to meet each other at the top, framing the house as it faces the modern square building of Mercury Insurance Group on the opposite side of the street.

For the past two months, Bill and Pam Higgins have been spending their weekends at the house. Along with their two children, 16-year-old Jennifer and 19-year-old Joe, the Higginses spend their Saturdays and Sundays cleaning up broken glass and preparing the house for its move to another site.

After the death of its last resident, Florence Durkee, in 1986, the house was scheduled for demolition and its 2.2 acres turned into an employee parking lot for the Mercury Group. Mrs. Higgins said the yellow plywood covering the windows "made me want to do something."

Higgins, a maintenance services manager for Brea, came up with an idea: "Let's move it to another lot and live in it ourselves." Mrs. Higgins said the family has to move anyway, because its old house on Brea Boulevard is in a redevelopment area.

The house, known as the Sievers-Durkee house, is a Brea landmark and legend. It survived the Union Oil fire

of 1926 that destroyed the surrounding citrus groves and several nearby houses. It remained standing during the great earthquake of 1933.

Last year, the Brea Historical Society launched a campaign to save the historical Sievers-Durkee House. A city-appointed task force concluded that the cost was prohibitive, estimating \$200,000 to \$400,000 to bring the

house up to code, restore it and move it to another site, with an annual maintenance budget of \$62,000.

The Mercury Insurance Group gave the house to the Higgins family after Mrs. Higgins explained that her interest was both historical and sentimental.

"My aunt, Eleanor Neuls, lived there for years," she said.

Higgins said the biggest problem now is time. The family is trying to buy a lot to move the house to.

"We are negotiating over the price of our house and the city-owned lot," he said. "The city is trying to move fast on this, but right now we desperately need a temporary lot to put the house on for a couple of months."

George Joseph, president of Mercury General Corp., said that as of last week, he has not hired workers to begin building the parking lot. He said Mercury intends to try to save as many of the citrus and eucalyptus trees on the property as possible, as well as one of the huge pines. However, he said, while the contractors will try to work around the house, it must be moved soon.

Higgins figures it will cost \$150,000

for him to restore and move the 10-room, 5,000-square-foot house. "We're going to do a lot of the work ourselves," said Mrs. Higgins, a draftsman. She will design the plans; Higgins will do the construction and restoration work.

Karl Fanning, president of the Brea Historical Society, said he's delighted to hear the house may be saved. The 72-year-old lifetime resident of Brea has childhood memories of the property. He recalls the walnut trees "made a tunnel of shade in the summer."

Fanning said the house became known as the Sievers-Durkee house because J.D. Sievers was the "pio-

neer" who built the house and Florence Durkee was the last resident of the house. Other residents include the Bastanchury family, the Neuls and the Bell family.

Whether it becomes the future home of the Higgins family depends in part on the City Council. Higgins met with a representative of the city's Redevelopment Agency to outline a proposal. He declined to give details on his proposal, pending consideration by the city.

Steve Copenhaver of the Redevelopment Agency said it is premature to comment on the Higgins proposal, but, he added, "we are looking for a workable way to preserve the house."

# A house with a history

Home that survived earthquakes, fires now faces another threat: developers want the land under it

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

**Y**ou can't miss it as you turn north from Imperial Highway on Berry Street.

Perched upon a knoll behind a jungle of foliage is a pale green stucco-and-wood house that for nearly 70 years has been a Brea landmark.

Called the Durkee House, it is a treasure trove of history. It survived an oil fire that destroyed

surrounding citrus groves; weathered the 1953 earthquake that brought down the pillars at Brea-Olinda High School; had been the home to a Basque boxer; and the location of wild parties and festive weddings.

The sturdy 5,000-square-foot home situated on a prime piece of Brea real estate also is out of place among the industries that surround it.

A reminder of days when Brea was a sleepy town of farms and oil fields, the two-story house may not survive much longer. Its fate may be the wrecking ball.

The Durkee House and its 2.2 acres of land are for sale. Potential buyers have included a female



Chris Carlson/The Register

The landmark Durkee House has stood for almost 70 years at Berry Street and Imperial Highway.

attorney planning to turn the house into offices; a Texas oil man looking for a home; and several developers seeking the land for industrial uses.

"Everybody's interested," said Glen Fullenwider, trustee for the estate in which his wife, June, and her sister Maxine Vanderburg are heirs. "But when we start talking value, suddenly you find out (the house) is not quite suited to their needs."

The heirs, however, have agreed to give the house — named after the last owner-occupant, Florence Durkee who died in February at the age of 84 — to the Brea Historical Society, if the purchasers of the property on which it sets plan to demolish it.

The society, however, must pay to have the house moved to a new location, which could cost as much as \$400,000.

The city formed a four-member task force July 1 to determine the cost and feasibility of moving the house. The task force sent a memo outlining its findings to Brea City Manager Edward Wohlenberg on Aug. 13.

The issue probably will come before the Brea City Council on Sept. 16, Wohlenberg said.

"We have to determine how big of a priority this is to the community," he said. "This is a piece of real estate with real economic value that has nothing to do with its historical aspects. It's not an insignificant undertaking."

Bill Higgins, the task force chairman, said he recommends the city buy the property and retain the house as a museum and park. The house has more historical significance if left on its current site, he said.

"It's a landmark where it is," Higgins said. "It's sad when you see something like this go. You can never replace it."

Fullenwider would not disclose the market value of the house and land. But Higgins said the property is "rumored" to be worth \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million.

# HOUSE: After 70 years, threat now is from increasing land values

Other options for the house contained in the task force report include moving the house to a site on the Brea Municipal Golf Course near the Brea Senior Center or finding another location in the 35-acre Arovista Park.

To move the home and reconstruct it on another site would cost between

\$200,000 and \$400,000, Higgins said. Yearly maintenance would run another \$62,000 a year.

The cost could be funded with a combination of money from the society, Brea Foundation and city.

The entrance way to the grand home, unique among the modest dwellings built to house Brea oil workers, is now covered with pine needles that have fallen from the two trees that arch more than 10 feet above its sloping roof.

The trees shade the house, helping to keep its interior cool during the 100-degree weather that baked Brea recently. The noise of Imperial Highway traffic creates a constant whirl through the rooms of the house, which were emptied soon after Florence Durkee's death.

Four eucalyptus trees stand guard over the winding gravel driveway that leads from Berry Street to the house's front door. The gardener mows the lawn once a week and a tenant in the guest house waters the overgrown gardens, once the pride of Florence Durkee and previous owners.

The large foyer that leads into the 10-room house is cool. There are cedar-lined, walk-in closets; and walnut floors, staircase and moldings. There's even a secret compartment where former residents hid their valuables, behind a wooden panel in the dining room near the kitchen doorway.

The faded floral wallpaper appears to be original, echoing the post-World War I years when the house was built.

According to Dean Millen, a long-time Brea resident and a member of a 10-man consortium that eventually bought and divided the property, J.D. Sievers built the house around 1918.

Sievers, who had a street named after him in Brea, was a member of the school board and director of First National Bank of Brea. His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design sits on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been refurbished by its current owner.

The Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when a oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the house, Millen said. The blaze, touched off when lightning struck two Union Oil underground storage containers, missed the Sievers home.

The Sievers settled with Union Oil when the petroleum giant agreed to buy the house and property. Union Oil then found itself in the farming business, running about 2,300 acres of avocado, lemon and orange groves, Millen said.

For a short time, the Bastanchury family assisted in the farming operations, occasionally using the home to throw elaborate parties. In 1931, Union Oil enlisted the help of Joseph Neuls to run the orchards. Neuls moved into the home with his wife and three children.

Neuls bought the home in 1940 when a group of 10 Brea businessmen divided up 460 acres of Union Oil land, including the property on which the Sievers House — which became known as the Neuls House — was located. Neuls acquired title to the house and about 12 to 14 acres of land.

Neuls' only surviving child, Dale Hodkins of Brea, remembers life on the ranch as lonely. As a teen-ager, Hodkins said, she longed to live in town with her friends.

"Fifty years ago it was more country," she said. "There were no street lights and orchards all around. There were just a few houses up on the hill on Imperial and nothing across the street from us."

Unlike other Brea residents, who romanticize about the stately home with its rich history, Hodkins said she doesn't care what happens to the old house. She passed up a chance in 1948 to buy the home from her father for \$45,000.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," said Hodkins, who was married in the house. "I remember the termites and the rats that ran up the walls."

Florence Durkee, however, did not want the house torn down, Fullenwider said. She first suggested in 1973 that the home become the headquarters for the historical society.

Durkee, along with her sister and brother-in-law, Ruth and John Randolph Bell, bought the house in 1956. She moved there after her brother-in-law died.

"Florence Durkee always had a strong feeling toward historical societies, both locally and nationally," Fullenwider said. "She did not particularly want to destroy the house."

Karl Fanning, president of the Brea Historical Society, said the group seeks to preserve the house because "it belonged to a pioneer family. It's an illustration of a fine-quality home of the late teens and early 1920s in the California bungalow style."

But, Fullenwider said, he is in "no big hurry" to sell the house. "We're just letting people come to us," he said. "They have to see what they're up against. We're talking \$75,000 to \$80,000 just to get it up to standards."

## Here today, gone tomorrow



(Star-Progress photos by Jack Hancock)

**ONLY A MEMORY** — The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home, formerly located at the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, was demolished this morning after efforts to move the Brea landmark to a new site fell through. Above is a view of the home on Monday, looking south toward Imperial Highway. Today at 10:30 a.m., a view from Imperial reveals all that remains of the 10-room home of Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers are the tall trees which once framed the structure, above right.





(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

**SLATED FOR DEMOLITION** — The Sievers-Durkee home will be demolished Tuesday unless a solution for moving the home can be reached today. Located at Berry Street and Imperial Highway

for 69 years, the home was built by Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers. Mercury Insurance Co., owner of the property, wishes to build a parking lot on the site to serve its nearby office.

# Brea landmark razing ready

By Brian H. Greene  
DSP Staff Writer

**BREA** — Demolition of the Sievers-Durkee home, a Brea landmark for 69 years, will begin Tuesday, according to George Joseph, president of Mercury Insurance Co. which owns the property.

Located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway, the 10-room home was built by Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers. The last owner of the home, Florence Durkee, died in February of 1986, and her heirs recently completed a \$1.2 million sale of the land to Mercury Casualty Insurance Group, a branch of Mercury Insurance.

Mercury plans to construct a parking lot on the property, which will serve the Mercury Casualty building across Berry Street.

Four months ago, Mercury offered the home to lifetime Brea residents Bill and Pam Higgins at no cost except for the expense of moving the house. But the Higginses and the Brea Redevelopment

Agency have not been able to work out details of selling their current home to the agency and purchasing a new site for the Sievers-Durkee house in Brea.

Higgins, who along with his wife graduated from Brea-Olinda High School, now serves as Brea maintenance services manager.

"I'm willing to give them another 30 days, but I need some evidence of a good faith effort from them," Joseph said from his Los Angeles office this morning. "He's (Bill Higgins) going to have to act now because we're ready to tear it down in the morning."

Joseph sent Higgins a letter early last week stating a \$10,000 deposit would be needed by July 17 to extend the moving deadline to Aug. 14. Previously, Joseph had granted an extension to Bill Higgins at his request and then another extension at the request of Brea Mayor John Sutton. The mayor was in a

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)  
meeting this morning and could not be reached for comment.

"The city required us to place a \$40,000 piece of art in front of our building," Joseph said, referring to the city's Art in Public Places program. "You'd certainly think the city could take an extra step and help the man out."

But according to Chris Lissik, Redevelopment Agency project coordinator/ administration, City Attorney James Markman said the city could not legally put up the \$10,000. Also, Lissik told the Higginses on Saturday that a site for the home had been located on Walnut Avenue and the paperwork was being processed. But the Higginses opted not to take the risk of losing the \$10,000 deposit and told the agency they were no longer interested in the home.

"We talked about it and looked at the risk, but we didn't think it was worth it," Higgins said.

But Joseph said there is "no risk involved" with the deposit "if you've really got the money to move the house within the month."

Joseph explained he's waited as long as he can and that he owes it to the stockholders of the publicly owned company to move forward with plans.

"I've got a \$1.2 million investment down there and employees screaming they can't find a place to park," Joseph said.

The Mercury president also explained he'd received a message from Higgins on Friday stating he could not front the deposit.

"But I will not let the contractors start to tear down the house until I hear from him personally," Joseph said. When contacted this morning, Higgins said he had not spoken with Joseph.

But Joseph again emphasized the only way he will delay demolition is if Mercury receives a \$10,000 check today at either its Los Angeles or Brea office.

Several weeks ago, it looked as though the Higginses might move the home to a two-parcel site on Madrona Avenue in a redevelopment area. But Mrs. Higgins said the zoning in the area for apartments would not be suitable for the home and plans fell through in early June.

About two weeks ago, the Higginses began a door-to-door search in an attempt to find two homeowners next door to each other willing to sell. A potential site was found on Walnut Avenue, but the details of the sale of the

properties could not be worked out soon enough.

"They dragged their feet just a little too long," Mrs. Higgins said of the Redevelopment Agency.

"I think things could have been done faster. City government works very slow."

"We haven't made any progress with the city since the Madrona property was unavailable," Mrs. Higgins said.

One other possible site existed on Madrona near Pioneer Hall and the Brea Senior Citizens Center. Though the area is zoned for single-family residential homes, she said the city did not want to give up the triangle-shaped parcel because it was city-owned park land.

"We went with what they appraised our house at," Mrs. Higgins said of their initial approval for sale of their present South Brea Boulevard home to the agency. "Of course, that's all changed now. We're not going to sell our house to the city now."

Joseph said a Yorba Linda woman sent him a cashier's check in May for \$5,000 with the intent of moving the home. But he returned the check because she could not guarantee the home would stay in Brea and also because Joseph had a commitment to the Higginses.

But the Yorba Linda woman stated it would take about three months before she could move the home, and Joseph said it would be impossible wait any longer.

Sievers, the original owner of the home, built the house in 1918. His brother, William, built a similar home at the corner of Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where the vacant Gemco store now stands.

Sievers served on the School Board in Brea and was director of First National Bank of Brea. In 1926, an oil fire destroyed virtually all the orange groves and vegetation surrounding the property which Sievers also owned. Remarkably, the house survived and, as part of a settlement with Union Oil Co. for the fire damage to crops, Sievers sold the house to Union Oil.

Several owners occupied the home after Sievers, including relatives by marriage of Pam Higgins. The Durkee family acquired the home in the 1950s and owned the property until Mrs. Durkee's death.

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STAR-PROGRESS

Daily JUN 17 1987

# Razing of Brea home on hold

By Brian H. Greene

DSP Staff Writer *790*

BREA — An effort to save the 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home from destruction was put on hold Tuesday by the City Council until further details of an agreement can be worked out.

The final agreement will probably be reached within a week, Councilman Gene Leyton said this morning.

City Maintenance Services Manager Bill Higgins and his wife, Pam, are attempting to purchase a site in Brea and move the house. Mercury Insurance Co., which owns the property where the house currently stands, is rapidly moving forward with plans to build a parking lot on the site.

"We can't hold any longer. Mercury gave us three weeks to move the house, and that was last week," Mr. Higgins said this morning.

The home was built by J. D. Sievers in 1918 near the northwest corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street. The parking lot Mercury Insurance plans to build will serve its office complex on the east side of Berry. Mercury completed purchase of the land earlier this year.

Higgins has spoken with Mercury officials who said they will give him the house at no cost. But Higgins must move the house and purchase a new site for the home at his own expense.

Because Higgins owns a home in Redevelopment Area AB of the city, he has been working out an agreement with the Rede-

velopment Agency for the sale of his property and acquiring a site for the home. Higgins plans to refurbish the 10-room, two-story house and live in the structure with his family.

Higgins said Tuesday the project could be in trouble if the agency did not approve the agreement at its meeting.

Though Mercury had given Higgins a three-week extension, he explained it would take time to prepare the home to be moved.

"I think everybody wants to save the home. There are a few buildings we're trying to save in the redevelopment area," Leyton said.

"Bill wants to save the house, the City Council wants to save the house," Leyton said. But he explained the agreement hinges

on working out some "general issues" on the project. Because the agency is negotiating the sale of Higgins property, Leyton said he could not be more specific about the status of the project. The property acquisition was discussed by the agency in closed session Tuesday.

However, Leyton was confident the situation would be worked out. He said the council may call a special council meeting later this week to approve the memorandum of understanding between the agency and Higgins, or the council could approve the agreement at the council meeting scheduled for next Tuesday.

## Site sought for Brea landmark

# 790 Durkee home rescue moves ahead

By Brian H. Greene  
DSP Staff Writer

BREA — A "last-ditch" effort to save the 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home has come close to completion this week.

City Maintenance Services Manager Bill Higgins and his wife, Pam, were given the home by the current owner of the land, Mercury Insurance Co., and now are negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to find a new location for the historic Brea landmark.

In 1918, Brea pioneer J. D. Sievers built the 10-room home located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway. The tall trees which shade the house have grown to such a size that they have almost become landmarks themselves.

"We're currently negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to buy our house and we're hopefully going to be able to afford to move the house to another piece of property," Bill Higgins said.

"I feel this is a last-ditch effort because if we can't pull it off, the house will be destroyed," he said. "If we can't move it, I don't think there's enough time for someone to go through the same process."

Higgins said he's been negotiating with the agency for the last eight weeks.

Mercury Insurance plans to use the land under the home as a parking lot for its offices located across the street from the home. Higgins will coordinate moving the home with the building con-

tractor for Mercury.

"The way I understand it, they are going to try to keep at least one of those tall trees, and maybe both (trees)," Higgins said of the large trees which frame the home.

Higgins must now finance moving the home and restoring the structure, which Higgins

estimates could cost \$150,000. The Higginses own a home on Brea Boulevard in a redevelopment area and have been negotiating the sale of the land to the agency.

With the money gained from the sale of their home, the Higginses and the Redevelopment Agency are attempting to pur-

chase a site for the house.

"My wife and I both grew up in Brea and, yes, we've been tracking this for a long time," Higgins said. He said his wife has distant relatives who once lived in the home.

"The original thought was that the city would move this and  
(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

HOME SWEET HOME — Bill and Pam Higgins, lifetime Brea residents, are close to completing plans for moving the Sievers-Durkee home. The 69-year-old Brea landmark was close to being destroyed because Mercury Insurance Co. acquired the land and plans to build a parking lot on the property. The Higgins must now find a new site for the home.

STAR-PROGRESS

Daily MAY 14 1967

(OVER)

(Continued from Page 1)

make it a historical building."

But when the costs of moving the home and maintaining it on a yearly basis were calculated, the city bowed out of attempting to move the landmark.

Higgins chaired a task force to determine the home's destiny which, apparently, has left him as the last person interested in moving the structure.

At this time, Higgins said he is "80 percent sure" relocating the home will occur.

"We may have to move the house off the land to a temporary location and, in order to move the house, they'll have to cut it in half," Higgins said. He explained the expense of moving the home to a temporary location does not cost much more than if they move the house once.

"It's no more expensive, it's just like parking a truck someplace," Higgins said.

He also said vandals have shattered windows of the home and taken door knobs and accessories out of the home. He believes this has occurred because people think the home will be demolished.

The Higgins family can chart their own family path in Brea history. Bill, 38, and his wife Pam, 36, grew up in Brea and were married in 1967. Higgins said his mother has lived in Brea 40 years and Pam's grandparents met in Olinda before Brea existed. Pam's grandfather worked most of his career for Standard Oil. The Higgins now live in the home Pam's grandparents once occupied.

The Higgins children, Joe, 19, and Jennifer, 16, will also have a role in refurbishing the new home.

"They're excited," Higgins said. "They helped us build a family room on the back of our house and a new kitchen. We've added 550 square feet to our home."

J. D. Sievers, original owner of the home, has a street named after him in Brea. He was a member of the School Board and director of First National Bank of Brea.

His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at

Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a vacant Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design stands on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been restored by its current owners.

Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when an oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the home, according to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident. Remarkably, the home survived the blaze. As a settlement for the property destroyed by the Union Oil fire, the oil company agreed to buy the home from Sievers.

The property has experienced

several owners until the Durkee family acquired the home sometime in the 1950s. Florence Durkee, the last owner of the home, died in February 1986. Her heirs recently completed the sale of the property to Mercury Insurance for a price believed to be in excess of \$1 million.

Higgins said he hopes to finalize all aspects of the move and sale of property at the first City Council and Redevelopment Agency meeting in June.

"It's a part of Brea history and it may not be the most beautiful mansion, but I'm sure a lot of people don't want to see it destroyed," he said.



**LAST LOOK?**— The venerable Durkee-Bell house on the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, will soon be

demolished to make room for a parking lot.

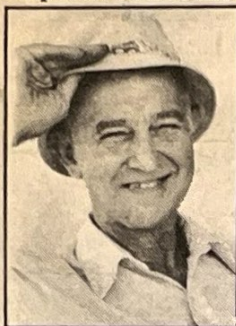
—Photo by David Carlson

# 790 Time running out for the old Durkee place

By Leslie Stuart Carter

The official address is "285 Berry Street," but it might well be "285 Brea" because the old Durkee-Bell house, on the southwest corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, has been there since before most Breans were born. The bilious-green old relic of a bygone age is Brea to those locals looking on aghast and impotent as one cherished echo of the past after another is obliterated, superseded by symbols of a plastic age.

If "last looks" are your thing, then it's suggested you hurry to Berry and Imperial before the demolition crews



ravage the Durkee place. You can still catch the ageless perfume of honeysuckle permeating the once immaculate back gardens. The two magnificent flat-top pine trees

still soar majestically above the dark green roof. The winding, gravelled driveway off Berry, flanked by four eucalyptus trees, once bore the tire marks of Florence Durkee, the house's last owner-occupant who died at age 84 in February, 1986.

The venerable, 5,000-foot wood and stucco building is doomed, purchased by the Mercury Insurance Group whose offices are across the street. Mercury wants the site for additional parking.

"We hate to see the house go," said Mercury administrative assistant Eraina Olson, "but we're desperate for additional parking space for our clients."

There's an oppressive aura of melancholy about the Durkee house today. Early on a blustery morning, the back gardens' accumulation of dead leaves crunched underfoot as everything flappable flapped, and everything creakable creaked. A child's swing set that once sent peals of laughter into the 10-room interior stands derelict and abandoned, undulating gently in the wind as if in silent appeal to its youthful rider of yesterday. An ancient brick-and-cement barbecue crumbles beside a rotting pile of highly combustible firewood. A cookout in days gone by must have been a joyous occasion at the old house.

The Durkee house, circa 1918, was a survivor. The original owner, J.D. Sievers, pillar of Brea society as well as director of the First National Bank and a trustee of the Brea Olinda High School's first school board, enjoyed eight years at the Berry Street residence. Then, at 8 o'clock on the sultry morning of April 8, 1926, a storm broke over Brea, and a lightning bolt struck two 700-gallon oil tanks north of the railroad tracks

on Berry, tracks that are still there to this day. Those Union Oil Co.'s containers exploded, and a deluge of blazing oil slashed through the citrus groves that Sievers (whose name is perpetuated in Brea's annals by the street bearing his name just east of the house) had planted south of the railroad. The 80-acre groves once were covered with choice walnuts before Sievers converted them to oranges and lemons.

The holocaust missed the house but consumed Sievers' orchards. Union Oil, rather than meet J.D.'s huge reparation assessment, simply bought him out—charred orchards, house, the lot. So the petroleum colossus found itself in the fruit business.

Another famous name in local circles, the Bastanchury family, was employed until 1931 by the oil company to tend the new crop of trees. The Basque Bastanchurys were boxing enthusiasts, erecting training facilities for local fighters. The family also earned a reputation of what today would be called "swingers," because their lavish parties at the house were de rigueur for Brea's leading citizens. A Bastanchury Christmas party, particularly, was a highlight of the social season with lights festooning the trees and the house ablaze with color.

The home became the "Neuls (rhymes with "miles") House" when Joseph of that ilk, a Union Oil citrus supervisor, took it over in 1931. A surviving Neuls daughter, Dale, remembers her pre-World War II childhood and her subsequent marriage in the house.

"I couldn't stand it there," Dale Hodgkins said, iconoclastically, "it was too isolated. All my friends lived downtown, and because it was so dark and scary there, once I'd walked home from school, I stayed put."

Dale Neuls Hodgkins remembers the rats and the termites, too. She also recalls that she had the opportunity to buy the atmospheric, historically rich house from her father in 1948 for \$45,000. Today, the stately old home, far grander than the modest oil workers' dwellings that once stood nearby, has a market value of about one-and-a-half million dollars.

So, first the good news. The Sievers-Neuls-Durkee-Bell place can still be saved. The old, dark house, now nailed up and securely sealed like a carcass about to be dismembered, could be relocated in, say, Arovista Park and preserved for future Brea generations to see that once upon a time we treasured our heritage—our links with a more expansive age now vanished and banished forever. The Brea Historical Society is anxious to

save the house, and Mercury Insurance Group doesn't want to go down in Brea history as the crass executioner of the city's loveliest old house. Actually, they just covet the 2.2 acres the place stands on.

Fact is, the people of Brea are up to here with the relentless dissolution of the city's historical landmarks.

"I'm not at all happy with what's going on here," confirmed Dean Millen, commenting on Brea's now gaudier face. Millen is a longtime resident of the community and a founder-member of the Brea Historical Society.

The bad news? The cost of removing the Durkee house from

(over)

Imperial and Berry to a new spot is a cool \$400,000, a sum that the Brea Historical Society simply hasn't got in its coffers.

So, unless somebody out there can come up with the money, the house, still oddly isolated despite its Imperial Highway location, will soon be a pile of rubble.

For many, a vast portion of Brea will be razed with it.

*Brea Beat is a regular feature of the Brea Highlander. Leslie Stuart Carter is a 21-year resident of Brea and a native of London, England. He has written freelance articles for a variety of newspapers and magazines. Comments and suggestions for future columns are welcomed.*

**OUR OPINION**

# And the walls came tumbling down

To most people, it won't matter much in a few years, or maybe even a few days, but a piece of Brea history died this week. And the sad fact is, it didn't have to.

Since 1918, the Sievers-Durkee mansion stood strong and tall at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway. It survived all the elements nature threw at it, but in the end, it was a man-made occurrence which finally struck it down.

On Tuesday, the home which once withstood the great Brea oil field fire in 1926, succumbed to bulldozers to literally pave the way for, of all things, a parking lot. And in just two hours, 69 years of Brea history had been demolished.

When the City Council, which also governs Brea as the Redevelopment Agency, wants to move quickly and fast track a project, it can. But only if the issue is important enough to the individuals holding office.

Brea has its hands full with a number of redevelopment projects downtown and is a major real estate participant in creating a new image for the city, both in the business and residential areas. In conjunction with this construction, the widening of Brea Boulevard and Imperial Highway in the center of the city is also being undertaken.

Additionally, the council is administering to large-scale development in the form of office structures built by Lowe Development Corp. on the current high school site, as well as buildings at Olen Pointe-Brea constructed by Olen Properties.

With so much work and so much responsibility to these matters and more, it was easy for the Sievers-Durkee home to get lost in the shuffle. But to be honest, this is no excuse for letting the home fall to a demolition project.

Six weeks ago, Councilman Gene Leyton spoke optimistically about preserving the home and that the council would do everything possible to save it from destruction. But Councilman Carrey Nelson, a pessimist or realist depending on your point of view, didn't think the home would be saved because, as he said, the city can't do anything in a short period of time. As it turned out, he was correct.

In February 1986, the last owner of the home, Florence Durkee, died and left the property and house to her heirs. Her heirs promptly placed the land up for sale and, because of its location, it generated a great deal of interest.

A little over a year ago, Bill and Pam Higgins, lifetime Brea residents, initiated a crusade to save the home. Mercury Casualty Insurance, which operates an office building across Berry Street from the property, purchased the land for \$1.2 million with the intent of providing more parking space for employees. The transaction was completed in February of this year.

Mercury said in February that because the house was of no use to the company, it was free for the taking. But it would have to be moved at someone else's expense.

Because of the expense, the Higginses and other residents could not convince the city to adopt the project. The city opted not to expend the \$150,000 to \$200,000 necessary to move the home. After

being unable to find a buyer, Bill and Pam Higgins began pursuing the idea of making it their permanent home four months ago. But they needed help.

As owners of a home in a redevelopment area, they attempted to work with the agency, hoping to sell their current residence to the Redevelopment Agency and then purchase a new site for the Sievers-Durkee home. They figured the cost of moving the house, coupled with the purchase of a piece of land for the structure, was the equivalent of purchasing a new home anyway. And with the help of their two teen-age children, they could preserve this Brea landmark for the city and themselves.

But as Pam Higgins said on Friday, city government works slowly. After granting several extensions of time, Mercury President George Joseph finally put his foot down and told the Higginses if they are serious about moving the house, a \$10,000 deposit would be necessary to guarantee the home will be moved by Aug. 14.

After haggling with the city over pieces of property for two months, frustration finally overtook the optimism the Higginses once felt. The deadline for submitting the deposit was Friday, and they let it pass, finally giving in to the grim reality the home would be destroyed.

The Redevelopment Agency contacted the Higginses on Saturday with a potential piece of property for the home, but there was no guarantee escrow would close in time to move the home. Because the city and agency, by law, could not front the \$10,000 deposit, the risk was on the shoulders of the Higginses — a risk they chose not to take based on past experience with the slow methods of city government.

The sad part is, other parties were interested. But Joseph had committed to the Higginses and the Redevelopment Agency. And when the deal fell through, he could wait no longer.

The home certainly wasn't typical of the average Brea home of the era, but that's what made it so unique. Built by J.D. Sievers, for whom a Brea street is named, a Basque boxer once also owned the home. It was the site of many social gatherings of significance in the 1930s and 1940s. Adding to its character, the dining room built-in buffet had a secret compartment which its last owner Florence Durkee loved to show guests.

With the plans the Higginses had for refurbishing the home when relocated in downtown, Brea could have retained a great piece of its history while moving forward to the future.

It's been said Brea is a "big operation for a little town of 32,000." Granted, the pace of the city is like that of an Anaheim or Costa Mesa at times. But like many big towns, sometimes progress moves forward too quickly and steps on the past. In order to understand the future and know where you're going, you've got to understand where you've been. A sense of the past can only help determine direction for the future.

And with the demise of the Sievers-Durkee home, Brea has joined the ranks of the larger cities — by crushing its past to make way for the future.

## Family may preserve historical Brea house

By Anne MacDonald <sup>790</sup>  
Special to The Register

The old green house at the corner of Berry and Imperial seems to defy the changing times. Older residents of Brea say it's been around about as long as the city, which was founded in 1917.

The branches of two huge stone pine trees bend inward to meet each other at the top, framing the house as it faces the modern square building of Mercury Insurance Group on the opposite side of the street.

For the past two months, Bill and Pam Higgins have been spending their weekends at the house. Along with their two children, 16-year-old Jennifer and 19-year-old Joe, the Higginses spend their Saturdays and Sundays cleaning up broken glass and preparing the house for its move to another site.

After the death of its last resident, Florence Durkee, in 1986, the house was scheduled for demolition and its 2.2 acres turned into an employee parking lot for the Mercury Group. Mrs. Higgins said the yellow plywood covering the windows "made me want to do something."

Higgins, a maintenance services manager for Brea, came up with an idea: "Let's move it to another lot and live in it ourselves." Mrs. Higgins said the family has to move anyway, because its old house on Brea Boulevard is in a redevelopment area.

The house, known as the Sievers-Durkee house, is a Brea landmark and legend. It survived the Union Oil fire

of 1926 that destroyed the surrounding citrus groves and several nearby houses. It remained standing during the great earthquake of 1933.

Last year, the Brea Historical Society launched a campaign to save the historical Sievers-Durkee House. A city-appointed task force concluded that the cost was prohibitive, estimating \$200,000 to \$400,000 to bring the

house up to code, restore it and move it to another site, with an annual maintenance budget of \$62,000.

The Mercury Insurance Group gave the house to the Higgins family after Mrs. Higgins explained that her interest was both historical and sentimental.

"My aunt, Eleanor Neuls, lived there for years," she said.

Higgins said the biggest problem now is time. The family is trying to buy a lot to move the house to.

"We are negotiating over the price of our house and the city-owned lot," he said. "The city is trying to move fast on this, but right now we desperately need a temporary lot to put the house on for a couple of months."

George Joseph, president of Mercury General Corp., said that as of last week, he has not hired workers to begin building the parking lot. He said Mercury intends to try to save as many of the citrus and eucalyptus trees on the property as possible, as well as one of the huge pines. However, he said, while the contractors will try to work around the house, it must be moved soon.

Higgins figures it will cost \$150,000

for him to restore and move the 10-room, 5,000-square-foot house. "We're going to do a lot of the work ourselves," said Mrs. Higgins, a draftsman. She will design the plans; Higgins will do the construction and restoration work.

Karl Fanning, president of the Brea Historical Society, said he's delighted to hear the house may be saved. The 72-year-old lifetime resident of Brea has childhood memories of the property. He recalls the walnut trees "made a tunnel of shade in the summer."

Fanning said the house became known as the Sievers-Durkee house because J.D. Sievers was the "pio-

neer" who built the house and Florence Durkee was the last resident of the house. Other residents include the Bastanchury family, the Neuls and the Bell family.

Whether it becomes the future home of the Higgins family depends in part on the City Council. Higgins met with a representative of the city's Redevelopment Agency to outline a proposal. He declined to give details on his proposal, pending consideration by the city.

Steve Copenhaver of the Redevelopment Agency said it is premature to comment on the Higgins proposal, but, he added, "we are looking for a workable way to preserve the house."

**pacific clippings**

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**STAR-PROGRESS**

Daily JUL 21 1987

# Here today, gone tomorrow

790



(Star-Progress photos by Jack Hancock)

**ONLY A MEMORY** — The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home, formerly located at the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, was demolished this morning after efforts to move the Brea landmark to a new site fell through. Above is a view of the home on Monday, looking south toward Imperial Highway. Today at 10:30 a.m., a view from Imperial reveals all that remains of the 10-room home of Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers are the tall trees which once framed the structure, above right.



# Brea landmark facing wrecking ball

By Brian H. Greene

DSP Staff Writer 790

BREA — Though initial efforts to save the 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home seemed promising last May, the Brea landmark now appears to be dying a slow death.

The 10-room home, located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway, now faces probable destruction, according to Brea redevelopment consultant Steve Copenhaver.

Built by Brea pioneer J. D. Sievers in 1918, the home remains a landmark in Brea because of its architectural style as well as its history of previous owners.

Because the city and a potential new owner only have about 10 days left to move the home, Copenhaver said just a 10 percent chance remains for purchasing a new site for the home and actually moving the structure.

Mercury Insurance Group, owners of the property where the Sievers-Durkee home stands, also owns an office building across Berry Street from the house. Earlier this year, Mercury purchased the Sievers-Durkee home site for a price reported to exceed \$1 million.

Mercury plans to build a parking lot on the land which will serve its office building across the street. But Mercury also is willing to let the house go for free — except for the cost of moving the structure off the land.

Mercury has been in the pro-

cess of preparing the land around the house for construction and is ready to begin the parking lot project.

Bill Higgins, city maintenance services director, has been attempting to find a site to move the home to and make the home his own. But to date, his efforts and the city's efforts have been

unsuccessful.

"No one wants to see that beautiful house destroyed, but we've done about everything we can to save it," Mayor John Sutton said at the Redevelopment Agency meeting Tuesday night.

"Unfortunately, unless we have a streak of good luck, I just

can't see this happening," Copenhaver told the agency Tuesday. "It's hard to get people to move on a week's notice."

Copenhaver said a property owner in La Habra Heights is interested in moving the home to the Heights, but on such short notice this may be impossible.

# Last bid fizzles; Durkee house leveled



190

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

All that's left now at 285 Berry St. is a dusty, empty lot.

The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee house that stood at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway was leveled last week after last-ditch efforts to save the local landmark fizzled out. One of the two towering pine trees which grew together in a curtain above the 10-room home now stands alone on the site in the midst of yellow landmovers and lumbering bulldozers.

The Mercury Insurance Co., which operates in a building across the street, will pour asphalt on the site and use it as a parking lot.

City officials and residents alike mourn the loss of the home, built in 1918 by J. D. Sievers, a Brea pioneer. But for one Brea couple, the destruction of the dark green house went a little deeper than disappointment at the disappearance of a piece of local history.

Bill and Pam Higgins, both Brea natives who grew up and married in the city, tried tirelessly for months to save the Durkee house. The couple worked with the Brea Redevelopment Agency, the City Council and Mercury insurance officials to save the home, according to Carol Richardson, the city's public information officer.

The Higgins had to move anyway, since their home was in the downtown redevelopment area and would be torn down to make way for another lane on Brea Boulevard. They decided to fix up the old house, which a distant relative of Pam's had lived in long ago, and move it to another location, Richardson said.

There began a long trip down bureaucratic boulevard, a journey which would end in disappointment for most involved.

The huge costs of renovating the home and moving it to another site, in

addition to time constraints, made relocation of the home impossible. The Brea Historical Society couldn't afford it, and neither could the Higgins family in the end.

The Higgins began their effort to save the Sievers-Durkee house in July of 1986, when Bill Higgins, a Brea maintenance division manager, was asked about the cost of relocating the home.

In March of 1987, Redevelopment Agency staff members told Higgins they were interested in purchasing his Brea Boulevard home, to make way for street widening. Faced with a move, the Higgins family decided to live in the local landmark. A letter from Pam Higgins to Mercury Insurance prompted the firm's president, George Josephs, to offer the home to the Brea family, provided they could find a suitable site within a short time frame. The insurance firm had already planned a parking lot for the site and had deadlines of its own to meet.

Higgins approached the Redevelopment Agency in May of 1987 about the possibility of trading his Brea Boulevard home for other property within the city, property to which he could move the big house. Although three locations were suggested, none were deemed suitable for the Sievers-Durkee house.

Richardson said Higgins wanted to move the house to the corner of the city golf course at Madrona. But problems with zoning codes couldn't be ironed out and this proposal, like many others, fell through.

Higgins then went door-to-door in the city, seeking two adjacent sites to purchase for the house. In early July, he found two properties on Walnut. The Higgins family, the property owners and Redevelopment Agency staff haggled over the land until late July 10, but could not come up with an agreement. But on July 13, the owners indicated they would sell, but time had run out, Richardson said.

69-year-old Sievers-Durkee house at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway was leveled last week after last-ditch efforts to save the local landmark fizzled out.

Photo by David Carlson



# HIGHLANDER

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 1987

25¢

## Last bid fizzles; Durkee house leveled



**IT'S GONE**— The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee house that stood at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway was leveled last week after last-ditch efforts to save the local landmark fizzled out.

—Photo by David Carlson

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

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## Brea school district to seek long-term funds

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

School districts need more money to operate.

That's the message the Brea school board hopes will reach legislators in Sacramento. The Brea Olinda Unified School District Board of Trustees recently passed a resolution calling for a statewide initiative to "provide stable, long-term funding" for public schools.

The resolution is designed to protest a lack of state funding for local school districts.

Brea faces a grim budget year in 1987-88. The board was told by Assistant Superintendent Gaylen Freeman at a June meeting it faces "severe budget cuts" for the 1988-89 school year. Freeman suggested charging for bus rides to and from school and the possible elimination of a seventh period at the junior high and high school levels to balance the budget.

Freeman's suggestions of cuts were met with unanimous opposition from the board. One member suggested perhaps more drastic measures to obtain state funding for local school dis-

trict.

Trustee Lynn Daucher suggested a statewide "school-out" in September. Delaying indefinitely the beginning of the school year would get the attention of legislators in Sacramento, Daucher suggested.

The recently passed resolution does not mention a school-out, however. The document, passed July 15, said the trustees are "extremely concerned about the status of public school finance and the inability of the State Legislature and the governor to plan, write and implement finance legislation that will allow school districts statewide to maintain programs need to educate competitive graduates."

The resolution points out the kindergarten through 12th grade education will be receiving "dramatically lower" percentages of new state revenues in the 1987-88 budget. State expenditures per student in the same year will "increase insignificantly," the resolution states, putting a growing demand on local coffers.



**Horsing around**

Amanda Gundy, 3, of Brea, seems to be having the time of her life on the horse swing at Carbon Canyon Regional Park one recent afternoon.

—Photo by David Carlson

# 151-unit senior apartment complex tops agenda

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

A proposal for a 151-unit senior citizen apartment complex in Brea will be debated by the City Council Tuesday.

A public hearing on the proposed complex, planned for 2.4 acres at 195 W. Central Ave., is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, said City Clerk Donna

Rhine.

All property owners within 300 feet of the proposed development received written notification of the public hearing. Any Brea resident, however, can speak on the proposal, Rhine said.

On June 24, the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval of a 141-unit apartment com-

## City Council Preview

plex, with 139 units designated for senior citizens. Newport Beach developer John Shea then asked to add 10 units. One-hundred and fifty of the proposed 151 units would be designated for seniors in the Brea Woods Apartments.

The reason for the request for 10 additional units, according to a Planning Department staff report, is to enable Shea to rent to persons who are a minimum of 55 years old, rather than the mandated 62 years old and above. Under the Unruh Act, senior developments that have 150 units or more can define seniors as 55 years old or older. Those with less than 150 units must designate senior citizens as anyone more than 62 years old.

As proposed, 10 of the units will be for low income seniors, 39 will be moderately priced and 76 will be market rate units. Rents will range from \$395 per month to more than \$500. Square footage ranges from 450 square feet to 855 square feet.

Eighty-three standard parking

stalls, three handicapped stalls and 23 compact parking stalls will be provided.

The 151 apartments will be housed in one three-story building, about 43 feet high, according to the staff report.

The Planning Commission considered the proposed senior apartment complex at its meeting Tuesday and was expected to recommend the City Council approve the project.

Under the development agreement being considered, Shea will receive a 156 percent density increase for providing a minimum of 24 percent of the rentable units to low income households and 26 percent of the units to low/moderate income households.

The City Council meets the first and third Tuesday of the month in the City Council/Board hearing room on the first level of the Civic & Cultural Center. Scheduled agenda topics are subject to change.

For more information on this, or other agenda topics, call 990-7757.



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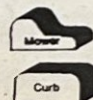
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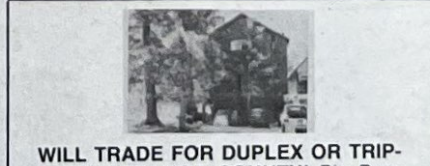
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# Here today, gone tomorrow



(Star-Progress photos by Jack Hancock)

**ONLY A MEMORY** — The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home, formerly located at the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, was demolished this morning after efforts to move the Brea landmark to a new site fell through. Above is a view of the home on Monday, looking south toward Imperial Highway. Today at 10:30 a.m., a view from Imperial reveals all that remains of the 10-room home of Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers are the tall trees which once framed the structure, above right.

## Sunny Hills coaches suspended for abandoning team in desert

By Meg James  
Freedom News Service

FULLERTON—Two Sunny Hills High School coaches have been suspended after abandoning six high-school basketball players for nearly two hours in the desert Saturday night. The boys were found about 9:30 p.m. by a Riverside County sheriff's deputy. They were in a school-owned van parked along Interstate 10 near Whitewater, about 20 miles northwest of Palm Desert.

The two assistant coaches supervising the players after a Palm Desert basketball tournament allegedly became annoyed with the boys' behavior. They pulled over, took the van's keys and drove off with a friend who had been following in a second vehicle. The coaches, R. Lyndon Boop, 26, and Mark Kremer, 21, both of Fullerton, allegedly had dinner and returned to find the boys gone, according to Steven White, the school's head basketball coach. White had remained in Palm Desert with five other

team members and some parents. "At first we thought it was a joke," said player Walter W. Mitter, 17, of Fullerton. "We're always rowdy, and usually Coach White doesn't mind." Eventually the boys sought help from a motorist, who notified authorities, said Riverside Sheriff's deputy James Coillot, who was dispatched to locate them. "They were just sitting there in the freeway traffic (on the shoulder of the highway)," he said. "And the first thing they wanted to know was if we could arrest the coaches."

## Temporary sales...

(Continued from Page 1)  
CoreCare Inc. has previously stated that construction would not begin for approximately nine months.

applicant, Wilford W. Williams is the property owner. According to the staff report, neither the city nor the police has received any complaints against the church.

He also said that California laws require that this type of facility have at least 50 percent of its project committed before a developer could begin construction. Corecare Inc. is composed of approximately 75 Fullerton doctors, according to Kambak. The property is owned by LAOR Liquidating Associates.

Also on the agenda is a request by Anaton Associates Ltd, applicant and property owner, for a conditional use permit. Anaton is requesting a joint-use parking agreement on the 31-acre multi-tenant shopper center on the southwest corner of Harbor Boulevard and Orangethorpe Avenue.

In addition, the planners will consider an application by Alterman Transport Lines, Inc. of Opa Locka, Fla., for permission to operate a long-distance trucking terminal at 360 S. Acacia Ave, on the southeast corner of Acacia and Walnut avenues.

Anaton needs the agreement, because the plans approved in 1985 had a parking surplus of 122 stalls according to city code and the 1987 plan has a 265-stall deficit. Although the 1987 plan has more square footage of building area than the 1985 plan, the basic reason for the parking stall deficit is that more space is being devoted to restaurant's use in the 1987 plan, requiring more parking.

## An hour with...

(Continued from Page 1)  
Obviously proud of her achievements, Le says Vietnamese women have become very aggressive since the war. "There are a lot of women in management positions in Saigon, we know we must work hard to achieve." Stropko, who began the In Bin business 12 years ago, says he's satisfied with his successor. "It's a fun business; every day provided a humorous thought. And with the number of foreign exchange students that visited through the years, it was always nice to know our T-shirts traveled to more than 50 countries. The former owner, who is moving to Lake Havasu City this month, spent three weeks training Le in the art of silk screening and transfer construction. "Now I'm looking into purchasing a silk screen factory so I can build a bigger operation and open more stores," she says. Since arriving in La Habra, Le has brought her sons into

the business. Hap, 13, handles the lettering process while Bao, 16, concentrates on silk screening. Extra time is spent working on art projects in the family home. Since taking over the business, numerous orders have been placed by local high schools, organizations and fun-loving residents, says Le. A few weeks ago, members of the Dean/Evans families ordered 116 shirts for a family reunion in Braymer, Mo. To assure continued success, Le keeps a reminder of her homeland on a store shelf. A gold-decorated figure of Than Tai, Vietnamese god of good fortune, is surrounded by water and fresh fruit arrangements "to show respect and offer a symbol of wealth for the store." With immeasurable exuberance, the diminutive entrepreneur seems satisfied with her new business home. "Even a man from Seattle, visiting on a business trip, drove here to get an Ollie T-shirt," adds Le. Words are getting around.

Besides Mitter, the boys include Brian J. McCloskey, 17, of Buena Park and the following Fullerton residents: Chris Drakos, 17; Brendan Hickman, age unknown; Ray Leone, 20; and Manish Munshi, 16. They were driven back to Orange County by Drakos' stepfather, arriving about 2 a.m., Mitter said.

While the boys waited at the Banning sheriff's station, they ordered take-out pizza and soft drinks. "They were really hungry and thirsty," Coillot said. Coillot has reported the incident to Riverside County sheriff's investigators and recommended that misdemeanor child-endangerment charges be filed. None of the boys was injured," he said.

After meeting with school officials Monday afternoon, White suspended the two coaches—neither of whom are teachers at the high school—for the remainder of the summer program, which ends in two weeks, he said.

Officials will review the case before school resumes in the fall to see whether the two will be rehired, he said.

Boop and Kremer could not be reached for comment Monday and did not return calls. "The kids were playing music and singing and jumping around, and (Boop) warned them to settle down," White said. "I guess they kept on jumping around." Boop reportedly pulled the van over to the side of the freeway and switched off the engine. White said. He and Kremer then took the keys and drove off with Boop's friend, White said.

"He should never have left those kids alone," White said. "Boop just made a bad judgment call." White said Boop had intended to teach the boys a lesson and returned to the van later with Kremer to drive the boys home. But by that time they had been picked up by the sheriff's deputy.

White said the two drove the van back to Orange County without further incident. Both coaches were salaried, although the summer athletic program is not an official school function, White said. He said Boop has coached at Sunny Hills for two years and Kremer was completing his first year.

School officials refused to talk about the incident Monday pending an investigation. Freedom staff writers Nick Johnson, Randy Franz and Donna Davis contributed to this report.



## Brea considers BCEA pact

BREA — A memorandum of understanding with the 96-member Brea City Employees Association will be considered by the City Council at its meeting tonight. BCEA has worked without a contract since Dec. 31, 1986, and sought increased benefits as well as an across-the-board pay increase. When an impasse in negotiations with the city was declared, workers took their fight to the streets outside the Civic and Cultural Center and picketed for a wage hike. The agreement, which will be

voted on under consent calendar items tonight, is for one year retroactive to Jan. 1. Thus, a new agreement will need to be hammered out in the near future for the 1988 calendar. The council will also consider implementing fees upon property owners concerning the abatement of weeds. Introduction and first reading of an ordinance to establish sewer service charges for the cost center recovery program

will also be considered by the council. During the council study session prior to the meeting, the council will review design details for both phases of improvements on Brea Boulevard. The City Council will meet in the Brea Civic and Cultural Center at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. The study session prior to the meeting will be held at 5 p.m. — Brian H. Greene

## Woman shot to death

SANTA MONICA (AP) — A 21-year-old woman was shot to death by a gunman in a passing car as she walked to a restaurant.

Paula Kelly of Los Angeles was struck in the head as she walked along the 1700 block of Ocean Avenue with three men at 2:25 a.m. Sunday, authorities reported. She was pronounced dead at the scene. Her companions were uninjured.

"It appears to be unprovoked," said Santa Monica police Sgt. Steven Brackett. "They drove by at a slow speed and fired at her."

## Officer...

(Continued from Page 1)  
tried to coax him out of a room, said her husband, a physical education teacher at Sonora High School in La Habra. She tried to get a hold of the normally playful animal, which became angry and attacked her, he said.

Indiga, given to the Davises as a gift three years ago, had nipped her in the arm with his teeth before but was not a problem in the last year. It could have been nervous at the presence of several people in the house that day, her husband said.

He said his wife, although upset at the death of the animal, had planned to have it put to sleep after it attacked her because she was concerned that it may harm someone else. "I can understand the officer protecting himself," her husband added.

He couldn't help but wonder, however, why the Animal Control officers could not have used a tranquilizer gun to calm the dog, he said.

Joe Oliver, chief of the county's Animal Control services, said officers who respond to such attacks do so unarmed with weapons and instead try to capture the animal with conventional methods like the noose pole.

Lack of weapons "is an accepted risk in the business," Oliver said.

Davis' husband said the police did inform his daughter that they may have to use their weapons if the dog should attack again. The officers also asked that all children present be removed from the house in case shots are fired, he added. "I appreciated that," he said. Davis is expected to return home soon, he added.

## Marriott hotel...

(Continued from Page 1)  
by Marriott, which resembles a two-story apartment complex with a tile roof and heavy landscaping. Currently, Courtyard by Marriott has a Buena Park location. In addition to Brea, plans are being made for a Courtyard in Santa Ana and two in Irvine, with sights also set on Huntington Beach and two more in Anaheim.

In all, the massive expansion plans by Marriott call for 300 Courtyards nationwide over the next five years at a cost of \$2 billion.

"We directed our marketing department to hone in on those needs of the business traveler, and we've tailored something to their needs," said Jack Bloodworth, regional real estate director for Courtyard by Marriott.

Bloodworth addressed the crowd by stating the project will have a positive effect on traffic in the area. Generally, hotel guests will occupy their rooms only during the evening hours and will not create traffic during the peak hours of the day. Also, many of the people staying in the hotel will conduct business with the adjacent buildings on the site, thus cutting down on the need to travel.

"That hotel is not going to reduce traffic," one resident asserted. The argument was raised that travel during the early morning and early evening hours will only make traffic in the area worse than it already is. Also, service vehicles will travel daily to deliver to the hotel.

"It's only 149 rooms. It's not like the full-service Marriott you see in Anaheim. Our primary function is not service from the big tractor-trailer, but primarily smaller vehicles which will serve the hotel," Bloodworth said.

Residents also asserted that the meeting rooms will attract large crowds, but Bloodworth said the one Courtyard meeting room can hold only 50 people. Thus, large conventions and banquets are virtually impossible because of the limited facilities.

"The object of the hotel is not to go after group business," Bloodworth said. "We don't want to compete with our own hotel project at Cal State Fullerton." Marriott is also building an \$18 million hotel at Cal State consisting of 224 rooms and a wide range of facilities. "We don't have the capabilities of conducting that type of business with this (Brea) hotel,"

Bloodworth said. "I assure you that our intent is not to become the focal point for group business."

One of the goals of Marriott is to cut costs of business travelers. Bloodworth said the price of a room at the Brea Courtyard would be \$68 nightly.

One woman asserted that with the new high school close to the site, drug dealers could sell narcotics to youths in a hotel room.

"If there's a problem, we'd work very hard with the law enforcement agency to combat it," Bloodworth said. "Marriott Corporation will not stand for any type of that activity."

The structure would be 47 feet at its highest point, though Bloodworth said the hilly site will be graded lower than it is currently. But residents remained concerned about the view. Olen's first two office buildings of six- and three-stories each have not been well received.

"We have a great view of Olen Properties, and if we have a great view of Olen, we'll have a great view of you," one resident told Bloodworth.

Bloodworth acknowledged the laughter from the audience after the comment. He remained good-natured about the presentation throughout the entire evening. Though residents were concerned the project, none overtly expressed hostility toward the Marriott representatives.

"It's the City Council and the Planning Commission that are at fault, and that's who we have to go after," another resident asserted. His comments were followed with applause.

Bloodworth expanded on the benefits to the city as a result of the project. Brea will realize about \$2.7 million in bed taxes over the first five years, and about \$7.8 million over 20 years.

"In any life cycle, there's a place where it will max out," Bloodworth said.

But a resident argued the "numbers weren't impressive enough" and suggested the city pursue a project which would net more revenue.

But Bloodworth countered that by providing a hotel, it would allow business travelers to stay in Brea and not have to travel to Anaheim or Buena Park.

"Actually, sir, I don't think that's an issue of any person in this room," a resident quipped to the delight of the audience.



## Camping fun

LH Scouts explore the great outdoors/News17

- **IN THE HEADLINES**
- **Mobilehome Park art/ News17**
- **Swim fun in Brea/ News18**
- **CSF hotel schedule told/ News18**

# Daily Star-Progress



### Serving

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## Brea officer kills dog that attacked woman

By Janet Joson  
DSP Staff Writer

**YORBA LINDA** — A woman is recovering from serious arm wounds received Monday from an attack by her Chinese fighting dog, which was shot to death by a Brea police officer.

Karen J. Davis, 44, is in fair condition at St. Jude Hospital after being treated for multiple puncture and tear wounds on both arms, according to a hospi-

tal spokesperson.

Brea police responded to a call of an animal attack at a residence in the 5200 block of Via Ester shortly after 12:30 p.m., according to police reports. They were joined by Orange County Animal Control officers, who tried to capture the dog with a noose pole.

The dog, however, broke loose and ran into another room where Brea police Officer Daniel Hun-

ter and a partner were waiting. The angered animal, which was apparently charging toward Hunter, was shot six times, according to Davis' husband Norman.

Neither Hunter nor a Brea Police Department spokesperson could be reached for comment.

The dog, a Chow named "Indiga," was stubborn when Davis (Continued on Page 2)

## Marriott hotel experiment meets opposition in Brea

By Brian H. Greene  
DSP Staff Writer

**BREA** — An official of Marriott Corp., which plans to construct a 149-room Courtyard by Marriott in conjunction with office structures at Olen Pointe-Brea, met with more than 80 concerned residents Monday.

Increased traffic and the attraction of an unwanted element, such as prostitution and drug dealers, topped the subdued protests by neighbors. Olen Pointe is located at the northeast corner of Lambert Road and the 57 Freeway.

The Marriott proposal, which would be located in the rear of Olen Pointe, will be close to the new Brea-Olinda High School being constructed just up the hill. Among the observers at the meeting in the City Council Chambers were School Board President Sharon Chase and Councilwoman Clarice Blamer.

The Olen project has previously received Planning Commission and City Council approval. But for a hotel to be built on the site, Marriott will need an amendment to the existing conditional use permit with Olen.

This would also need council approval.

More than \$40 million in research by Marriott was conducted in an effort to determine how to best meet the needs of the businessman who travels frequently. Marriott's research found that most business travelers didn't like the traditional high-rise hotel setting. The more the hotel resembled home, the better, according to Marriott officials.

Thus, out of the research came the development of Courtyard (Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Jack Hencock)

**PALM DESERT** — The Palm Court North condominium complex on Harbor Boulevard, north of Whittier boulevard in La Habra, has remained vacant for more than two years. The owners have not received a certificate of occupancy because the city has questioned the soil compaction underneath buildings.

## City, condominium owners conflict over soil reports

By Debra Cano  
DSP Staff Writer

**LA HABRA** — For more than two years, the 60-unit Palm Court North condominium development has remained vacant.

The north Harbor Boulevard complex has never been sold and occupied because the compaction of the soil has been questioned by the city.

According to city officials, a certificate of occupancy for the development has not been granted because the soil compaction does not meet city satisfaction.

However, Mission Viejo-based Beverly Hills Savings and Loan, which owns the condominium development, believes compaction of the soil does meet city and state building code.

"We believe that the soil report submitted was sufficient," said Joe Cartwright, assistant vice president of property management of Beverly Hills Savings and Loan.

While the city and Beverly Hills Savings and Loan are working toward resolving the matter, Cartwright said "the city is dragging its feet for reasons we don't know or understand."

And because of ongoing impositions by the city, Cartwright said it is costing the financial institution a bundle of money every month the development sits empty.

Cartwright said it is costing Beverly Hills Savings and Loan

upward of \$30,000 a month to retain the property. "That's pretty expensive, when we have buyers."

Joe Cartwright

expert for further evaluation and opinion.

"That's pretty expensive, when we have buyers," he added.

The two- and three-story complex — built for adults 55 years of age and older — is located on the eastside of Harbor Boulevard, north of Whittier Boulevard.

Dick Woods, director of the city's Building and Safety Department, denies the city is responsible for any delays: "Why would we want a building to stay vacant? It wouldn't make any sense to us."

According to City Attorney Dick Jones, Beverly Hills Savings and Loan had a check list of items — from lack of required landscaping to meeting with concerned neighbors and agreeing to the complex's city-imposed bylaws — that needed to be complied with, including the soil report, before the certificate of occupancy is granted.

But the final and unresolved issue is the city will not grant the condominium development a certificate of occupancy until a soil compaction report is reviewed by an independent soil

expert for further evaluation and opinion.

The project's dilemmas apparently started in early 1985 after the original developer, Mahmoud Itani, deserted the project and another developer, Burke and Burns, became a partner, according to Cartwright.

Subsequently, the developers had financial problems and Beverly Hills Savings and Loan foreclosed on the construction loan in July 1985.

After the financial institution assumed title, it discovered the original developers never submitted the final grading and compaction report to the city, which would show the soil was compacted to the project's preliminary report's criteria.

On new developments, a preliminary grading and compaction report is completed at the start of a project, performed by the development's soil engineer.

Following, the final soil report usually is submitted to the city — in compliance with state Building Code requirements — before a building is constructed. (Continued on Page 3)

## Temporary sales office before Fullerton agency

By Jackie Brown  
DSP Staff Writer

**FULLERTON** — Planning commissioners will consider an application Wednesday at 4 p.m. from CoreCare Inc. to place a temporary sales office at the southwest corner of Brea Boulevard and Bastanchury Road.

The request is in conjunction with the planned construction

Fullerton's first life-care facility for affluent senior citizens.

The Mediterranean-styled self-contained community will include 248 dwelling units, 90 suites (bed and board facilities without kitchens) and 262 beds for intermediate care and skilled nursing facilities.

President Maynard Kambak (Continued on Page 2)

## An hour with...Yvonne Le

### She has a few words for you

By Barbara Glasone  
DSP Managing Editor

**LA HABRA** — Olliespeak is spoken here. At the In Bin, La Habra's whimsical command post for public opinion, customers are getting things off their chests by putting them across their chests.

"Ollie By Gollie," "Ollie for President" and "Ollie North is #1" are just three of Yvonne Le's latest T-shirt artworks that put verse in controversy.

"When the Lakers won the championship, we sold lots of shirts that said Boston s—," Le whispered. "And people always have something to say about ill-mannered habits."

It's quite an introduction to American humor for the Vietnamese-bred woman who purchased the Harbor Boulevard business from Jack Stropko two months ago. Trying to keep abreast of world, national and local events, Le concedes her volume, "Better English Made Easy," is well-worn.

Raised in Saigon, Le and her family were among the first to flee their homeland 12 years ago on a military flight. "My father was employed by the American Embassy as chief of the security group; he helped plan our escape," she recalls.

At the time, Le was divorced with 18-month-old and 3-year-old sons. A graduate of Saigon University with a pharmaceutical degree (she was sales director of a French drug firm), she applied her skills in South Carolina as soon as she arrived in America.

During her first six years on the East Coast, she was employed as a quality process

controller and engineer for Ameron. A transfer to Houston with another company led to quality assurance experience. By January, 1983, she arrived in California "in recession times" to earn a real estate license.

"I've been looking for a long

time to find a place for my own business," says the successful 41-year-old. "I just saved and saved, hoping some day I could bring my sons from their grandparents' home in Texas to live with me. Now we can be a team."

(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Barbara Glasone)

**MESSAGE MAKERS** — Fishermen, Lakers and Ollie North vie for popularity at the In Bin T-shirt shop in La Habra, purchased two months ago by Yvonne Le, seated. Helping her establish a profitable silk-screening and transfer business are sons Hap, left, and Bao, who arrived 12 years ago from Vietnam.

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## Beauty time

Miss LH contest set for Monday/News9

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# Daily Star-Progress



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## Puente St. extension dying a slow death

By Jackie Brown  
DSP Staff Writer

FULLERTON — The deletion of the Puente Street extension from city plans was virtually assured Wednesday night, when the Planning Commission gave its unanimous approval.

When the deletion comes up at the City Council meeting on June 2, the process will have gone full circle, having previously won unanimous approval from the Transportation and Circulation Commission. The deletion had been recommended by the council.

The section from Rolling Hills to Las Palmas drives would have provided a way to extend Puente to Imperial Highway.

At the same time, the commission abandoned 10-foot-wide strips on the east and west sides of Puente from Bastanchury Road north to approximately 100 feet north of Rosarita Drive, and on the west side of Puente Street between Cienega Drive to approximately 266 feet south of Las Rientas Drive.

Since Puente has been changed from a secondary arterial highway to a local collector street and the possibility of widening the street has been eliminated, the extra land strips are no longer needed.

In other business, the planners approved 6-0 (Commissioner Chester Schultz was absent) a conditional use permit application by the North Orange County Regional Occupation Program to use the former location of the Chuck E Cheese Restaurant as a vocational training facility.

The site is part of the commercial center at the northwest corner of Orangethorpe Avenue and Brookhurst Road. The commission also approved the ROP's use of the center's parking lot, in back of the proposed school.

Other items unanimously approved were: site plans for a  
(Continued on Page 2)

## Brea narc officers arrest 4

By David Crocker  
DSP Staff Writer

BREA — Three adults and one juvenile were arrested in Santa Ana Tuesday by Brea narcotic officers following the sale of a kilogram of cocaine, police report.

According to Brea police Sgt. Mike Messina, the arrests culminated a monthlong investigation involving cocaine distribution between the cities of Yorba Linda and Santa Ana. Messina said an undercover officer last month met with Richard Martinez, 24, of Santa Ana, at the Coco's Restaurant on Nutwood Avenue and the 57 Freeway in Fullerton.

Following subsequent meetings, Martinez led officers Tuesday to the La Fiesta Restaurant, 819 S. Main St., in Santa Ana.

About 6:30 p.m., undercover officers arrived at the restaurant and found Martinez and three other male suspects waiting. One of the suspects was a  
(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Barbara Glasone)

LEARNING THE FUND-RAISING ROPES — La Habra Boys and Girls Club Executive Director Tom Sauer, center, welcomes Echo Park director Mike Flores, right, and Eastside Boys and Girls Club Director Alex Fey to the 13th annual Boys and Girls Club Auction. The pair were on hand to learn successful fund-raising techniques. For more auction photos, see page 13 of today's edition.

## Site sought for Brea landmark

# Durkee home rescue moves ahead

By Brian H. Greene  
DSP Staff Writer

BREA — A "last-ditch" effort to save the 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home has come close to completion this week.

City Maintenance Services Manager Bill Higgins and his wife, Pam, were given the home by the current owner of the land, Mercury Insurance Co., and now are negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to find a new location for the historic Brea landmark.

In 1918, Brea pioneer J. D. Sievers built the 10-room home located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway. The tall trees which shade the house have grown to such a size that they have almost become landmarks themselves.

"We're currently negotiating with the Redevelopment Agency to buy our house and we're hopefully going to be able to afford to move the house to another piece of property," Bill Higgins said.

"I feel this is a last-ditch effort because if we can't pull it off, the house will be destroyed," he said. "If we can't move it, I don't think there's enough time for someone to go through the same process."

Higgins said he's been negotiating with the agency for the last eight weeks.

Mercury Insurance plans to use the land under the home as a parking lot for its offices located across the street from the home. Higgins will coordinate moving the home with the building con-

tractor for Mercury.

"The way I understand it, they are going to try to keep at least one of those tall trees, and maybe both (trees)," Higgins said of the large trees which frame the home.

Higgins must now finance moving the home and restoring the structure, which Higgins

estimates could cost \$150,000.

The Higginses own a home on Brea Boulevard in a redevelopment area and have been negotiating the sale of the land to the agency.

With the money gained from the sale of their home, the Higginses and the Redevelopment Agency are attempting to pur-

chase a site for the house.

"My wife and I both grew up in Brea and, yes, we've been tracking this for a long time," Higgins said. He said his wife has distant relatives who once lived in the home.

"The original thought was that the city would move this and  
(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

HOME SWEET HOME — Bill and Pam Higgins, lifetime Brea residents, are close to completing plans for moving the Sievers-Durkee home. The 69-year-old Brea landmark was close to being destroyed because Mercury Insurance Co. acquired the land and plans to build a parking lot on the property. The Higginses must now find a new site for the home.

## LH Boys Club director plans semiretirement

By Barbara Glasone  
DSP Managing Editor

LA HABRA — For the first time since 1969 when Tom Sauer took command of the La Habra Boys Club, the organization faces a deficit budget. Adding salt to the \$25,000 financial wound, United Way announced its \$2.6 million shortfall in 1987 will sever contributions by 17 percent to receiving agencies.

Cutbacks in tax deductions for non-profit groups also threaten

the operating budget for the local group.

In the midst of the funding frenzy, Sauer announced last week he will retire as director on Feb. 15, 1988.

Persons not acquainted with the 50-year-old businessman, who has brought nine national Boys Club of America Program Excellence awards to La Habra, may assume the frustration of keeping the youth group solvent  
(Continued on Page 2)

## U.S. marshals seize video tapes in LH

By Barbara Glasone  
DSP Managing Editor

LA HABRA — Authorities from the U.S. Marshal's office in Los Angeles confiscated suspected pirated video cassettes from a local business Tuesday, according to representatives of Motion Picture Association of America who initiated the investigation.

Mark Harrad, MPAA communications director for anti-piracy, said today action was instituted against Video USA owner Said Abdul Fattah Aboulwafa after reports of pirated tapes in four of his southland

locations were obtained from public complaints. In addition to the 116 W. La Habra Blvd. site, Aboulwafa owns two stores in the City of Industry and one in Baldwin Park, Harrad said.

Harrad said that marshals seized 155 cassettes suspected of being duplicated for commercial use. An additional 365 videos were placed in sealed boxes.

Harrad said the titles involved included: "Ruthless People," "Young Sherlock Holmes," "Murphy's Romance," "Pale Rider," "Weird Science," "Year of the Dragon," "Big Trouble in Little China," "Pretty in Pink" and "Oxford Blues."

Harrad said the MPAA trade organization was founded in 1922 to protect Hollywood studios, and to help with the ratings systems. In 1986, more than 1,200 investigations into illegal video reproductions were logged nationwide.

The MPAA representative said from his New York City headquarters that two types of complaints are normally filed for piracy: criminal and civil. The criminal injunction may result in a \$250 fine and a maximum jail sentence of five years. Civil action may incur suits for damages and profits. Statutory fines of up to \$50,000 per case for copyright infringement may also be instituted.

Harrad said in the Video USA case, the civil action would include a temporary restraining order preventing the owner from continuing to duplicate or sell pirated copies.

In checking with the La Habra location, the assistant manager said today the manager was not available for comment.

Capt. Mike Burch of La Habra Police Dept. said his department was not called in to assist with the investigation.

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(Star-Progress photo by Jack Hancock)

**MEMORIAL FUNDRAISER** — Jane Wagner, left, Fullerton's marketing representative for The Red Onion restaurant, and Dotti Keegan, chairman of the Fullerton Emblem Club Memorial Fund, are joining their efforts to raise money for a new Veterans Memorial in Hillcrest Park. The Red Onion is sponsoring a fundraiser buffet Monday at 5 p.m. at 1446 N. Harbor Blvd. Tickets, priced at \$20 per person, include cocktails, an all-you-can-eat buffet, door prizes and entertainment.

## Dinner will benefit memorial for servicemen killed in action

**FULLERTON** — Fullerton Emblem Club 469 and the Red Onion Restaurant are joining forces to raise money to build a granite memorial to Fullerton servicemen killed in action in the wars of this century.

The two are sponsoring a buffet dinner at the restaurant at 5 p.m. Monday. Proceeds from the dinner will be added to the approximately \$12,000 collected by the club thus far. Estimated cost of the memorial, which will be located in Hillcrest Park, is \$30,000.

Tickets to the dinner are \$20

per person, and include cocktails, a 20-foot buffet, prizes and entertainment. The restaurant is located at 1446 N. Harbor Blvd., in Fullerton.

The Emblem Club, which is working in cooperation with the Fullerton Community Services Department, launched the memorial project after it was learned that an existing World War II memorial at the park was decaying. The club had hoped to be able to restore the old memorial and add to it the names of those Fullerton servicemen killed in World War I, Korea and

Vietnam. However, the memorial, carved on a giant redwood slab, has deteriorated so badly that restoration is impossible.

Tickets to the fund-raising buffet may be purchased at the restaurant or from Emblem Club members. Further information may be obtained by calling club members Dottie Keegan, chairwoman of the Veterans Memorial Project, at (714) 526-3039, or Jane Wagner at (714) 526-8191.

Further information about the project may be obtained by calling Keegan or the Fullerton Community Services Department at (714) 738-6589.

## LH Boys Club director...

(Continued from Page 1)

was too overwhelming. To the contrary, Sauer has announced he will fill a newly designed position — Financial Development Director — to help the club continue to grow and expand, to raise funds that will keep the doors open.

"Let's say I'm going into semi-retirement," explains Sauer, whose annual salary exceeds \$40,000 per year. "I'll have the time to get out there and find funds, and do some private consultant work on the side."

Fund raising has been one of Sauer's top credentials in the fiscal market. During his tenure, he inaugurated the Sweetheart Ball, Auction and Board of Directors Dinner. This year, auction profits totaled \$81,000, a considerable increase over the initial \$13,000 raised at its inception in 1974.

During Saturday's event, greater Los Angeles Boys Club executive directors Alex Fey and Mike Flores were on hand to observe Sauer's methods. "We've heard this auction is one of the most successful fundraising events among Southern California Boys Clubs," says Fey. "Something like this could really boost our treasury in the East Los Angeles area."

Sauer claims there's no Midas touch, no secret formula involved. "People know we have a good mission, the results are in the product — 2,000 La Habra and 250 Brea Boys and Girls Club members. I sell the event with a good deal of optimism: If you know you're right, the results will produce."

The director's personal mission began in 1957 when he arrived in San Francisco with \$200 and a "beat-up old car." He was joined by a Carlsbad Community College classmate, who had applied for a job at the San Francisco Boys Club. "When he didn't qualify and directors said I did, I got the position."

Sauer remembers that's when he discovered he had an opportunity to make a difference in young people's lives. He established a tutoring program, implemented a carnival which yielded \$2,000 on its first go-round, and helped plan camp trips for local members.

From the modest downtown

San Francisco club environment, Sauer was transferred eventually to South San Francisco, where he battled the hippie, beatnik and gang climate. Though neighboring business groups and residents fought hard to save the stable environment, they finally gave up in despair.

In 1969, Sauer shifted to the quiet, conservative La Habra community, eager to develop new programs for the area. "In this job, your imagination can run wild, you can be innovative." Following his motto, "Plan your work and work your plan," Sauer found rapport with caring and concerned supporters. Together the leaders "dedicated hundreds of hours" toward helping the youth of La Habra.

Sauer explains the best example of Boys Club character-building is evidenced in Carlos Romo, a La Habra High graduate who was named national Boys Club Boy of the Year in 1985. Since his award, Romo has been named a United Way Ambassador in America and was one of four top men selected to organize and run the United Way Youth Conference in Washington. He now serves as a director on the Orange County United Way Board.

"It really wasn't until his junior high years and the opportunity to join Keystone Club that Romo found direction," says Sauer, displaying pride. "Who would have guessed that this month he would sit at First Lady Nancy Reagan's Washington luncheon table as a youth representative?"

Envisioning a need to spread the Boys and Girls Club success eastward, Sauer implemented a joint program with Brea 10 years ago. "But we didn't have enough adult support at the time," Sauer recalls. "That's when we invited Brea businessmen Russ Danson and Carol Weddle to join our La Habra directors, and watch how the programs are organized."

Today, 250 Brea youths enjoy the fruits of Sauer's labors. The full-scale operation is conducted at Laurel School with plans to shift into the proposed Brea Community Center.

Sauer, a garden hobbyist, concedes his plans have not all been a bed of roses. "I projected the

La Habra Girls Club building would be completed five years before we actually opened the doors. That perhaps was one of my worst miscalculations."

A self-described workaholic, Sauer took time out in 1977 to realize his long-time need to parent. "Friends have given up on trying to match me with women," says Sauer. "I've dated a lot, but just don't have the need to be married. I guess they'll just have to classify me as a stubborn, old bachelor," he says jokingly.

With the assistance of the Children's Home Society, Sauer, who himself was adopted at 18 months, welcomed 9- and 12-year-old boys into his Brea home and delved into the job of parenting.

"It's not easy, this parent thing," Sauer confides. "Rules are rules here at the Boys Club, but I knew I had to bend a little at home." He attended the Little League games, supported school events and chipped in with the household chores. And a few years ago, he added a foster child, Eric Wagner, to the family home.

Good times are also spent with former Boys Club members, who have entered the professional work force. "Juan Garcia, now a top employee at Chevron Research in La Habra, has become a close friend," says Sauer. "We spend a lot of time with his family in Rosarita Beach. And with more spare time, I can now devote energies to helping the Our Lady of Fatima Church congregation near the Rosarita home."

Sauer concedes there are other hobbies he would like to pursue, including work aboard the shrimp boats and cruise ships and, "ready for this? Dealing blackjack at Vegas."

His friends are ready for anything, confident Sauer will spend his semiretirement reaching his goal: raising \$2 million by 1991 for the La Habra and Brea Boys and Girls clubs.

"I want our clubs to be self-supporting when I leave," he says. "We may not be the best, but we can strive to be the very best."

## Durkee home rescue moves...

(Continued from Page 1)

make it a historical building." But when the costs of moving the home and maintaining it on a yearly basis were calculated, the city bowed out of attempting to move the landmark.

Higgins chaired a task force to determine the home's destiny which, apparently, has left him as the last person interested in moving the structure.

At this time, Higgins said he is "80 percent sure" relocating the home will occur.

"We may have to move the house off the land to a temporary location and, in order to move the house, they'll have to cut it in half," Higgins said. He explained the expense of moving the home to a temporary location does not cost much more than if they move the house once.

"It's no more expensive, it's just like parking a truck somewhere," Higgins said.

He also said vandals have shattered windows of the home and taken door knobs and accessories out of the home. He believes this has occurred because people think the home will be demolished.

The Higgins family can chart their own family path in Brea history. Bill, 38, and his wife Pam, 36, grew up in Brea and were married in 1967. Higgins said his mother has lived in Brea 40 years and Pam's grandparents met in Olinda before Brea existed. Pam's grandfather worked most of his career for Standard Oil. The Higgins now live in the home Pam's grandparents once occupied.

The Higgins children, Joe, 19, and Jennifer, 16, will also have a role in refurbishing the new home.

"They're excited," Higgins said. "They helped us build a family room on the back of our house and a new kitchen. We've added 550 square feet to our home."

J. D. Sievers, original owner of the home, has a street named after him in Brea. He was a member of the School Board and director of First National Bank of Brea.

His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at

Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a vacant Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design stands on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been restored by its current owners.

Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when an oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the home, according to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident. Remarkably, the home survived the blaze. As a settlement for the property destroyed by the Union Oil fire, the oil company agreed to buy the home from Sievers. The property has experienced

several owners until the Durkee family acquired the home sometime in the 1950s. Florence Durkee, the last owner of the home, died in February 1986. Her heirs recently completed the sale of the property to Mercury Insurance for a price believed to be in excess of \$1 million.

Higgins said he hopes to finalize all aspects of the move and sale of property at the first City Council and Redevelopment Agency meeting in June.

"It's a part of Brea history and it may not be the most beautiful mansion, but I'm sure a lot of people don't want to see it destroyed," he said.

## Newsline

### LH Chamber Night canceled

**LA HABRA** — The La Habra Area Chamber of Commerce fund-raiser, a special performance of the play "George Washington Slept Here," has been canceled. The event had been scheduled for tonight at the Community Theatre.

### Jordan School recognized

**WHITTIER** — Jordan Elementary School has been selected as one of 38 exemplary schools in Los Angeles County by the state Department of Education, it was announced at Monday's Lowell Joint School District Board meeting.

The board also approved extended contracts with an art liaison at Meadow Green School and a music liaison at Jordan School through the end of the school year.

In other action, the board certified that it would be able to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The resignation of Olita teacher Mary Bailey was accepted. Bailey retired after 19 years with the district.

The next meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. June 8 in the board room at the district office.

### Police Department auction

**LA HABRA** — The Police Department will hold a property auction Saturday in the rear compound of the police station, located at 150 N. Euclid St.

Items offered include bicycles, stereo equipment, sporting goods, VCRs, cameras, and miscellaneous tools and appliances. All items must be paid for at the time of purchase. Personal checks will be accepted with proper identification.

Previewing of merchandise will begin at 8:30 a.m. with actual bidding at 9 a.m.

### Brea peace marcher speaks

**BREA** — Allen Afelt of Brea, who will participate in a Leningrad to Moscow Soviet Peace Walk, will speak at Brea United Methodist Church at 7:30 p.m. Monday.

More than 200 Americans and 200 Soviets are expected to join the march which will begin in early June. Afelt is attempting to generate financial and spiritual support for the march through his speech. The public is invited to attend.

Brea United Methodist Church is located at 480 N. State College Blvd. in Brea.

— Brian H. Greene

### City horse code hearing set

**FULLERTON** — The Planning Commission will consider an amendment to the Fullerton Municipal Code at 7:30 p.m. on May 27, according to the commission's agenda forecast. The amendment concerns the establishment of commercial horse stables on property zoned O-G (oil-gas) or P-L (public land).

An urgency moratorium on increasing the number of horses on O-G property was passed by the City Council and continued by the council on April 21. The purpose was to draft an ordinance to resolve problems connected with commercial stables located near R-1 (single-residence) property.

— Jackie Brown

### Retail center on agenda

**FULLERTON** — The Redevelopment Design Review Committee will consider site and architectural plans for a multi-tenant retail center at its meeting today at 4 p.m. in the City Council conference room.

The center would be located on the northwest corner of Highland Avenue and Valencia Drive. The project, consisting of two Spanish-type buildings, would wrap around the existing car wash. C.J. Development Co. of Garden Grove is the applicant; Seung S. Lee of Brea is the property owner.

Also on the agenda are site and architectural plans for a new pump house to be constructed by the Water Engineering Department at Hillcrest Park, and plans for two single-family residences at 434 E. Truslow Ave. Mario Diaz of Perris is the applicant on the residential project, and Dario V. Canizalez of Fullerton is the property owner.

— Jackie Brown

## Narc...

(Continued from Page 1)

16-year-old Santa Ana youth.

A deal was struck, with officers purchasing a little more than two pounds of cocaine from the suspects for about \$22,000.

When officers identified themselves, the juvenile and 19-year-old Juan J. Gamez of Santa Ana ran off.

Messina said when the juvenile was confronted by an officer, he pulled a 9mm automatic handgun from his waistband and pointed it at the officer.

The officer pulled his own gun and fired twice at the juvenile, both shots missing the mark. After that, the juvenile dropped his gun and was taken into custody.

Other officers chased Gamez about a quarter-mile before capturing him.

Also taken into custody was David De La Rosa, 20, of Santa Ana. Messina said officers found a .380 caliber automatic handgun on him.

Martinez, Gamez and De La Rosa were lodged at County Jail on suspicion of conspiracy to sell cocaine. Bail for each was set at \$25,000.

The 16-year-old was sent to Juvenile Hall.

Messina said the kilogram of pure cocaine had a street value of \$300,000.

## Puente...

(Continued from Page 1)

multi-tenant commercial center at the northeast corner of Brea Boulevard and Rolling Hills Drive; a request to sell fast food from mobile carts at the Price Club at the northeast corner of Harbor Boulevard and Southgate Avenue; and site plans for a commercial complex on the northwest corner of Commonwealth and Jefferson avenues.

Unanimous approval was also given to: a conditional use permit from John D. Raphael to operate an art school in the commercial center on the northwest corner of Euclid Street and Rosecrans avenue; a conditional use permit to build a granny unit at the northwest corner of Las Palmas and Altura drives; and site plans for a nine-unit apartment building at 3930 Valencia Drive.

### LHH City Council meets

**LA HABRA HEIGHTS** — The City Council will consider a site development master plan for the La Habra Heights County Water District at tonight's meeting.

The water district is proposing to upgrade its current facilities by tearing down the existing building and constructing a new office building and garage.

Other public hearings scheduled include consideration of the city's 1987 weed abatement program and a request to construct a tennis court with lights at 2008 Kanola Road.

Appointments will be made to various city commissions and committees including: Planning Commission, city treasurer, historical committee, arts committee, Parks and Recreation committee and emergency preparedness committee.

Council members also will discuss entering into a five-year agreement with Los Angeles County for animal control services.

The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in the Community Center, 1245 N. Hacienda Blvd. More information is available by calling (213) 694-6304.

# We Be People

From The Associated Press

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — This day-by-day account of 1787, the year that the U.S. Constitution was written, blends the significant with the small, personal details that bring history to life. The authors spent three years in research and writing, drawing on letters and personal diaries as well as the better-known historical documents. The writers are David D.C. Dutcher, David A. Kimball, Robert K. Sutton and Anna Coxo Toogood, all of the Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, where the Constitution was created 200 years ago.

Monday, July 23, 1787  
PHILADELPHIA TODAY

State Treasurer David Rittenhouse paid Comptroller General John Nicholson 120 shillings "to defray the Contingent Expenses of his office including fire wood for the Guards, oil and so forth for the Guard Room." (These state-employed guards were probably the "sentries" some visitors reported as guarding the Convention.)

The Sons of St. George held their quarterly meeting at City Tavern. A slate of 27 prospective members was presented for consideration before being voted on at the October meeting.

CONFEDERATION TODAY

Eight states were present in Congress. Congress voted to give those with claims against the old Commissary, Hospital, Clothier and Marine Departments eight months, and all other Revolutionary claimants one year, to present their accounts.

Minister Thomas Jefferson wrote Minister John Adams that the United States had no cash remaining in France, and its French banker, M. Grand, was refusing Jefferson's request for a small advance. Could Adams get Jefferson money in Holland?

CONVENTION TODAY

John Langdon and Nicholas Gilman from New Hampshire took their seats.

After considerable debate, with Hugh Williamson (N.C.), Elbridge Gerry (Mass.), James Wilson (Pa.), and Nathaniel Gorham (Mass.) involved, the Convention agreed to require oaths from state and federal officers to support the government.

Gerry noted the key reason: "Hitherto the officers of the two Governments had considered them as distinct from, not as parts of, the General System and had in all case of interference given a preference to the State Government. The proposed oaths will cure that error."

Gouverneur Morris (Pa.) and Rufus King (Mass.) moved that the Senate consists of (blank) members from each state, who should vote as individuals. Morris moved to fill the blank with three. Otherwise, a quorum would be 14, too small a number to trust. Gorham preferred two, otherwise with Kentucky, Vermont, Maine and Franklin (Tennessee), the Senate would become too big. Mason agreed. Williamson added that too many senators would burden the distant states. William Houston (Ga.) and Richard Dobbs Spaight (N.C.) moved to reconsider appointment of the executive by electors chosen by the state legislature, because of the expense of getting the electors from distant states like Georgia to the capital.

Gerry moved that the proceedings of the Convention be referred to a committee "to prepare and report a Constitution conformable thereto." Charles Pinckney announced his opposition to any committee report which did not give security against emancipation of slaves and taxes on exports. Committees of 10 and seven were defeated; a committee of five was agreed upon.

LOOKING BACK

William Houston

William Houston, who was on this day 200 years ago so worried about the cost of sending electors to the capital, is one of the least known delegates. Yet, his was the first American name to become known to thousands of immigrants in the early 1900s — Houston (now Houston) Street in New York City's Lower East Side was named for him.

Born in 1757, Houston was the youngest of four sons and a daughter born to Sir Patrick and Lady Priscilla Dunbar Houston. In 1775 he was a clerk in the law office of his brother, John. In June of 1776 he sailed for London to study law at the Inner Temple, returning to Savannah sometime after 1780. While the timing is suspicious, and his brother Patrick and George were Tories, his brother John was a leading patriot and delegate to Congress in 1775. William seems to have returned in time to serve in the Georgia militia before the Revolution was over, since he received a bounty land grant from the state. He was admitted to the Georgia bar in 1782, and in 1783 took a seat in the legislature. In 1784, '85 and '86 he served in Congress. While there, he met Mary Bayard, a niece of Gov. William Livingston, whom he married in 1788.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUIZ

A: No person may be punished for breaking a law established after the alleged offense occurred.

export facto law shall be passed.

A. True. Article I, Sec. 9, Par. 3, "No bill of attainder or

# LHH water building expansion opposed

By Rosemary Santana  
DSP Correspondent

**LA HABRA HEIGHTS** — The La Habra Heights County Water District meeting Tuesday afternoon found resident Jana Espinosa alone.

"I sure wish other people could have been here. I was real disappointed," Espinosa said.

Espinosa attended the meeting to inquire about the Water District's proposed building remodeling plans.

The matter, however, was not on the agenda.

Heights residents have complained about the 4:30 p.m. time slot for the meetings and noted

## 'Sting' operation at park

**FULLERTON** — Children kicking clumps of grass near the amphitheater section of Hillcrest Park Tuesday morning stirred up a hornet's nest — and received painful bites.

Police spokeswoman Kitty Jaramillo said a patrolman, passing through Hillcrest at 11:30, heard children screaming. Upon investigation, he learned Sean Nevin, 10, and Felicia Hiscutt, 8, both of Anaheim, had received hornet stings.

Sean's mother Mary told the officer she would seek medical attention for the children through a private doctor.

In an unrelated incident, thieves cut fence wire at the State of California Warehouse Office of Procurement Tuesday afternoon and removed \$2,100 of aluminum.

Reports indicate the metal was transported to a waiting car parked near the 2325 Moore Avenue facility.

— Barbara Glason

Sell unused items with a classified ad!

most people are at work at that hour and are unable to attend. "What's the point of having a new board room if no one can show up for the meetings?" asks Espinosa.

The Water District's proposed renovation plans include a new board room, showers for employees, a new lunchroom and an enclosed garage.

Reconstruction costs are estimated at \$400,000.

At the June City Council meeting residents voiced opposition to the proposed reconstruction of the Water District building, located on Hacienda Road.

Council members have not yet voted on the matter. The expansion plans have been scheduled for the September council meeting, in which a public hearing will be held.

"What is needed is a whole new revamping of the board rules," Espinosa said. "Before they spend for an office or a garage, they should allow a voice or a vote by the people."

Residents opposing the new building termed it a "Taj Mahal"

because of its proposed increase in size and cost, considering only seven personnel are currently employed.

However, board members noted that the present facilities do not meet the needs of the projected employee growth within the next 15 years.

The board also discussed that the reason for the proposed reconstruction is to improve the low morale among employees as a result of the poor facilities they now work in.

Board members also believe without a new building it would make it more difficult to hire capable and experienced employees in the future.

However, some Heights residents still aren't sympathetic to the remodeling proposal.

"This isn't Zody's. We don't have a lot of people trampling through this building," Espinosa noted.

The proposed Hacienda Road realignment, which possibly could pass through the existing Water District property, is another factor in determining

the fate of the remodeling project.

"Everything hinges on the road. Where the road goes dictates what we could do," said Board Director Bill Scotten after the meeting.

Despite her disagreement of the cost of the proposed new building, Espinosa said some Water District's expenditures are valid. She noted an example in which a retaining wall was needed because Water District property was slowly crumbling. The District spent \$70,000 for the retaining wall.

"There's a lot of wealthy people in La Habra Heights. But I'm not one of them and I guess that's why there hasn't been a lot of concern," Espinosa added.

The Water District's next meeting will be Aug. 18 at 4:30 p.m. in the board room.

Meetings are held every third Tuesday of each month.

Those interested in inspecting the present working conditions or who have any questions can call Jim Frie, Water District manager, at (213) 697-6769.

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## OUR OPINION XX

### And the walls came tumbling down

To most people, it won't matter much in a few years, or maybe even a few days, but a piece of Brea history died this week. And the sad fact is, it didn't have to.

Since 1918, the Sievers-Durkee mansion stood strong and tall at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway. It survived all the elements nature threw at it, but in the end, it was a man-made occurrence which finally struck it down.

On Tuesday, the home which once withstood the great Brea oil field fire in 1926, succumbed to bulldozers to literally pave the way for, of all things, a parking lot. And in just two hours, 69 years of Brea history had been demolished.

When the City Council, which also governs Brea as the Redevelopment Agency, wants to move quickly and fast track a project, it can. But only if the issue is important enough to the individuals holding office.

Brea has its hands full with a number of redevelopment projects downtown and is a major real estate participant in creating a new image for the city, both in the business and residential areas. In conjunction with this construction, the widening of Brea Boulevard and Imperial Highway in the center of the city is also being undertaken.

Additionally, the council is administering to large-scale development in the form of office structures built by Lowe Development Corp. on the current high school site, as well as buildings at Olen Pointe-Brea constructed by Olen Properties.

With so much work and so much responsibility to these matters and more, it was easy for the Sievers-Durkee home to get lost in the shuffle. But to be honest, this is no excuse for letting the home fall to a demolition project.

Six weeks ago, Councilman Gene Leyton spoke optimistically about preserving the home and that the council would do everything possible to save it from destruction. But Councilman Carrey Nelson, a pessimist or realist depending on your point of view, didn't think the home would be saved because, as he said, the city can't do anything in a short period of time. As it turned out, he was correct.

In February 1986, the last owner of the home, Florence Durkee, died and left the property and house to her heirs. Her heirs promptly placed the land up for sale and, because of its location, it generated a great deal of interest.

A little over a year ago, Bill and Pam Higgins, lifetime Brea residents, initiated a crusade to save the home. Mercury Casualty Insurance, which operates an office building across Berry Street from the property, purchased the land for \$1.2 million with the intent of providing more parking space for employees. The transaction was completed in February of this year.

Mercury said in February that because the house was of no use to the company, it was free for the taking. But it would have to be moved at someone else's expense.

Because of the expense, the Higginses and other residents could not convince the city to adopt the project. The city opted not to expend the \$150,000 to \$200,000 necessary to move the home. After

being unable to find a buyer, Bill and Pam Higgins began pursuing the idea of making it their permanent home four months ago. But they needed help.

As owners of a home in a redevelopment area, they attempted to work with the agency, hoping to sell their current residence to the Redevelopment Agency and then purchase a new site for the Sievers-Durkee home. They figured the cost of moving the house, coupled with the purchase of a piece of land for the structure, was the equivalent of purchasing a new home anyway. And with the help of their two teen-age children, they could preserve this Brea landmark for the city and themselves.

But as Pam Higgins said on Friday, city government works slowly. After granting several extensions of time, Mercury President George Joseph finally put his foot down and told the Higginses if they are serious about moving the house, a \$10,000 deposit would be necessary to guarantee the home will be moved by Aug. 14.

After haggling with the city over pieces of property for two months, frustration finally overtook the optimism the Higginses once felt. The deadline for submitting the deposit was Friday, and they let it pass, finally giving in to the grim reality the home would be destroyed.

The Redevelopment Agency contacted the Higginses on Saturday with a potential piece of property for the home, but there was no guarantee escrow would close in time to move the home. Because the city and agency, by law, could not front the \$10,000 deposit, the risk was on the shoulders of the Higginses — a risk they chose not to take based on past experience with the slow methods of city government.

The sad part is, other parties were interested. But Joseph had committed to the Higginses and the Redevelopment Agency. And when the deal fell through, he could wait no longer.

The home certainly wasn't typical of the average Brea home of the era, but that's what made it so unique. Built by J.D. Sievers, for whom a Brea street is named, a Basque boxer once also owned the home. It was the site of many social gatherings of significance in the 1930s and 1940s. Adding to its character, the dining room built-in buffet had a secret compartment which its last owner Florence Durkee loved to show guests.

With the plans the Higginses had for refurbishing the home when relocated in downtown, Brea could have retained a great piece of its history while moving forward to the future.

It's been said Brea is a "big operation for a little town of 32,000." Granted, the pace of the city is like that of an Anaheim or Costa Mesa at times. But like many big towns, sometimes progress moves forward too quickly and steps on the past. To someone who understands the future and knows where you're going, you've got to understand where you've been. A sense of the past can only help determine direction for the future.

And with the demise of the Sievers-Durkee home, Brea has joined the ranks of the larger cities — by crushing its past to make way for the future.

ALAN BOCK

### High cost of latter-day Prohibition

The drug war continues despite (because of?) its futility. In Peru, financed by \$4.5 million extracted from U.S. taxpayers, the government seals off the Upper Huallaga River Valley and searches villages and hamlets without warrants, empowered to hold prisoners for as long as 15 days for questioning before bringing charges.

In Santa Ana, police are working to make their presence visible in a neighborhood known for sales of \$10 bags of marijuana, arresting customers and dealers alike. The efforts are justified by neighborhood complaints — people stealing items to get money to buy drugs, cars broken into, drug sellers and buyers congregating in parking lots of markets, occasional violence. Few note the irony that such objectionable happenings are not the result of particular chemical substances, but of the unenforceable laws designed to prohibit them.

Sellers of drugs like alcohol don't duke it out or fight over territory with nasty weapons. But, as the summer movie hit, "The Untouchables," reminds us, they used to do that and much more, for one reason: alcohol used to be prohibited by law. That created the potential of huge profits for sellers of illicit booze and established the Mob as a permanent feature of American life and folklore. Yet today's anti-drug crusade dwarfs the Prohibition-era efforts in expense, intrusiveness, and ineffectiveness.

During the first 10 years of Prohibition, between 1920 and 1929, Congress authorized \$88.1 million for federal law enforcement. That translates into \$56.2 million — over 10 years, remember — in 1983 dollars. In FY 1983, on the other hand, the feds budgeted \$836.3 million for drug law enforcement. This figure doesn't include sums spent on

prevention, treatment, and research programs, nor the costs of state and local police anti-drug activities. Federal spending escalated to a minimum of \$1.2 billion in 1985. The *Washington Times* estimated in 1984 that government at all levels spent at least \$5 billion a year in the war against drugs.

I'm indebted for those figures to a provocative new book put out by the Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy in San Francisco, titled *Dealing With Drugs* (Lexington Books, \$12.95 paper). The introduction by Ronald Hamowy, professor of history at the University of Alberta (Canada), continues: "Yet despite these staggering costs, the availability and use of the major illicit drugs do not appear to have decreased." The Drug Enforcement Administration estimated there were about 490,000 heroin users in 1979, and the same number in 1981. Heroin consumption increased from 3.85 metric tons in 1981 to 6.04 metric tons in 1983 and 5.97 metric tons in 1984.

The DEA estimated that the number of regular users of cocaine increased from about 1.2 million in 1976 to 5 or 6 million in 1984. Hamowy notes: "The National Narcotics Intelligence Consumers Committee, a government interagency group, has estimated that in 1978 between 19 and 25 metric tons of cocaine were smuggled into this country and the amount increased to between 40 and 48 metric tons in 1980, between 54 and 71 metric tons in 1983, and between 71 and 137 metric tons in 1984. Thus, based on the lowest NICC estimates, the amount of illicit cocaine entering the United States has increased by 274 percent between 1978 and 1984."

Marijuana consumption seems to have dropped slightly over the past few years, but there is "no evidence whatsoever that this

decline can be credited to more vigilant law enforcement." The decline occurred before California's highly publicized CAMP program, and consumption has been steady since 1982.

If these figures are at all accurate, the billions spent by government to wipe out drugs has been a total waste of money. But, as Chicago law professor Randy Barnett points out in an insightful chapter, drug laws have created a powerful complex of people and organizations with vested interests in keeping the laws on the books and increasing skill at manipulating simplistic pieties to keep their hands in the public till.

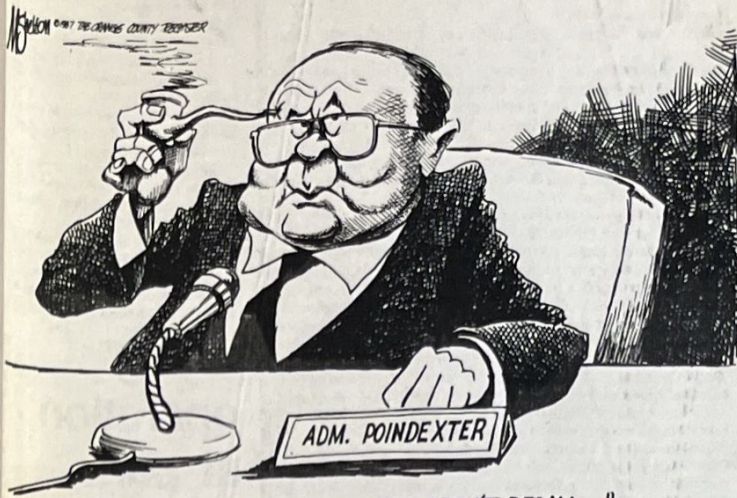
The harmful side effects of the futile effort to prohibit alcohol eventually became apparent enough that we gave it up. The side effects of our current crusade — wasted money, increases in real crime — are already more massive and pervasive than was the case with alcohol prohibition, but this reality is not yet apparent to the general public. If *Dealing With Drugs*, with its fact-filled, sober, and scholarly approach, helps to cure this lack of knowledge, it will have performed a signal service.

Bock is the *Register's* senior columnist.

### Quips

By Ed Scott

Jim and Tammy Bakker are now accused of fraud and racketeering. A couple contributed \$1,000 to the ministry, claiming to have been told that they'd annually get a free stay at the PTL Theme Park hotel. But the pair couldn't obtain reservations. The problem isn't new to Christianity. There was no room in the inn.



STEPHEN CHAPMAN

### Congressional ethics a joke

Congressional ethics is one of those terms, like "judicial restraint" or "socialist economics," that sound inherently self-contradictory. Most voters think members of Congress are akin to the shyster lawyer who, it was said, had been acquitted of numerous felonies.

Politicians in a democracy extol their profession as a noble one and resent the popular skepticism. But confronted with lurid examples of venality, members of Congress generally grow so squeamish that they have to avert their eyes. Apparently the only thing worse than being suspected of corruption is being required to do something about it.

Sitting in judgment on one's colleagues is not a task anyone would envy. But there are other ways, which lack the outlandish defects of the existing system, to ensure that ethics laws are vigorously enforced.

What is missing now is a healthy dose of prosecutorial zeal. Congressional ethics committees are famous for carrying out dogged investigations of members accused of wrongdoing, carefully weighing the evidence, mercilessly reporting every transgression for public consideration and then generously letting the offender off unpunished.

Last month, the House committee found that Democrat Mary Rose Oaker of Ohio had paid an aide \$45,000 in salary for two years after the aide had moved to New York. Because representatives from Ohio don't need or have offices in New York, that was a violation of House rules and federal law. Her only penalty was having to repay the money.

In April, the same committee had gone to heroic lengths to spare another colleague, New York Democrat Fernand St Germain, who is chairman of the banking committee. In 1985, *The Wall Street Journal* had documented how he had grown rich from what it called "lots of investment help from the people and institutions that have benefited from his official actions."

The ethics committee somehow managed to validate the *Journal's* case while exonerating the accused. It found St Germain

had violated the law in understating his net worth by \$1 million on his financial disclosure forms and accepting free airline flights from a savings and loan group.

It also found that St Germain had intervened with federal regulators on behalf of a bank owned by a friend. He later bought a share of that bank — a purchase that forgetful congressman also failed to disclose. The punishment for abusing his office was the same as it would have been for not abusing his office: nothing.

The handling of Oaker and St Germain is not exceptional. The exception is when unethical practices are actually penalized. Thanks to a Justice Department prosecution, Rep. George Hansen, R-Idaho, was sent to prison for omitting several hundred thousand dollars' worth of loans and income from his financial disclosure forms. Only after his conviction did the House grudgingly impose a reprimand, though it blanch at censure or expulsion.

A reprimand, mild as it is, was more than the House could bear in the case of Geraldine Ferraro. Her failure to report her husband's assets was based on the improbable claim that she expected to derive no benefit from them. Because she was leaving the House anyway, having given up her seat to run for vice president, the committee obligingly let the violations pass.

It is possible that Congress reached exactly the right result in each of these cases. But given

the natural reluctance of members to punish their own friends and associates, and their vested interest in keeping ethical standards comfortably loose, voters have good reason to be suspicious.

True, the attorney general can pursue those offenders whom the ethics committee absolves. But heavy pressures discourage the executive branch from exercising strict scrutiny over the legislature. A Justice Department investigation of a congressman may be answered with a cut in the Justice Department's budget. If the investigation damages a member of the opposing party, it invites accusations of political harassment. If it clears a member of the President's party, it is vulnerable to the charge of whitewashing.

There is a simple way around all these obstacles, which was devised by Congress to remove the dilemmas of having the executive branch investigate its own top officials: Turn these matters over to special prosecutors, as proposed by Rep. E. Clay Shaw Jr., a Florida Republican. That would simultaneously elevate the public reputation of Congress and relieve its members of a burden for which they are demonstrably ill-suited.

The only danger it presents is to members who would rather preach ethics than practice them. But a Congress that is waxing eloquent in defending the rule of law against an overzealous White House is in no position to indulge those members who disdain the laws they have enacted.

### Today in history

By Associated Press

Today is Thursday, July 23, the 204th day of 1987. There are 161 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history: Twenty years ago, on July 23, 1967, one of the worst outbreaks of race-related rioting in the United States erupted in Detroit after police raided a black-owned nightclub. State and federal troops were brought in to stem the violence. By the time order was restored several days later, 43 people were killed and hundreds of businesses destroyed.

On this date:

In 1829, William Austin Burt of Mount Vernon, Mich., received a patent for his "typographer," a forerunner of the typewriter.

In 1885, Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th president of the United States, died in Mount McGregor, N.Y., at the age of 63.

In 1886, New York City saloonkeeper Steve Brodie claimed to have jumped off the Brooklyn Bridge into the East River.

## Daily Star-Progress

A WATCHFUL NEWSPAPER

EVER STRIVING TO MAKE THE LA HABRA, BREA, LA HABRA HEIGHTS, EAST WHITTIER AND FULLERTON AREA AN EVEN BETTER PLACE TO LIVE.

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We believe that freedom is a gift from God and not a political grant from government. Freedom is neither license nor anarchy. It is self-control. No more. No less. It must be consistent with the truths expressed in such great moral guides as the Coveting Commandment, the Golden Rule and the Declaration of Independence.

The Daily Star-Progress is dedicated to furnishing information to our readers so that they can better promote and preserve their own freedom and encourage others to see its blessings. Only when man is free to control himself and all he produces can he develop his utmost capabilities.

# Sunny Hills basketball team abandoned in desert

**BANNING (AP)** — Two basketball coaches abandoned a high school team on a stretch of desert highway because they were angry over losing a tournament, Riverside County authorities said Monday.

The six boys from Sunny Hills High School in Fullerton were discovered by Deputy Jim Coillot Saturday night beside Interstate 10 between Palm Springs and Banning, according to sheriff's Sgt. Tim Smith.

Besides being angered over losing the final game of a tournament in Palm Springs, the coaches were upset because one of the boys insisted on playing his radio too loud, the boys' deputies.

The coaches took the key out of the van's ignition and left with a friend who had been following in another car, Smith said. The boys, discovered after about two hours, were taken to the Banning sheriff's station

about 85 miles east of Los Angeles, where they devoured several pizzas while they waited for parents to come pick them up. No one was injured, but Smith said authorities were conducting

an investigation into whether child endangerment had occurred. The school is closed for vacations, and no one answered a call seeking comment.

# Daily Star-Progress



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**SLATED FOR DEMOLITION** — The Sievers-Durkee home will be demolished Tuesday unless a solution for moving the home can be reached today. Located at Berry Street and Imperial Highway

for 69 years, the home was built by Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers. Mercury Insurance Co., owner of the property, wishes to build a parking lot on the site to serve its nearby office.

(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

## Brea landmark razing ready

**By Brian H. Greene**  
DSP Staff Writer

**BREA** — Demolition of the Sievers-Durkee home, a Brea landmark for 69 years, will begin Tuesday, according to George Joseph, president of Mercury Insurance Co. which owns the property.

Located at the northwest corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway, the 10-room home was built by Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers. The last owner of the home, Florence Durkee, died in February of 1986, and her heirs recently completed a \$1.2 million sale of the land to Mercury Casualty Insurance Group, a branch of Mercury Insurance.

Mercury plans to construct a parking lot on the property, which will serve the Mercury Casualty building across Berry Street.

Four months ago, Mercury offered the home to lifetime Brea residents Bill and Pam Higgins at no cost except for the expense of moving the house. But the Higginses and the Brea Redevelopment

Agency have not been able to work out details of selling their current home to the agency and purchasing a new site for the Sievers-Durkee house in Brea.

Higgins, who along with his wife graduated from Brea-Olinda High School, now serves as Brea maintenance services manager.

"I'm willing to give them another 30 days, but I need some evidence of a good faith effort from them," Joseph said from his Los Angeles office this morning. "He's (Bill Higgins) going to have to act now because we're ready to tear it down in the morning."

Joseph sent Higgins a letter early last week stating a \$10,000 deposit would be needed by July 17 to extend the moving deadline to Aug. 14. Previously, Joseph had granted an extension to Bill Higgins at his request and then another extension at the request of Brea Mayor John Sutton. The mayor was in a

(Continued on Page 2)

# Fullerton to consider Allen Hotel renovation

## Expansion plans included

**By Jackie Brown**  
DSP Staff Writer

**FULLERTON** — An agreement between the Gregg family and the Redevelopment Agency/City Council for the renovation and development of the Allen Hotel will be considered at Tuesday's 4 p.m. City Council meeting.

The hotel development, on the southeast corner of Harbor Boulevard and Truslow Avenue, would be Phase II of an earlier commercial development project at the northeast corner of Valencia Drive and Harbor by Aaron V. and Beatriz Gregg.

At the time the Redevelopment Agency approved the first phase, it also approved entering into an option agreement with the owner of the Allen Hotel for the second phase.

As part of Phase II, the hotel's first floor would be expanded to the north with a 2,300-square-foot addition. Retail shops would be opened on the first floor and offices on the second floor.

If retail shops are not forthcoming in the first six months of the project, the owner may use the first floor for offices, according to the proposed agreement.

The proposal would involve a large sum of money being put up by the city/agency in proportion to the revenue generated by the project.

Roughly estimated, the city/agency would be contributing \$430,000 in monies and land with an estimated annual return of \$18,000. The \$430,000 does not include a loan to be made to the developer which will be paid back to the agency.

In Phase I, the agency only provided \$60,000 for public improvements to the developer's \$923,000 for the project. Considering both phases together, the city/agency investment would be approximately \$500,000 with an approximate total annual return of \$40,000.

Assistant City Manager Hugh L. Berry's said his rationale for the considerable investment in Phase II is that it will revitalize a blighted area on south Harbor.

His report further argues that the spin-off benefits of the proposed project to the area would be substantial and nearby properties might upgrade as a result.

Under the proposal, the developer would put up \$964,000 and the agency, \$636,000.

Included in the city/agency's portion would be: a commercial rehabilitation loan of \$200,000 which would be repaid to the agency; and a donation of a city lot and alley portions, valued at approximately \$135,000.

Also included would be costs for the relocation of hotel tenants, and lease acquisition and administration, legal and contingency costs of approximately \$200,000.

The city parcel to be donated is being used as a pocket park just north of the hotel, and the alley portions are at the site area. The park would be abolished and used for parking.

In other business, the council will consider approval of a \$16,000 interest-free loan to the Friends of the Arboretum for the final phase of Heritage House restoration, and awarding a \$362,000 contract to Gentry Brothers Inc. of Irwindale for alley reconstruction.

Also to be considered are recommendations by the Transportation and Circulation Commission to rescind the two-hour parking limit on the west side of Acacia Avenue between Com-

(Continued on Page 2)



(Star-Progress photo by Jack Hancock)

**TIME FOR A CHANGE?** — Adult book shop and other tenants may be moving if City Council members approve redevelopment project proposed for the Allen Hotel property. Plans call for abolishing pocket park to the north of hotel to provide parking space for renovation of building.

## Tip leads LH police to drug cache

**By Janet Joson**  
DSP Staff Writer

**LA HABRA** — Police, acting on a lead from an anonymous We Tip call, seized \$17,000 worth of cocaine and marijuana and \$2,000 in cash from a residence Friday afternoon.

Officers found 5 1/2 ounces of cocaine and a quarter pound of marijuana in plastic bags in the 300 block of North Sunset Street about 2:30 p.m.

The occupant of the home, 26-year-old Luciano A. Lopez, was arrested for possession of and intent to sell controlled substances, said police Capt. Mike Burch.

Lopez was already on probation for another offense when police searched his home. He is

in custody at Orange County Jail in lieu of \$25,000 bail, Burch said.

Police were able to search Lopez's residence without a warrant because the terms of his probation allowed authorities to do so at any time, Burch noted.

Meanwhile, a 26-year-old Fullerton woman escaped harm from a would-be rapist last Wednesday at 9 p.m.

The victim was moving her belongings from her parked vehicle to a new apartment in the 700 block of West Imperial Highway when a male approached her from behind and silenced her with his hand, according to a police report filed Friday afternoon.

object to the victim's back, told her to keep quiet or he would kill her. He then forced her on the ground of the carport but heard

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## Joint probe launched in area drive-by shootings

**By Barbara Giasone**  
DSP Managing Editor

**FULLERTON** — Buena Park and Fullerton police launched a joint investigation following two drive-by shootings Sunday night that injured a Fullerton teenager and a 24-year-old Buena Park man.

Sgt. Charles Russell of the Buena Park force said police responded to a shooting in the 6500 block of Berry Street around 9:45. Officers said Arnold Serrato, who had been struck in both legs by shots from what appeared to be a small

caliber handgun, was transported to La Palma Intercommunity Hospital where he was treated and released.

Russell said witnesses reported the suspects' vehicle was a late model, full-sized car. The case was listed as an attempted murder.

Twenty minutes later, residents in the 2300 block of West Baker Avenue in Fullerton reported a '79 Buick Regal, occupied by four male Hispanics, drove past a nearby apartment complex. Shots reportedly were fired at Jesse Escalera, 21, and

Hector Lopez, 25, both of Fullerton, and a 15-year-old Buena Park youth. Fullerton police spokeswoman Linda King said the Fullerton High School teenager was hit by either flying shrapnel from a small caliber weapon or from flying glass. The victim suffered minor injuries.

Police said the suspects were described as male Hispanics, approximately 16 to 18 years old. One suspect, reports indicated, was wearing a baseball cap with the letters ESBP on the bill.

No arrests have been made in

(Continued on Page 2)



ONE UP, ONE DOWN — Construction continues on Fullerton's Pep Boys store on Harbor Boulevard as workmen demolish the old facility to make room for a parking lot. Store manager Ray Brenier said the

### Brea landmark...

(Continued from Page 1) meeting this morning and could not be reached for comment.

"The city required us to place a \$40,000 piece of art in front of our building," Joseph said, referring to the city's Art in Public Places program. "You'd certainly think the city could take an extra step and help the man out."

But according to Chris Lissik, Redevelopment Agency project coordinator/administration, City Attorney James Markman said the city could not legally put up the \$10,000. Also, Lissik told the Higginses on Saturday that a site for the home had been located on Walnut Avenue and the paperwork was being processed. But the Higginses opted not to take the risk of losing the \$10,000 deposit and told the agency they were no longer interested in the home.

"We talked about it and looked at the risk, but we didn't think it was worth it," Higgins said.

But Joseph said there is "no risk involved" with the deposit "if you've really got the money to move the house within the month."

Joseph explained he's waited as long as he can and that he owes it to the stockholders of the publicly owned company to move forward with plans.

"I've got a \$1.2 million investment down there and employees screaming they can't find a place to park," Joseph said.

The Mercury president also explained he'd received a message from Higgins on Friday stating he could not front the deposit.

"But I will not let the contractors start to tear down the house until I hear from him personally," Joseph said. When contacted this morning, Higgins said he had not spoken with Joseph.

But Joseph again emphasized the only way he will delay demolition is if Mercury receives a \$10,000 check today at either its Los Angeles or Brea office.

Several weeks ago, it looked as though the Higginses might move the home to a two-parcel site on Madrona Avenue in a redevelopment area. But Mrs. Higgins said the zoning in the area for apartments would not be suitable for the home and plans fell through in early June.

About two weeks ago, the Higginses began a door-to-door search in an attempt to find two homeowners next door to each other willing to sell. A potential site was found on Walnut Avenue, but the details of the sale of the

properties could not be worked out soon enough.

"They dragged their feet just a little too long," Mrs. Higgins said of the Redevelopment Agency.

"I think things could have been done faster. City government works very slow."

"We haven't made any progress with the city since the Madrona property was unavailable," Mrs. Higgins said.

One other possible site existed on Madrona near Pioneer Hall and the Brea Senior Citizens Center. Though the area is zoned for single-family residential homes, she said the city did not want to give up the triangle-shaped parcel because it was city-owned park land.

"We went with what they appraised our house at," Mrs. Higgins said of their initial approval for sale of their present South Brea Boulevard home to the agency. "Of course, that's all changed now. We're not going to sell our house to the city now."

Joseph said a Yorba Linda woman sent him a cashier's check in May for \$5,000 with the intent of moving the home. But he returned the check because she could not guarantee the home would stay in Brea and also because Joseph had a commitment to the Higginses.

But the Yorba Linda woman stated it would take about three months before she could move the home, and Joseph said it would be impossible wait any longer.

Sievers, the original owner of the home, built the house in 1918. His brother, William, built a similar home at the corner of Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where the vacant Gemco store now stands.

Sievers served on the School Board in Brea and was director of First National Bank of Brea. In 1926, an oil fire destroyed virtually all the orange groves and vegetation surrounding the property which Sievers also owned. Remarkably, the house survived and, as part of a settlement with Union Oil Co. for the fire damage to crops, Sievers sold the house to Union Oil.

Several owners occupied the home after Sievers, including relatives by marriage of Pam Higgins. The Durkee family acquired the home in the 1950s and owned the property until Mrs. Durkee's death.

new 21,000-square-foot structure houses more merchandise on the sales floor. A 10-bay service area is linked to the store. A grand opening is set for August.

(Star-Progress photo by Stan Bird)

### State Senator Torres is facing DUI charge

SACRAMENTO (AP) — State Sen. Art Torres, a Los Angeles Democrat, was arrested over the weekend on suspicion of drunk driving, police said Monday. Officers said the state-owned car Torres was driving in a downtown residential-commercial district at about 2:30 a.m. Sunday skidded to a stop two inches behind a police vehicle parked in the street with its hazard and amber lights flashing.

The officers said the car, which carried a license plate of "S24" for Torres' 24th senatorial district, paused for 10 seconds to 15 seconds before it was backed up and driven haltingly around the patrol vehicle. The officers

then stopped the car.

Police said the driver, whom they identified as Torres, failed a field sobriety test, was arrested at the scene and was booked into Sacramento County Jail on charges of driving under the influence of alcohol and driving while intoxicated. He was bailed out of jail later Sunday, according to authorities.

Torres' press secretary, Dario Frommer, declined comment on the arrest.

The results of a test to determine alcohol level in the blood are not yet available, police said.

Torres, who was elected to the Senate in 1982, chairs the Toxics and Public Safety Management Committee in the upper house.

### Poindexter has no regrets

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former National Security Adviser John Poindexter today denied misleading members of Congress when the Iran-Contra affair became public last fall, defiantly telling investigators, "I don't have any regret about anything I did" as a top aide to President Reagan.

In an extraordinary counter-attack while under harsh questioning from Republican members of the House and Senate committees, Poindexter also accused former House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, D-Mass., of holding up final approval of

Contra aid last year "while men in Central America who were fighting for their freedom, were dying."

"I'm not going to change my mind" about the actions he authorized and the secrets he kept, Poindexter said. "I'm not going to be apologetic about it."

Even as he denied misleading Congress about the affair, Poindexter, in his fourth day in the witness chair, told the nationally televised Iran-Contra hearings that "much too much information is provided to Congress about the details of covert activity."

Poindexter listened while several Republican members of the committees challenged his credibility, either bluntly or implicitly.

In reply, he conceded that administration officials "weren't telling everything that we knew" last fall as the Iran-Contra affair became public, in hopes that the hostages remaining in Lebanon might still be freed.

But he denied that he deliberately misled members of Congress after the decision was made to go public.

"The reason for not misleading the Congress is a very practical one," said Rep. Richard Cheney, R-Wyo. "It's stupid. It's self-defeating... Eventually you destroy the president's credibility."

Sen. William Cohen, R-Maine., in an extraordinary statement, said the result would be "suicidal" for the American form of government if the Congress and executive branch continue to "lie to each other or withhold information or... alter or shred documents..."

He said that officials of the various administrations, as well as members of Congress, are guilty of leaking of sensitive secrets.

### Joint...

(Continued from Page 1) either incident.

In an unrelated occurrence, a 31-year-old Fullerton man, sitting in his vehicle in the 1800 block of West Orangethorpe Avenue Friday afternoon, was ordered at gunpoint to drive to another location.

Police said the victim followed the assailant's orders, was dropped off and robbed of his vehicle and \$113 in cash. The vehicle was later recovered.

A Santa Ana man reported someone broke into his locked aircraft at Fullerton Airport and removed a radio valued at \$1,000. The loss was discovered at 10 a.m. Saturday.

A 16-year-old Fullerton boy was victimized Sunday night as he rode his skateboard in the 2100 block of West Baker Avenue.

Police said the driver of a white and brown Monte Carlo pulled in front of the youth while his passenger grabbed the \$150 board after threatening his victim with fists. The assailants were described as a male black, approximately 17-18 years old, and a male Hispanic, 17 years old.

### Newsline

#### Marriott discusses Brea hotel

BREA — Representatives from the Marriott Hotel Corp., who are proposing to construct a 149-unit hotel at Olen Pointe in Brea, will meet with residents tonight to discuss the new complex.

Olen Pointe, located at the northeast corner of the 57 Freeway and Lambert Road, recently completed construction of two office buildings. Further plans for Phase I of the project include a Courtyards by Marriott development which is a functional, home-style hotel catering to business travelers.

The meeting will be held in the City Council Chambers of the Civic Cultural Center tonight at 7:30.

— Brian H. Greene

#### Hearing on AB 1425 delayed

FULLERTON — Senate Education Committee hearings on Assembly Bill 1425, the Schools of Choice bill, have been delayed, according to Fullerton resident Pat Soderquist.

Soderquist, who has actively promoted the bill, said that Sen. Gary Hart, D-Santa Barbara, had pulled the bill for study and it will be presented to the senate committee in August.

AB 1425 has passed the total Assembly, 50-14. The bill provides alternative learning within the public school system.

— Jackie Brown

### Couple is injured in Yorba Linda crash

By Janet Joson DSP Staff Writer

BREA — A husband and wife were injured Saturday after their vehicle struck a parked car.

Caesar Fabian Acosta, 25, of Yorba Linda was treated and released from Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Anaheim, an emergency room spokesperson said.

His wife, Roberta, 21, was treated for contusions and abrasions and released from Kaiser.

Acosta was traveling southbound on Plumosa Drive near Mandarin Lane in Yorba Linda at about 3:45 p.m. when he hit an unoccupied vehicle, according to police records.

He was reportedly looking

down and away from the road when he struck the parked car, owned by an Anaheim woman, police said.

Another injury traffic accident occurred Friday about 9:45 p.m. at Imperial Highway and Puente Street.

Twenty-two-year-old Randall James Montemayor of Brea allegedly struck another vehicle from behind while traveling westbound on Imperial, police said.

The other driver, Ronda L. Sullivan, 22, of La Habra, was treated for minor injuries and released from Brea Community Hospital, a hospital spokesperson said.

Montemayor was not injured in the accident, police said.

### 91 Freeway crash hurts two seriously

Two people were injured seriously and several others suffered minor injuries when a tractor-trailer truck set off a chain-reaction crash on the Riverside (91) Freeway in Fullerton on Saturday evening.

Truck driver William Terry Underhill, 34, of Banning was eastbound near West State College Boulevard about 5:45 p.m. when he tried to pass a car but had to return to his original lane to avoid colliding with a van, the California Highway Patrol said.

Underhill's truck hit the back of a car driven by Jacob Martin Bischoff, 69, investigators said, and then sideswiped a vehicle driven by Robert Palmer Broersma, 65, of Bellflower.

Bischoff and his wife, Elsa, 69, both of Fullerton, were taken to Western Medical Center in Santa Ana with major injuries, police said. Both were reported in good condition Sunday.

Broersma and his wife, Audrey, 63, were treated for minor injuries, the CHP said.

### Tip leads LH police...

(Continued from Page 1) passersby approaching, Burch said.

He fled from the scene, but not before telling the victim he would return, Burch added.

The suspect was described as a male Hispanic, age 25 to 30, 5 feet 10 inches and 140 pounds with black hair, police said.

In another incident, two pet canaries were killed at a residence in the 100 block of North Leora Avenue Sunday.

The occupant of the home, who was watching seven canaries for a relative, discovered two of the male birds with their heads cut off, according to police.

Someone had entered the property between 8:30 p.m. Saturday and 5:30 p.m. Sunday and killed the orange and yellow birds, worth \$80, with a sharp instrument. Two similar canaries were also discovered missing from the cage kept in the patio area, Burch said.

Also on Sunday, police re-

sponded to a report of a grand theft in the 700 block of Stone Harbor Circle.

Gold jewelry and contact lenses worth \$3,000 were believed to have been taken from a condominium July 12 during an open house, police said.

The victim had left the property in the care of a real estate agent between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. that day, during which time several people had arrived to view the residence, according to police.

Another substantial loss, listed at almost \$4,900, was reported to police Friday at 7:40 a.m.

Several power tools and construction equipment were discovered missing from a locked garage of an apartment complex in the 300 block of South Hazel Avenue.

The items, believed taken between 4 p.m. July 16 and 7 a.m. the next day, were being used in the construction of the property, police said.

### Fullerton to consider...

(Continued from Page 1) moonwalk Avenue and Walnut Avenue, and the physically handicapped parking zone on a portion of West Union Avenue.

Councilmembers will hear the second reading of the ordinance pertaining to commercial horse stables on public land and in oil-gas zones and an interim urgency ordinance to repeal the moratorium previously placed on increasing the number of horses in oil-gas zones.

City staff is recommending that the council take no action on repealing the moratorium so that it can remain in place until the

horse ordinance becomes effective on Aug. 20.

Also on Tuesday's agenda is consideration of a resolution to authorize the County of Orange to defend Fullerton in legal action by Southern Pacific Transportation Co. for refund of property tax from July 1, 1982, to June 30, 1986.

In addition, the council will appoint a voting delegate and voting alternate for the 1987 League of California Cities Annual Conference.

The council meeting will be held at the City Council Chambers, 303 W. Commonwealth Ave.



## City, chamber seek smoking policy input

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

Brea city and chamber officials want input from employees in the city on smoking policies in the workplace.

It is hard to gauge the success of the six-month-old Brea smoking ordinance, they said, unless those actually affected by voluntary policies at work come forward with comments.

Members of the Chamber/City Smoking Ordinance Committee met last week to discuss compliance to the law, which governs the smoking of cigarettes or pipes in public places, including the workplace.

The business community was given a year to implement smoking policies voluntarily, while being monitored by the Brea Chamber of Commerce. So far, five employees have filed written complaints and about three have

called to voice their dissatisfaction about the lack of a smoking policy in their offices.

"Maybe they're ignoring the situation or just turning their heads," said Ed Seal, chairman of the committee. Norm Wasserman, executive director of the chamber, said he noticed "reluctance" on the part of people to file a complaint.

"They may be afraid of losing their job, or having a conflict with their supervisor," Wasserman said.

Seal said some callers have requested their name not be used for fear of reprisals.

"Overall, there has not been a great deal of activity," said Denise Ovrum, assistant city manager. "It's hard to say (whether the ordinance is successful). Sometimes silence is not golden. The only way to gauge it is to

get feedback from the employees."

One complaint the committee did receive came from a customer at Albertson's market. Brea's ordinance does not include supermarkets because there is a state agency which forbids smoking in grocery stores. However, Ovrum said, the state does not enforce the law. Brea's smoking ordinance does, however, cover smoking in service lines in any public place. An increase in signage could solve this problem, the committee determined.

City Hall itself has had its problems enforcing the ordinance. City employees have reportedly been smoking in elevators and certain restrooms, Seal said. Additional signs on the outside of elevator and bathroom doors are being considered.

Employees with problems concern-

ing workplace smoking policy are encouraged to try and work out the situation first with their employers. If unsuccessful, employees should call the Chamber of Commerce at 529-4938. Complaints from callers who wish to remain anonymous will also be accepted.

After a year, voluntary smoking policies in the workplace will be reviewed by the City Council. If the council decides all businesses are complying with the law, they will continue to let them set their own policy. If they find businesses are not complying, however, the council will enforce stricter smoking restrictions.

The council is scheduled to evaluate the voluntary policies in October. The Chamber/City Committee will meet again in about four months to review the smoking ordinance.

## Brea High dance show set this week

By Kim Irwin  
Staff Writer

Every year for the last 18 years, the best of the best at Brea high entertain 1,200 residents with graceful movements and energetic leaps.

This year will be no exception.

The Brea Olinda High School dance production class takes to the stage again at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday in the high school auditorium. The concert will include many aspects of creative movement, said dance director Carole Finne, providing a range of entertainment, from humorous to fast-moving jazz to dramatic modern dance.

"We've had real good attendance at our past concerts," said Finn, who has been dance director at the high school since 1969. We usually get about 600 people for two nights. It is an excellent show."

Most Brea high students who will be performing in the concert are junior and seniors who are in the advanced class section of Brea's dance production class.

"These girls are the very top," Finn said.

The featured soloist dancers are Kerri Alexander, Amer Engerman and Robyn Hart.

This year, the concert also features three dances performed by the entire dance production class. Karen Kiunke, a former Brea Olinda High School dance production student, choreographed a modern dance



TO PERFORM— Among those performing in Brea Olinda High's annual dance production Thursday and Friday are (clockwise, from bottom left) Marily del Carpio, Torie

Wilson, Ginger Grover, Sally Ortiz and Amy Bates. The performances will be held in the high school auditorium.

titled "Legs." Senior Kerri Alexander choreographed a jazz number called "Jazz... With Ease," while Robyn Hart choreographed "California Girls," the concert's finale.

The advanced dance class will also perform a dance called "Darkness in Africa," choreographed by Tina Harrison, Jodi Martenson, Kim Oden, Sarah Ann Pope and Lisa Wicke.

Rusty Ham, David Morrill and Greg Quiring, also Brea students, will make guest appearances at the concert.

Other members of the Brea Olinda High School dance production class include Amy Bates, Saadia Billman, Kara Clizbe, Shana Curry, Marily del Carpio, Gina Grover, Dominique Hitchcock, Mona Lee, Heather Lucas,

Danae McDaniel, Sally Ortiz, Kelly Oyler, Jennifer Summers, Shannon Thrall and Torie Wilson.

General admission tickets are \$3, with student tickets priced at \$2.50 (with an Associated Student Body card). Children under 12 are admitted for \$2.50. Tickets are available at the high school. For more information, call 990-7854.

### Voluntary pay envelope inside

A voluntary pay envelope for a three-month subscription to the Brea Highlander is inserted in today's issue.

The subscription helps defray a small part of the cost of producing the best possible community newspaper, said Ron Redfern, publisher.

A contribution of \$3 for three months of the Highlander is requested. Readers are encouraged to return their contributions with their comments on any aspect of the newspaper.

## Sutton named to toxic dump advisory panel

Brea Mayor John Sutton has been chosen to represent the Orange County League of Cities on the Stringfellow Advisory Committee.

The league committee is monitoring the clean-up process at Stringfellow toxic dump site in Glen Avon in Riverside County.

"Orange County is directly affected by this clean-up process," Sutton said, "because a plume of contaminated ground water from that site does come out in wells and eventually finds its way to Orange County."

The reclamation process for the dump site includes the interception of possibly contaminated well water, which is cleaned and shipped to Orange County, Sutton said. Once the water reaches the county, it is processed a second time at the Huntington Beach water treatment site.

Sutton said the volume from Stringfellow dump is only one-tenth of one percent of the total volume handled by the Orange County Sanitation District, Sutton said. So the

processing does not pose a hazard to Orange County.

"We do need to watch this process very closely," Sutton said.

The Stringfellow Advisory Committee meets quarterly.

Sutton brings to the committee not only his experience as Brea's mayor, but four years as a city councilman.

He has also served as a representative to the Orange County Sanitation District and is chairman of Orange County's 13th Sanitation District.

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**LAST LOOK?**— The venerable Durkee-Bell house on the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, will soon be demolished to make room for a parking lot.

—Photo by David Carlson

**Time running out for  
 the old Durkee place**

**By Leslie Stuart Carter**  
The official address is "285 Berry Street," but it might well be "285 Brea" because the old Durkee-Bell house, on the southwest corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, has been there since before most Breans were born. The bilious-green old relic of a bygone age is Brea to those locals looking on aghast and impotent as one cherished echo of the past after another is obliterated, superseded by symbols of a plastic age.

If "last looks" are your thing, then it's suggested you hurry to Berry and Imperial before the demolition crews ravage the Durkee place. You can still catch the ageless perfume of honeysuckle permeating the once immaculate back gardens. The two magnificent flat-top pine trees still soar majestically above the dark green roof. The winding, gravelled driveway off Berry, flanked by four eucalyptus trees, once bore the tire marks of Florence Durkee, the house's last owner-occupant who died at age 84 in February, 1986.

The venerable, 5,000-foot wood and stucco building is doomed, purchased by the Mercury Insurance Group whose offices are across the street. Mercury wants the site for additional parking.

"We hate to see the house go," said Mercury administrative assistant Eraina Olson, "but we're desperate for additional parking space for our clients."

There's an oppressive aura of melancholy about the Durkee house today. Early on a blustery morning, the back gardens' accumulation of dead leaves crunched underfoot as everything flappable flapped, and everything creakable creaked. A child's swing set that once sent peals of laughter into the 10-room interior stands derelict and abandoned, undulating gently in the wind as if in silent appeal to its youthful rider of yesterday. An ancient brick-and-cement barbecue crumbles beside a rotting pile of highly combustible firewood. A cookout in days gone by must have been a joyous occasion at the old house.

The Durkee house, circa 1918, was a survivor. The original owner, J.D. Sievers, pillar of Brea society as well as director of the First National Bank and a trustee of the Brea Olinda High School's first school board, enjoyed eight years at the Berry Street residence. Then, at 8 o'clock on the sultry morning of April 8, 1926, a storm broke over Brea, and a lightning bolt struck two 700-gallon oil tanks north of the railroad tracks

**Brea Beat**

on Berry, tracks that are still there to this day. Those Union Oil Co.'s containers exploded, and a deluge of blazing oil slashed through the citrus groves that Sievers (whose name is perpetuated in Brea's annals by the street bearing his name just east of the house) had planted south of the railroad. The 80-acre groves once were covered with choice walnuts before Sievers converted them to oranges and lemons.

The holocaust missed the house but consumed Sievers' orchards. Union Oil, rather than meet J.D.'s huge reparation assessment, simply bought him out—charred orchards, house, the lot. So the petroleum colossus found itself in the fruit business.

Another famous name in local circles, the Bastanchury family, was employed until 1931 by the oil company to tend the new crop of trees. The Basque Bastanchurys were boxing enthusiasts, erecting training facilities for local fighters. The family also earned a reputation of what today would be called "swingers," because their lavish parties at the house were de rigueur for Brea's leading citizens. A Bastanchury Christmas party, particularly, was a highlight of the social season with lights festooning the trees and the house ablaze with color.

The home became the "Neuls (rhymes with "miles") House" when Joseph of that ilk, a Union Oil citrus supervisor, took it over in 1931. A surviving Neuls daughter, Dale, remembers her pre-World War II childhood and her subsequent marriage in the house.

"I couldn't stand it there," Dale Hodkins said, iconoclastically, "it was too isolated. All my friends lived downtown, and because it was so dark and scary there, once I'd walked home from school, I stayed put."

Dale Neuls Hodkins remembers the rats and the termites, too. She also recalls that she had the opportunity to buy the atmospheric, historically rich house from her father in 1948 for \$45,000. Today, the stately old home, far grander than the modest oil workers' dwellings that once stood nearby, has a market value of about one-and-a-half million dollars.

So, first the good news. The Sievers-Neuls-Durkee-Bell place can still be saved. The old, dark house, now nailed up and securely sealed like a carcass about to be dismembered, could be relocated in, say, Arovista Park and preserved for future Brea generations to see that once upon a time we treasured our heritage—our links with a more expansive age now vanished and banished forever. The Brea Historical Society is anxious to

See BREA BEAT, page 5

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# Now is the time to find that summer job

By Greg Klerkx  
Staff Writer

Although summer is still a few months away, now is the time to begin looking for those often-elusive summer jobs, according to the director of the Yorba Linda Youth Employment Service.

"There are a lot of kids and a lot of jobs," said Judy Peterson, director of the year-round service based in the Yorba Linda Library. "Kids need to keep in touch and be active about their searching, and now is the time to start."

The Youth Employment Service is a state-sponsored organization that helps people, primarily students, ages 14 and older, find entry-level jobs. The Yorba Linda branch, which serves Yorba Linda, Placentia, Brea and Anaheim Hills, has been in operation for nearly three years, said Peterson.

The jobs available to students vary

greatly, said Peterson. Youths might spend the summer as a receptionist, cashier, lifeguard, clerk or working in someone's home or at a child care center. Unusual jobs are also available: Last year, one student's job was reading to a blind man while another was an auto body repair trainee.

Peterson said all employers look for enthusiastic people with "good attitudes," regardless of the job available. She offered the following suggestions to potential employees:

- Think about what kind of work you are willing to do, what hours and days you are available (be flexible) and know how you will get to and from work.
  - Be neat and thorough on applications—use ink.
  - Be on time, even early, for interviews.
  - Go alone to apply and to interview.
  - Don't be discouraged: Keep trying.
- For more information, call 777-5031.

## BREA BEAT: Durkee place

From page 2

save the house, and Mercury Insurance Group doesn't want to go down in Brea history as the crass executioner of the city's loveliest old house. Actually, they just covet the 2.2 acres the place stands on.

Fact is, the people of Brea are up to here with the relentless dissolution of the city's historical landmarks.

"I'm not at all happy with what's going on here," confirmed Dean Millen, commenting on Brea's now gaudier face. Millen is a longtime resident of the community and a founder-member of the Brea Historical Society.

The bad news? The cost of removing the Durkee house from

Imperial and Berry to a new spot is a cool \$400,000, a sum that the Brea Historical Society simply hasn't got in its coffers.

So, unless somebody out there can come up with the money, the house, still oddly isolated despite its Imperial Highway location, will soon be a pile of rubble.

For many, a vast portion of Brea will be razed with it.

*Brea Beat is a regular feature of the Brea Highlander. Leslie Stuart Carter is a 21-year resident of Brea and a native of London, England. He has written freelance articles for a variety of newspapers and magazines. Comments and suggestions for future columns are welcomed.*

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# VIEWPOINTS

## Letters to the Editor

### Value of sports

**To the editor:**  
Fullerton schools, as well as those in other communities, are dealing with a very important question these days. The question is: How important is a sports program in educating our young. Or rephrasing the question: What do students learn from sports that they can't learn in the classroom?

Academically, both boys and girls are taught the same knowledge in the classroom. Yet, boys have grown up to become leaders without any problem. Why? You need to go back in time. Think about it for just a minute. Who participated in the schools' sports program 25 years ago. The boys!

Sports! The one thing years ago which was different, between the sexes. Sports! It must teach you how to become a leader by being a part of a school team. That means working with each other. It's working together with one goal in mind—to win not for yourself but to win for your school. The team can only win because each player learns the skills to be a follower as well as a leader. The education system and only the education system can offer these skills to all its students who desire to learn how to achieve their highest goals.

Sports are no longer just for men. Today women are just as involved and are enjoying the benefits too. Now that school districts are questioning expenditures on sports, one must wonder why, when only boys were involved in sports, there was never any question about the money being spent on this need. With women equally involved in sports, it has become a question of money. Men for decades had the opportunity handed to them on a silver platter. While, on the other hand, women have had to fight every inch of the way to have it handed to them on a paper plate. What should Fullerton and other districts do with that paper plate? Keep it! It would be wrong to take this opportunity away from girls, or boys.

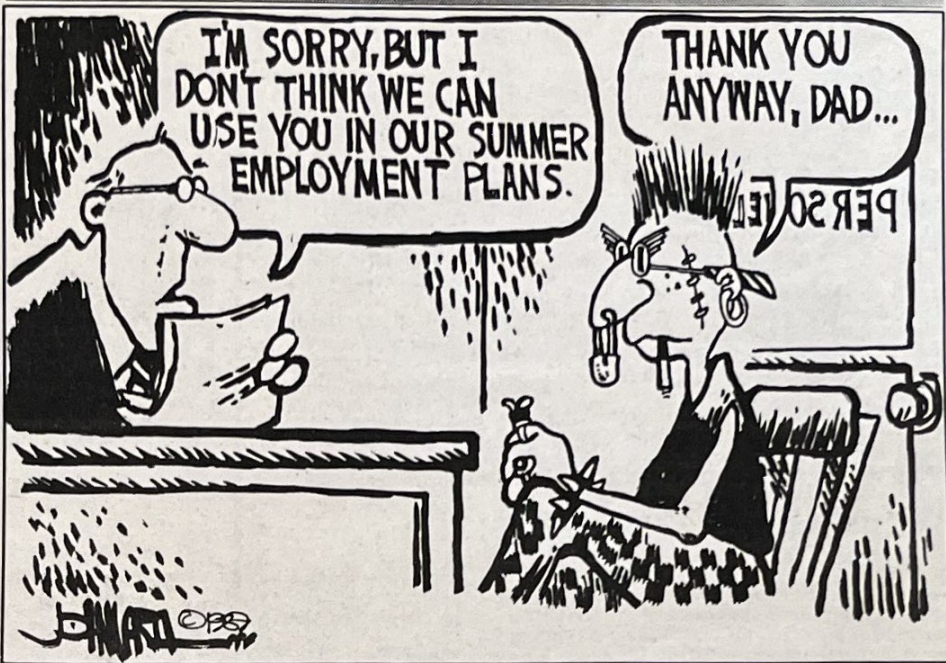
Many years ago I spoke at a school board meeting on why sports should be kept in the school system. Brea-Olinda Unified School District heard the same thing I'm writing about now. They kept sports. The schools' reward and mine is knowing many students are attending college because they received scholarships for playing sports. This fact alone makes sports worth its price in gold.

With no sports in schools, how many kids would drop out? You know, as well as I do, that many students come to school not for academic knowledge but to play in a sports program and etc. For many students sports is their life. Today students cannot be on a school team until they first achieve academically with a required grade point average. This factor alone encourages the students to make the grade in the classroom.

School districts should think twice before they cut their athletics budgets. These programs are needed in the school system. Remember our leaders of tomorrow are our sports players of today. Can we afford to be a country without leaders? This is the real question.

Sandy Schuessler  
Fullerton

Lara



## Write Your Reps

**County**  
Supervisor Gaddi Vasquez, Third District, 10 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana 92701. 834-3330.

**State**  
Sen. William Campbell, (R-21st), 23161 Lake Center Drive, Suite 205, El Toro 92630. 770-5533. In Sacramento: State Capitol, Sacramento 95814. (916) 445-2848.

Assemblyman Ross Johnson, (R-64th), 1501 N. Harbor Blvd., Suite 201, Fullerton 92635. 738-5853. In Sacramento: State Capitol Building, Sacramento 95814.

Gov. George Deukmejian State Capitol, Sacramento 95814. (916) 445-2841.

**Federal**  
Rep. William Dannemeyer, (R-39th), 1235 N. Harbor Blvd., Suite 100, Fullerton 92632. 992-0141. In Washington, D.C.: 1214 Longworth HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-4111.

Sen. Pete Wilson, (R), Federal Building, 880 Front Street, Room 659, San Diego 92188. (619) 293-5257. In Washington, D.C.: United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-9652.

Sen. Alan Cranston, (D), 5757 W. Century Blvd., Suite 515, Los Angeles 90045. (213) 642-5008. In Washington, D.C.: United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 244-3553.

President Ronald Reagan, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500. (202) 456-1414.

**Local**  
Brea City Council, No. One Civic Center Circle, Brea 92621. Mayor John Sutton. City Manager Ed Wohlenberg. 990-7600.

Brea-Olinda Unified School District, No. One Civic Center Circle, Brea 92621. Board President Sharon Chase. Superintendent Edgar Seal. 990-7800.

Brea Coordinating Council, President Jan Wingerter. 529-8143.

BREA

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Meets for breakfast every Thursday at Benjie's restaurant in Brea. For more information, call 971-3473.

**American Association of Retired Persons**  
Meets at 1 p.m. the third Wednesday of the month at Brea Senior Center, 500 S. Sievers Street. For more information, call 529-3810.

**American Association of University Women**  
Meets at 7:30 p.m. the third Wednesday of the month at Brea United Methodist Church. For more information, call 529-7279.

**American Business Women's Association**  
Placentia Stars Chapter. Meets at 6:30 p.m. the fourth Wednesday of the month at various locations. For information, call 993-4286 or 529-7979.

**American Legion Auxiliary of Brea**  
Meets at 8 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month at the

American Legion building, 204 S. Brea Blvd. For more information, call 529-1459.

**Arovista Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association**  
Meets at 7:15 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month at the school in the teacher's lounge. For more information, call 529-2185.

**Brea Art Association**  
Meets at 7:30 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month at Pioneer Hall, Elm and Madrona streets. For more information, call 529-5322.

**Brea Boy Scouts**  
Individual troop meeting dates, times and locations vary. For more information, call 546-4990.

**Brea Chamber of Commerce**  
Meets at 7:15 a.m. for breakfast the fourth Friday of the month in the community room on the fourth level of the Civic Cultural Center. Mixers every second Wednesday of the month from 5:30-8 p.m. Locations vary. For more information, call 529-4938.

**Brea City Council**  
Meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Tuesday of the month in the council chambers on the third level of the Civic Cultural Center. For more information, call 990-7600.

**Brea Coordinating Council**  
Meets at noon the second Friday of the month at Brea Community Hospital, 380 W. Central Ave. For more information, call 529-8143.

**Brea Community Emergency Council**  
Meetings times, dates and locations vary. For more information, call 990-7776.

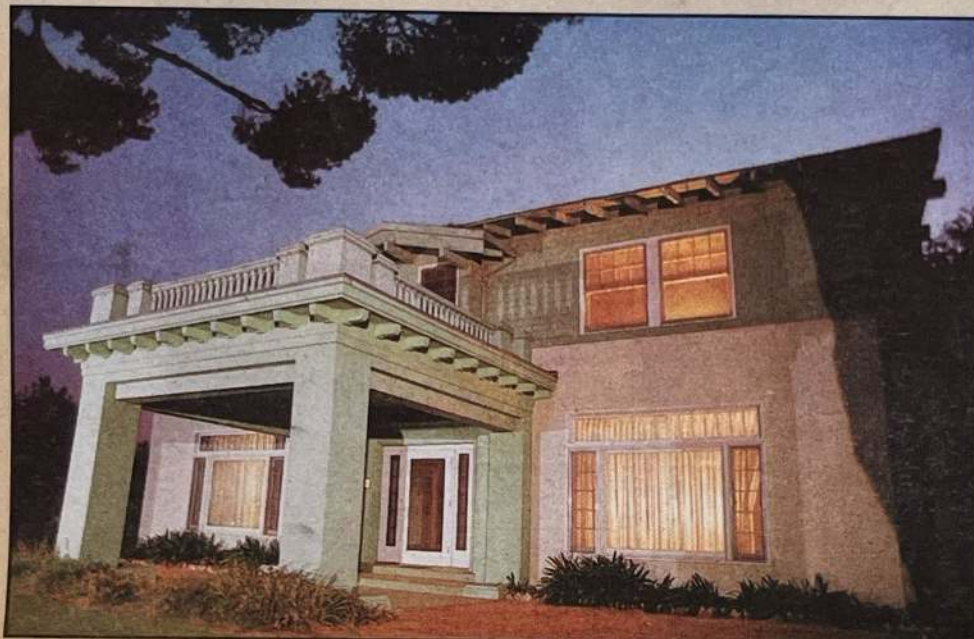
**Brea Community Hospital Auxiliary**  
Meetings times, dates and locations vary. For more information, call 529-0211. Ext. 295.

**Brea Cultural Arts Commission**  
Meets at 6 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month in the conference training center on the fourth level of the Civic Cultural Center. For more information, call 990-7735.

See CALENDAR, page 7

September 2, 1986

BR32



Chris Carlson/The Register

The landmark Durkee House has stood for almost 70 years at Berry Street and Imperial Highway.

## A house with a history

Home that survived earthquakes, fires now faces another threat: developers want the land under it.

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

**Y**ou can't miss it as you turn north from Imperial Highway on Berry Street.

Perched upon a knoll behind a jungle of foliage is a pale green stucco-and-wood house that for nearly 70 years has been a Brea landmark.

Called the Durkee House, it is a treasure trove of history. It survived an oil fire that destroyed

surrounding citrus groves; weathered the 1933 earthquake that brought down the pillars at Brea-Olinda High School; had been the home to a Basque boxer; and the location of wild parties and festive weddings.

The sturdy 5,000-square-foot home situated on a prime piece of Brea real estate also is out of place among the industries that surround it.

A reminder of days when Brea was a sleepy town of farms and oil fields, the two-story house may not survive much longer. Its fate may be the wrecking ball.

The Durkee House and its 2.2 acres of land are for sale. Potential buyers have included a female

Please see HOUSE/19

## Density becoming an issue

Multifamily homes gain favor as land shrinks

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

**L**a Habra City Councilwoman Dorothy Wedel calls the attached housing units that have sprung up across the city in the last 10 years "condominiums."

The name fits what she said is a trend of building higher-density housing of lower quality throughout the 61-year-old city. It's a trend against which she campaigned when up for election two years ago; a platform she said helped capture her a City Council seat.

But some of Wedel's council colleagues and city officials dispute that La Habra's single-family residential area is being steadily eroded by the encroachment of high-density development.

The question of density is becoming the center of a war of words that has been raging quietly behind the walls of the La Habra City Hall. With few parcels left in the city on which to build, the issue is drawing more fire from city officials and developers.

"Every time you turn around there is another high-density apartment building going up," Wedel said. "People asked me to run because I was a voice out there that said, 'Hey, we've had it.'"

The La Habra Planning Commission Monday will consider another such multifamily development slated to be built on five acres of land off Idaho Street and Buena Vista Avenue.

The commission postponed a decision on the project two weeks ago after nearby residents protested the 71-unit townhouse project would ag-

Please see DENSITY/6

### INSIDE

**Visitors:** A delegation from Japan made a stop in Brea on a one-week tour of North America/3

**World as school:** A pair of travel agents that has booked tours and trips since 1960 say traveling fosters understanding and education/10

**New opponent:** Brea-Olinda has a new foe: the bulldozers that will take away the playing fields until the new high school is ready for the '88 school year/17

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Street Talk/2

## Brea teachers take contract to school

Approval comes after year without agreement

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

**T**he Brea-Olinda Teachers Association will return to the classroom Thursday with a contract in hand.

The association, which has been battling the district for more than a year and worked last year without a contract, ratified a two-year contract in general balloting last week. The re-

sults of the balloting were revealed Aug. 25.

State mediator Draza Mrvichin, who counted the ballots, said the tabulation of votes on the ballot — which included two separate salary offers and a contract vote — would not be revealed. He said 146 teachers voted in the ratification election.

"The teachers are under no obligation to tell management how they voted," Mrvichin said.

The teachers accepted a two-year contract that provides a one-time 5 percent salary bonus for the 1985-86 school year; an 11 percent increase

for 1986-87; a \$500 increase added onto the top three salary ranges; and a \$1,000 salary step for teachers who stay more than 31 years.

"I am very pleased with the vote," said Rachel Sweet, president of the 160-member association. "We are very happy to go back to work with a contract and with last year's (contract) settled."

The teachers received ballots Aug. 12 offering two salary choices plus a strike option. Besides the two-year option, a three-year contract tying 1987-88 salary hikes to the cost-of-living

Please see TEACHERS/8

# STREET TALK

Question asked at Albertson's, Imperial Highway and the Orange (57) Freeway, Brea.

## Do you think there are too many national holidays?



“ No. I don't think so. I think workers need time off sometimes. ”

**Marie Sobczyk**  
Brea  
housewife



“ No. But we have enough already. ”

**Kathy Page**  
Brea  
housewife



“ No. I like holidays, but we don't need more. ”

**Tracey Spencer**  
Garden Grove  
nurses assistant



“ We need more, definitely. There are not enough workdays off with pay. ”

**Kay Barr**  
La Mirada  
pharmaceutical employee



“ The latest was Martin Luther King's, and I agree with that. Maybe we should drop someone else's and keep his. I don't think there are too many holidays. No. ”

**Joanne Stout**  
Oregon  
housewife



“ If my husband gets off work with pay, then I'm all for them. ”

**Karen King**  
Brea  
housewife

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S407

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# HOUSE: After 70 years, threat now is from increasing land values

FROM 1

attorney planning to turn the house into offices; a Texas oil man looking for a home; and several developers seeking the land for industrial uses.

"Everybody's interested," said Glen Fullerwider, trustee for the estate in which his wife, June, and her sister Maxine Vanderburg are heirs. "But when we start talking value, suddenly you find out (the house) is not quite suited to their needs."

The heirs, however, have agreed to give the house — named after the last owner-occupant, Florence Durkee who died in February at the age of 84 — to the Brea Historical Society, if the purchasers of the property on which it sets plan to demolish it.

The society, however, must pay to have the house moved to a new location, which could cost as much as \$400,000.

The city formed a four-member task force July 1 to determine the cost and feasibility of moving the house. The task force sent a memo outlining its findings to Brea City Manager Edward Wohlenberg on Aug. 13.

The issue probably will come before the Brea City Council on Sept. 16, Wohlenberg said.

"We have to determine how big of a priority this is to the community," he said. "This is a piece of real estate with real economic value that has nothing to do with its historical aspects. It's not an insignificant undertaking."

Bill Higgins, the task force chairman, said he recommends the city buy the property and retain the house as a museum and park. The house has more historical significance if left on its current site, he said.

"It's a landmark where it is," Higgins said. "It's sad when you see something like this go. You can never replace it."

Fullenwider would not disclose the market value of the house and land. But Higgins said the property is "rumored" to be worth \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million.

Other options for the house contained in the task force report include moving the house to a site on the Brea Municipal Golf Course near the Brea Senior Center or finding another location in the 35-acre Arrovista Park.

To move the home and reconstruct it on another site would cost between

\$200,000 and \$400,000, Higgins said. Yearly maintenance would run another \$62,000 a year.

The cost could be funded with a combination of money from the society, Brea Foundation and city.

The entrance way to the grand home, unique among the modest dwellings built to house Brea oil workers, is now covered with pine needles that have fallen from the two trees that arch more than 10 feet above its sloping roof.

The trees shade the house, helping to keep its interior cool during the 100-degree weather that baked Brea recently. The noise of Imperial Highway traffic creates a constant whirl through the rooms of the house, which were emptied soon after Florence Durkee's death.

Four eucalyptus trees stand guard over the winding gravel driveway that leads from Berry Street to the house's front door. The gardener mows the lawn once a week and a tenant in the guest house waters the overgrown gardens, once the pride of Florence Durkee and previous owners.

The large foyer that leads into the 10-room house is cool. There are cedar-lined, walk-in closets; and walnut floors, staircase and moldings. There's even a secret compartment where former residents hid their valuables, behind a wooden panel in the dining room near the kitchen doorway.

The faded floral wallpaper appears to be original, echoing the post-World War I years when the house was built.

According to Dean Millen, a long-time Brea resident and a member of a 10-man consortium that eventually bought and divided the property, J.D. Sievers built the house around 1918.

Sievers, who had a street named after him in Brea, was a member of the school board and director of First National Bank of Brea. His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design sits on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been refurbished by its current owner.

The Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when a oil fire de-

stroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the house, Millen said. The blaze, touched off when lightning struck two Union Oil underground storage containers, missed the Sievers home.

The Sievers settled with Union Oil when the petroleum giant agreed to buy the house and property. Union Oil then found itself in the farming business, running about 2,300 acres of avocado, lemon and orange groves, Millen said.

For a short time, the Bastanchury family assisted in the farming operations, occasionally using the home to throw elaborate parties. In 1931, Union Oil enlisted the help of Joseph Neuls to run the orchards. Neuls moved into the home with his wife and three children.

Neuls bought the home in 1940 when a group of 10 Brea businessmen divided up 460 acres of Union Oil land, including the property on which the Sievers House — which became known as the Neuls House — was located. Neuls acquired title to the house and about 12 to 14 acres of land.

Neuls' only surviving child, Dale Hodkins of Brea, remembers life on the ranch as lonely. As a teen-ager, Hodkins said, she longed to live in town with her friends.

"Fifty years ago it was more country," she said. "There were no street lights and orchards all around. There were just a few houses up on the hill on Imperial and nothing across the street from us."

Unlike other Brea residents, who romanticize about the stately home with its rich history, Hodkins said she doesn't care what happens to the old house. She passed up a chance in 1948 to buy the home from her father for \$45,000.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," said Hodkins, who was married in the house. "I remember the termites and the rats that ran up the walls."

Florence Durkee, however, did not want the house torn down, Fullenwider said. She first suggested in 1973 that the home become the headquarters for the historical society.

Durkee, along with her sister and brother-in-law, Ruth and John Randolph Bell, bought the house in 1956. She moved there after her brother-in-law died.

"Florence Durkee always had a strong feeling toward historical societies, both locally and nationally," Fullenwider said. "She did not particularly want to destroy the house."

Karl Fanning, president of the Brea Historical Society, said the group seeks to preserve the house because "it belonged to a pioneer family. It's an illustration of a fine-quality home of the late teens and early 1920s in the California bungalow style."

But, Fullenwider said, he is in "no big hurry" to sell the house. "We're just letting people come to us," he said. "They have to see what they're up against. We're talking \$75,000 to \$80,000 just to get it up to standards."

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Irvine, Fountain Val.; 751-4155  
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N.Huntington, Sunset; 891-1606  
Whittier, La Palma, Cypress, W.Garden Grove, W.Anahem; 826-9660  
El Toro, Laguna, San Clemente; 586-0224

THE ORANGE COUNTY  
**Register**

## Immigration said to be reason for TB rate above U.S. average

By Susan Gill  
The Register

The number of cases of tuberculosis reported in Orange County — already greater than the national average — is on the rise because of increased immigration from countries in which TB is prevalent, American Lung Association officials said.

"We've noticed quite an increase in tuberculosis cases, particularly in the Hispanic, Vietnamese and Korean populations," said Sharon Finsterbush, director of communications and development for the Santa Ana-based American Lung Association of Orange County.

TB rates in Orange County during 1985 were 154 percent of the U.S. case rate, according to Department of Health Sciences statistics. Recent tuberculosis skin-testing programs in

Orange County junior and senior high schools revealed that the TB rate among students who were born outside the United States was 20.9 percent, compared to 3.3 percent among native-born students.

Last week, the association sponsored Tuberculosis Awareness Week to provide the public with information about skin testing, treatment recommendations and services available to Orange County residents.

"We wanted to inform high-risk groups such as children and the elderly that once TB is diagnosed, it's treatable," Finsterbush said.

A lung disease which was the major cause of death in the early 1900s, TB is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes into the air. Frequent, prolonged exposure is necessary for transmission to occur.

# Dining & Entertainment

## ON THE TOWN

### Ichabod's Sleepy Hollow

#### La Habra

The east coast abounds with landmarks significant to the early years of our nation. Where they can boast the likes of Independence Hall, Mount Vernon, Monticello and Plymouth Rock, we can point to Ichabod's Sleepy Hollow Restaurant on Whittier Blvd. in La Habra. It is an authentic slice of 18th century Americana in both its decor and bill of fare.

Yankee Pot Roast, Philadelphia Pepperpot Soup, seafood specialties, Steaks and 5 cuts of Prime Rib served with traditional Spoon Bread Pudding head the list of favorites for anyone who has ever contemplated sticking a feather in one's hat and calling it "Macaroni."

Just as a mild sense of internationalism pervaded the Yankee upper crust, so it is with Ichabod's. Brochette of Beef Teriyaki, Mexican Potato Skins, Escargot de Bourgogne and soon to be added Middle Eastern dishes shouldn't ruffle too many powdered wigs.

The decor at Sleepy Hollow is as rich and comfortable as a homemade quilt. Rough wood beams and colonial cabinetry contribute a rustic element. Antiques, collectibles and a plethora of framed prints depicting revolutionary era scenes fill every available portion of wall-space and shelf. Dark wood booths and comfortable tables are spaced around the dining rooms, providing an intimate setting.

Ichabod's serves lunch from 11:00 to 3:00. Of course the California palate is accommodated with a large selection of luncheon salads, omelettes and sandwiches. Those who want to enjoy Ichabod's finest should refer to the "entree" section of the lunch menu, all of these are served with Hot Bread, Soup and Salad.

The entertainment in Sleepy Hollow's cocktail lounge offers a twist on their otherwise American theme--Bellydancing every Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

New owners Joe and Mary Youssef held a terrific Grand Opening celebration recently that gave lucky guests a glimpse of the hospitality they will be offering to patrons everyday at the Sleepy Hollow Restaurant.

651 W. Whittier Blvd. La Habra, (714)992-2336

### The Caribbean

#### Dana Point

Picture the Caribbean. You're sitting in a restaurant gazing at a palm-shaded lagoon. The ceiling fans stir the hanging plants. Cool jazz is carried by the ocean breeze. Impressively inexpensive fresh fish is the order of the day. Yes, this is the Caribbean alright--The Caribbean Restaurant in Dana Point on PCH.

For years, Dana Point had been struggling with its identity, but with the maturation of the beautiful harbor and the opening of restaurants like the Caribbean, Dana Point has really come into its own. There is lots of fun stuff to do on a warm summer afternoon as well as a cool summer evening.

Mesquite-broiled seafood dinners start at \$8 and range to an remarkable \$14 for a huge portion of Alaskan King Crab Legs, Australian Lobster Tail, Mahi-mahi, and Halibut are also good values at the Caribbean.

Pick and choose your favorite oceanic tidbit from the Caribbeans oyster bar, while enjoying a cocktail and listening to live music. The Caribbean is a must-do in an evening of short stops along the coast, and an equally appealing spot to spend an entire relaxing evening.

An easy way to become acquainted with the Caribbean is to partake

of the complimentary hors d'oeuvres during their happy hour Tues.-Fri., 4-6pm. My bet is that after you have made your first to the Caribbean, you'll be back.

34130 Pacific Coast Hwy. Dana Point, 240-2390.

### Cluckers

#### Orange

Cluckers Chicken & Rib Co. has just opened its bright green doors on 2249 N. Tustin Avenue, directly across the street from the Mall of Orange. The restaurant took over the 11,000 square foot Imperial Bank building, and has 300 seats with an informal, family style "sawdust on the floor" motif.

The menu is outstanding, featuring Rotisserie Roasted Chicken and Broiled Beef, Blade and Baby Back Pork Ribs. The chicken preparation is most interesting, in that no gas or electricity is used--just 100% real Mesquite charcoal in real brick ovens. These ovens, unavailable in the U.S., were specially made in Canada and brought to California for Cluckers use.

Cluckers menu also features a host of tempting appetizers, including Deep Fried Mozzarella Cheese, Potato Skins and Cheese Fries. There is also a 40-foot salad bar loaded with fresh greens and garden goodies. There's a mouth-watering array of other salads as well, including Walnut Chicken, Pasta, Cottage Cheese and Fruit and Shrimp Louis. You'll also find a delightful combination of sandwiches ranging from Chicken Salad to BBQ Ham. Beer and wine service is available, as is a very reasonably priced children's menu during lunch and dinner.

Perhaps the most unique dish prepared at Cluckers is their Original Chicken Chili; available as lunch, dinner or a side dish. It has the great taste of homemade chili without the fat.

Cluckers is open for lunch and dinner, 7 days a week during these hours: Mon-Thurs 11am-10pm, Fri-Sat 11am-11pm, Sun 11am-9pm. Look for the very bright yellow and green sign and awnings! Take out is available, and major credit cards are accepted.

### Bluegrass & Traditional Music Expo '86

#### Costa Mesa

The inaugural Bluegrass & Traditional Music Expo '86, featuring some of the nation's top performers in both fields as well as a unique musical trade show, will be held at the Orange County Fairgrounds, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 5-7.

There will be various seminars and musical workshops given by participating performers, vintage instrument displays, arts and crafts exhibits.

Single-day tickets are \$10. Senior citizens over 65 and children under 10 accompanied by an adult are free. Show hours are 10a.m. to 8p.m. Friday and Saturday and 10a.m. to 6p.m. Sunday.

Send Restaurant Information to: KB  
1848 N. Placentia Ave.  
Placentia 92670

For Advertising Information  
Call Marianne Archibald  
953-4917

# Brea/Fullerton Community

## Police blotter

### BREA Monday

2:48 p.m. — Two subjects detained at Sears Brea Mall for petty theft.  
3:31 p.m. — Petty theft reported in the 2100 block of East Birch Street.  
11:45 p.m. — Auto burglary reported at the Brea Mall parking lot.

### FULLERTON Monday

6:32 a.m. — Auto theft reported in the 1400 block of North Placentia Avenue.  
8:10 a.m. — Commercial burglary reported in the 1200 block of East Chapman Avenue.  
10:35 a.m. — Commercial burglary reported in the 1200 block of East Wilshire Avenue.  
11:42 a.m. — Petty theft reported in the 2000 block of West Porter Avenue.  
12:23 p.m. — Petty theft reported in the 2700 block of North Associated Road.  
1:50 p.m. — Petty theft reported in the 300 block of North Basque Avenue.  
2:43 p.m. — Grand theft reported in the 1300 block of South State College Boulevard.

## Sexuality seminar set

ORANGE — The Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange is sponsoring a seminar for those working with adolescents entitled "Issues of Sexuality for Adolescents" from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 17 at Marywood Center. The seminar, presented by consultant Ken Brokamp, is designed to inform parents, teachers, youth ministers, volunteers, priests or anyone ministering to adolescents about the need for sexuality teaching in schools, what the church teaches regarding sexuality, and what can be done practically. The cost is \$5 per person. Lunch will not be provided. Further information and reservations are available by calling the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at (714) 974-7120.



(Star-Progress photo by Brian Greene)

The historical Durkee home on Berry Street has become the focus of attention for developers and preservationists.

## Obituaries

### Ethel Maude Donaldson

Fullerton resident Ethel Maude Donaldson, 88, died Dec. 30 at her residence. Born in Guernsey, England, she is survived by her daughter Gladys Walker of Fullerton; sister Ivy German of Brooklyn Heights, Ohio; three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Visitation is set for Saturday at 10 a.m. at Memory Garden Mortuary. Graveside services will be held Saturday at 11 a.m. at Memory Garden Memorial Park.

### Gary R. Sumej

Fullerton resident Gary R. Sumej, 42, who worked for 20 years as chef at Trapper's Inn Restaurant in La Habra, died Dec. 29 at St. Jude Hospital. Born in Uniontown, Pa., he also served as chef at Alta Vista Country Club in Placentia. Survivors include his mother Evelyn of Fullerton; sisters Karen Byrd of Anaheim and Bonnie Evans of Fullerton; nephews David and John Byrd of Anaheim; niece Karen Bateson of Fullerton; and aunt Ellie Ellison of Placentia. Graveside services will be held Friday at 1 p.m. at Loma Vista Memorial Park in Fullerton. Visitation is set for Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at McAulay & Wallace Mortuary in Fullerton.

### Murphy L. McKinnon

Brea resident Murphy L. McKinnon, 72, died Dec. 30 at a Brea residence. Born in Missouri, he was a mail room clerk with the ABC Unified School District for 20 years. Survivors include his wife Galena; son Lindell of Florida; daughters Diane Lustig and Loretta Bigham, both of Brea; sisters Rosemary Eckles and Harrietta Olsen, both of Missouri; brother Albert of Missouri; 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Visitation will be held Thursday from noon to 7 p.m. at McAulay & Wallace Fullerton Chapel. Services are planned for Friday at 11 a.m. at North Chapel of the Fullerton Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton. Interment will follow at Loma Vista Memorial Park.

## McAulay & Wallace Mortuary and Florist

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## NEELS BREA MORTUARY

Carol D. Weddle

Obituaries are printed by family request only  
Call NEELS for funeral service information

HAROLD A. BARLOW. Rosary will be held Friday 8:30 p.m. at St. Dennis Church in Diamond Bar. Mass is Saturday morning at 10 a.m. at St. Dennis.

835 South Brea Boulevard, Brea  
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OSCAR REYES ORONA. Viewing today from 5 to 9 p.m. Memory Garden Mortuary. Interment Monterrey, Mexico.

ETHEL DONALDSON. Viewing Saturday, 10-10:30. Graveside Services Saturday 11 at Memory Garden.

## Durkee home reminder of bygone era

# Land in 'landmark' lures developers

By the DSP staff  
and Freedom News Service

BREA — A Brea landmark is in escrow with the sale estimated to be in excess of \$1 million by one of its co-owners. But the deal isn't being consummated because of the structure on the site. The developer wants the land under it.

Located at the corner of Berry Street and Imperial Highway, the Durkee house stands as a reminder of an era gone by. And, as escrow on the property enters the final stages, the destruction of the 70-year-old home appears imminent.

"The whole place is in escrow right now," said Maxine Vandenburg, a niece of the last owner of the home, Florence Durkee, who died in February.

"We have offered to give the home to the city, to the Brea Historical Society and to the Brea Foundation, but no one has the cash to move the house," Vandenburg said of the 5,000-square-foot structure.

Bill Higgins, chairman of a task force to determine the home's destiny, recommends the city buy the property and retain the house as a museum and park. He believes the house has more historical significance if left on its current site.

"It's a landmark where it is," Higgins said. "It's sad when you see something like this go. You can never replace it."

To move the home and reconstruct it on another site would cost between \$200,000 and \$400,000, Higgins said. Annual maintenance could run \$62,000 a year, he added.

Because the property is in escrow, Vandenburg couldn't discuss the fate of the 2.2-acre parcel located across the street from the Mercury Casualty Insurance office. But she said the prime piece of commercial real estate will probably sell for "over \$1 million."

"Our property doesn't include the house. Our property is only one acre," said Dave Scott, a broker with the Vandenburg Group in Irvine. Scott's company owns a 1-acre strip of land adjacent to the Durkee house running along Imperial Highway.

"We wanted to buy it (the Durkee property), but we ended up spending so much time talking, somebody beat us to the punch," Scott said. "I'm a little upset we didn't get it."

He estimated the price of the land would be \$10 to \$12 per square foot and that it would be even more if it were a complete corner parcel.

"Everybody's interested," said Glen Fullerwider, trustee for the estate in which his wife, Jus-

and her sister Maxine Vandenburg are heirs. "But when we start talking value, suddenly you find out (the house) is not quite suited to their needs."

"We have to determine how big a priority this is to the community," City Manager Ed Wohlsberg said in late summer. "This is a piece of real estate with real economic value that has nothing to do with its historical aspects. It's not an insignificant undertaking."

The history of the home is unique, not only to Brea, but for the North Orange County region.

It survived an oil fire that destroyed surrounding citrus groves; weathered the 1933 earthquake; had been the home to a Basque boxer; and the location of wild parties and festive weddings.

Potential buyers have included a female attorney planning to turn the house into offices; a Texas oil man looking for a home; and several developers seeking the land for industrial uses.

The entrance way to the grand home, unique among the modest dwellings built to house Brea oil workers, is now covered with pine needles that have fallen from the two trees that arch more than 10 feet above its sloping roof.

The trees shade the house, helping to keep its interior cool during the 100-degree weather that bakes Brea during the summer months. The noise of Imperial Highway traffic creates a constant whirl through the rooms of the house, which were emptied soon after Florence Durkee's death.

Four eucalyptus trees stand guard over the winding gravel

driveway that leads from Berry Street to the house's front door. The gardener mows the lawn once a week and a tenant in the guest house waters the overgrown gardens, once the pride of Florence Durkee and previous owners.

The large foyer that leads into the 10-room house is cool. There are cedar-lined, walk-in closets; and walnut floors, staircase and moldings. There's even a secret compartment where former residents hid their valuables, behind a wooden panel in the dining room near the kitchen doorway.

The faded floral wallpaper appears to be original, echoing the post-World War 1 years when the house was built.

According to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident and a member of a 10-man consortium that eventually bought and divided the property, J.D. Sievers built the house around 1918.

Sievers, who had a street named after him in Brea, was a member of the school board and director of First National Bank of Brea. His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design sits on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been refurbished by its current owner.

The Sievers lived in the Berry Street House until 1926 when a oil fire destroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the house, Millen said. The blaze, touched off when lightning struck two Union Oil underground storage containers, missed the Sievers home.

The Sievers settled with Union

Oil when the petroleum giant agreed to buy the house and property. Union Oil then found itself in the farming business, running about 2,300 acres of avocado, lemon and orange groves, Millen said.

For a short time, the Bastanchury family assisted in the farming operations, occasionally using the home to throw elaborate parties. In 1931, Union Oil enlisted the help of Joseph Neuls to run the orchards. Neuls moved into the home with his wife and three children.

Neuls bought the home in 1940 when a group of 10 Brea businessmen divided up 460 acres of Union Oil land, including the property on which the Sievers House — which became known as the Neuls House — was located. Neuls acquired title to the house and about 12 to 14 acres of land.

Neuls' only surviving child, Dale Hodkins of Brea, remembers life on the ranch as lonely. As a teen-ager, Hodkins said, she longed to live in town with her friends.

"Fifty years ago it was more country," she said. "There were no street lights and orchards all around. There were just a few houses up on the hill on Imperial and nothing across the street from us."

Unlike other Brea residents, who romanticize about the stately home with its rich history, Hodkins said she doesn't care what happens to the old house. She passed up a chance in 1948 to buy the home from her father for \$45,000.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," said Hodkins, who was married in the house.

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## Dedication inscribed in Jewish artist's porcelain

By Barbara Glasone  
DSP Managing Editor

LA HABRA — In the spirit of Hanukkah, Lucia Davis lights her menorah, dishes up latkes (potato pancakes) onto her hand-painted porcelain serving dish and thanks God for all her blessings.

Well, almost all her blessings. Why, pray God, should she be thankful for the Israeli Fair customers who overlooked her artistic talents? Who's to know there are 14 boxes of porcelain dishes inscribed with authentic Hebrew words sitting in her storage locker? And who's to care Davis is working 15 hours a day, seven days a week at two jobs to help defray expenses incurred when she tried to offer Jewish families dishes that symbolized unwavering tradition?

"Those ladies in the next booth who were offering glitzy sweatshirts with gold glitter had all the customers," bemoans Davis, sitting on the floor of her modest La Habra apartment. "Can you imagine? People were spending \$60 for sweatshirts when they could have had unique dishes which to my knowledge, no one else in America has produced."

The emotions run deep as Davis' dedication to her religion and tradition are tarnished by trendy consumers.

The La Habra woman's kitchen table is laden with samples of her skills. A haroset bowl, designed to hold the apples and nuts of Passover, is inscribed with the Hebrew year in which it was painted. A salt and pepper shaker display authentic Hebrew words in blue and white ancient lettering. Tiles bearing

Jewish symbols decorate the apartment walls.

"I love table appointments, and I thought other Jews would, too," says Davis, pointing to a cake plate laden with floral designs. "I believe the eye feasts first before the person dines, so it would be natural for a Jew to enjoy a dinner plate inscribed with a blessing or message."

Davis' project began in early spring when she found a ceramic studio owner who would allow her to fire dishes on weekends. For 12 hours at a sitting, Davis diligently traced ancient Hebrew designs, researched in Jewish encyclopedias, onto porcelain dishes.

"Using a crow quill pen, I was only able to move one-eighth inch at a time before replenishing the paint. And most of the time, it took one hour to trace one design," she adds. "I was convinced people would love these dishes."

The intense work was as hard on her eyes as on her patience. Born with large eyes, Davis was told at an early age that she was legally blind. "My lens was too small for the focal point at the back of the eye. I could never distinguish branches and leaves on a tree."

At age 11, school officials gave Davis an eye test, and discovered she could not read the standard eye chart. Glasses were prescribed for extreme nearsightedness, while the optometrist determined the young patient's eyes were too badly damaged to be restored.

Eight years ago, while teaching at Carden School in Brea, Davis fell and tore the retina from her left eye. After

doctors sewed the piece on, she noticed blurred vision. Cataracts were discovered, then glaucoma set in.

"Now only medicine can prevent total blindness," says Davis. "You can imagine how difficult it was for me to use that quill pen and paint the detailed lettering on the dishware."

Yet, the dedicated artist is persistent. Convinced Jews should celebrate with decorative dishes, she plans to market her wares in Orange County gift shops and at other Jewish fairs. Such festive Hebrew spirit, however, was missing from Davis' childhood in a San Pedro housing tract during the 40s.

"My father was an alcoholic, and the only time we celebrated was when he was sober," she laments. "I grew up in poverty; we were struggling with no time to put people down."

It wasn't until Davis was married and started raising her two girls, Anna and Celeste, that she seriously embraced the Jewish

religion. "Actually, Judaism started dying in the 1950s," observes Davis. "The biggest concern rabbis had was that Hebrew, like Latin, was a dead language. Temples were losing their congregations, so they decided to implement Bat Mitzvah (coming of age ceremonies) for girls and institute Reform Judaism. There was a need for Hebrew to be learned."

With the resurgence of the Jewish spirit, Davis and her family regularly participated in Hebrew activities. "Yet, when we moved to Brea 15 years ago, a lady told me, 'Oh, you'll love it here, we don't have any blacks or Jews.'"

The remark obviously hurt Davis, who was trying hard to uphold her heritage.

Appearing undaunted by the bigotry, she posted a mezuzah (a scroll to remind Jews of their faith) beside her front door, joined Temple Beth Tikvah, managed the temple gift shop and sang in the choir.

Meanwhile, Davis pursued and was awarded a Fine Arts degree from Cal State Fullerton.

Despite her mother's early insistence that "little Lucia can't carry a note," Davis started singing lessons. She has since performed at Cal State Fullerton, Night in Fullerton and at her temple.

Recently divorced, the artist now has little time to devote to her talents. "I'm still trying to replenish my bank account after spending so much time and money on the dishes and tiles," says Davis. "Yet I know someday someone will appreciate the effort. I know there's a need for my little dishes..."



(Star-Progress photo by Barbara Glasone)

LABOR OF LOVE — Artist Lucia Davis displays painting and hand-painted tile symbolizing her Hebrew heritage. The La Habra woman registered disappointment her Jewish dishware was outsold by trendy items at a recent Orange County Israel Fair.

## Cal State physicist challenges ideas

FULLERTON — An atomic physicist at California State University, Fullerton is challenging prevailing ideas about the forces in atoms and molecules with the aid of a three-year \$114,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy.

James M. Feagin, associate professor of physics, is conducting basic research to advance the scientific community's general understanding of atoms and molecules.

"Our textbook notions about what holds atoms and molecules together are not always accurate," said Feagin, who is striving to produce calculations that more closely mirror what scientists learn directly by experiment.

His work, done largely with the assistance of blackboard and computer, is but one part of an international effort to address discrepancies between certain recent experiments and long-standing theories. Ultimately, such research will shed light on the process of energy transfer in atomic and molecular reactions, he explained.

"Research in the field of atomic and molecular collision physics has important technological implications in developing energy sources," he said. "The goal is to compare measurements made in the laboratory with the calculations so that you can believe both and have reliable data when measurements aren't possible."

Though working independently on this grant, Feagin has collaborated with John S. Briggs, professor of physics at Freiburg University in West Germany, who studies some of the same questions. Their research together was highlighted in a recent news article published in the British journal Nature.

On campus, Feagin is being assisted by physics major Curt E. Beckmann of Fullerton.

Feagin, also a Fullerton resident, joined the university faculty in 1984. He has a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina.

## Police blotter

Monday

12:30 p.m. — Vandalism reported in the 900 block of North Harbor Boulevard.

12:30 p.m. — Malicious mischief reported in the 1900 block of East Lambert Road.

## City of La Habra honors employees

LA HABRA — During the City of La Habra and the Employee Association's Christmas party, held recently at the Buena Park Hotel and Convention Center, employees were honored for their service of five years or more.

The following employees were given service award pins:

**5 YEARS**  
James Husley, William Morales, Vicky Casillas, Andrew Nunez, Gary Sens, Douglas Brickell, Mehrdad Miralae, Mike Lee, Mel Shannon, Carlos Jaramillo, Maria Ramos, Allie Starnes, Mark Wheeler, Cindy Ballou, Park Morse, Clifford McPhail, Corrie Ruiz, David Kirkendall, Thomas Wooton, Geraldine Ryan, Richard Cook and William Snaith.

**10 YEARS**  
John Rees, Edward Lanuza, Richard Simpson, Phillip Copelin, Mike McGroarty, Kevin Raisch, Philip Gray, Everett Knuth and Maria Palicte.

**15 YEARS**  
Alvino Ponce, Charles Hartz and Bea Lefter.  
**20 YEARS**  
James Powell, David Pace, Michael Burch and John Reese.  
**25 YEARS**  
John Guzman and Dennis Huizing.



(Star-Progress photo by Barbara Glasone)

Porcelain, bearing well-researched Hebrew inscriptions, provides a feast for the eyes on Lucia Davis' kitchen table.

## Update

### Watercolor painting class held

WHITTIER — A watercolor painting class will be offered to adults age 60 and older, at the Whittier Senior Citizens Center beginning Jan. 13, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesdays. The class will run eight weeks and cost is \$15.

Both beginning and intermediate students are invited to register, either by mail, or in person, at the Community Center, 7630 Washington Avenue.

For more information, call (213) 945-8205 or 945-8283.

### Oil painting class offered

WHITTIER — The Whittier Senior Citizens Center art program is expanding to include a Sunday afternoon intermediate level oil painting class.

The class will meet for eight weeks, beginning Jan. 18 from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Center, 13225 Walnut Street. Class members must be 60 years or older; There is a \$15 fee.

Registration can be done by mail or in person at the Community Center, 7630 Washington Ave. For more information, call (213) 945-8205 or 945-8283.

### Whittier seeks volunteers

WHITTIER — The Whittier City Parks and Recreation Department is looking for volunteers to work with kids in their after school programs held at various city parks.

Assistance is needed with arts and crafts, music lessons, educational programs and field trips. Volunteers are needed between 2 and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Open Door Student Exchange, a high school exchange organization, is looking for a volunteer to act as a part time area

representative. The primary role of the representative is to recruit families who are willing to host student from another country for three, five or 10 months.

The City of Pico Rivera is seeking individuals to assist with the city's Tiny Tot programs. The programs are designed to teach children ages three to five social interaction and basic learning skills. Programs meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

The Rio Hondo Area Volunteer Center at 7702 Washington Ave., Whittier lists a variety of volunteer positions. Please call (213) 693-4023.

### Youth exercise program set

An exercise program for eight to 14-year-old children, will be presented by Childrens Hospital of Orange County.

Bearobics is the fun way for children to exercise. Each session is taught by certified aerobics instructor Sandra Danciger and consists of dances that incorporate body stretches and floor exercises. All dance moves are scaled a child's ability. Bearobics strengthens the cardiovascular system and increases muscle tone.

A recent study conducted by the President's Council on Fitness revealed that children are less active and more overweight today than they were 20 years ago. Bearobics will not only help children get into shape, but it will teach them healthy, life-long exercise habits.

Bearobics is held monthly on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the CHOC Medical Education Center. The cost of the program is \$25 per month, due the first Tuesday or Thursday, and car pools can be arranged. Physical approval is required for registration. For information and registration, call Rebecca Smith, R.D., CHOC Nutrition Services, (714) 997-3000, ext. 5452.

# Dannemeyer faces tough questioners

## Sonora students get an opportunity to grill congressman

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

U.S. Rep. William Dannemeyer, R-Fullerton, went to La Habra Wednesday, braced for some tough questioning.

But the congressman, who has represented north Orange County since 1978, was not up against a legion of Democrats ready to pounce on him for his support of the controversial Proposition 64, the so-called AIDS Initiative, defeated in the Nov. 4 election, or his willingness to give aid to the Nicaraguan government rebels, known as Contras.

Instead, the inquisitors — who pelted him with hard questions on government spending and how to deal with homosexuals — were 100 students in Sonora High School's alternative education program, School Within a School.

The program accepts about 130 students who are looking for an alternative to the regular high-school environment, program Director Sylvia Sorrells said.

About 90 percent of the class is college-bound, Sorrells said about the program, the only one of its kind in the Fullerton Joint Union High School District.

But just because the average age of the audience members was 16, Dannemeyer did not expect an easy time.

"These were the typical types of questions that I would get at a town meeting with adults," Dannemeyer said after the one-hour meeting. "A high-school audience is tough to talk to. They are as inquisitive as any other audience."

Dannemeyer came to Sonora on an invitation from Fullerton resident Pat Soderquist, whose two



Michele Cardon/The Register

**'A high-school audience is tough to talk to. They are as inquisitive as any other audience,' Rep. William Dannemeyer said after his talk at Sonora High School.**

sons attended the School Within a School Program. "We wanted him to tell the kids what it was like to be a congressman," Soderquist said.

After a 30-minute talk that began with a non-partisan explanation of the origins of the American Constitution, but ended with a Republican bang, Dannemeyer took questions from the eager students.

When asked why the federal government spends "\$1,000 on a screwdriver that can be purchased at Handyman's for \$1.50," Dannemeyer joked about how the door — to escape — was at the other end of the room.

"I'm not going to stand here and try to defend that to you," he said. "When excesses develop in the system — as they will when you're spending that kind of money — we try to correct them. We're all human."

Dannemeyer mocked tears, even dapping at his eyes with his handkerchief, when asked how he felt about the defeat of state Supreme Court Justice Rose Bird and Associate Justices Cruz Reynoso and Joseph Grodin.

"I think it will be recorded in history as one of the most significant events in the last half of century of California politics," he said. "It sends a message to other justices that sit at the appellate level to limit their roles to interpretation of the law, not making policy."

Dannemeyer was equally direct when asked if he authored the controversial Prop. 64 that would in part require all patients with the acquired immune deficiency syndrome virus be reported to health authorities and restrict AIDS victims from certain jobs.

The measure failed to gain ap-

proval from California voters Nov. 4.

"No, I didn't start it," Dannemeyer said about Prop. 64's origins, "but I supported it."

"Before, Americans had moral and ethical reasons to pursue monogamous and heterosexual lifestyles," he said. "The threat of AIDS has added to that health reasons."

Dannemeyer implored students to closely examine foreign policy and spending decisions before choosing to join either the Republican or Democratic party.

"When you become of voting age, you have to decide which philosophy you feel most comfortable with," said Dannemeyer, who started his political career as a Democrat in the state Assembly. "You have to find out who is doing it to you."

## IN THE NEWS

### La Habra board considers changing trustee election date

In an effort to increase voter turnout and save the district money, the La Habra City School Board of Trustees Dec. 4 will hold a hearing on whether to change trustee elections from odd- to even-numbered years.

Trustee elections currently are held in odd-numbered years. The change would consolidate the elections with the general election for county, state and federal offices, held on the first Tuesday of November in even-numbered years.

The La Habra City Council June 17 voted to change its elections from April to November of even-numbered years.

If the trustees vote for the change, it would extend the terms of member Morrison Clements and board President Susie Hango one year.

The next board election is in November 1987.

The district also estimates the move to consolidate could save the district \$10,000 in election costs.

State legislation approved in September gives school districts the option to consolidate. The Orange County Board of Supervisors, however, must approve any consolidation plans.

### Brea woman claims group failed to provide services

A Brea woman has filed a \$10 million lawsuit against the self-help group Summit Organization, alleging the group's Irvine office defrauded her of \$18,000 without providing the services it promised, causing her emotional distress.

Clare Maloney also is seeking an injunction in Orange County Superior Court against the organization to prevent Summit employees from contacting her.

Maloney's attorney, Mark Wagner,

said the lawsuit against Summit was filed after Maloney tried to get help in February on a book she was writing about her mother, who died of Alzheimer's disease.

Maloney, who cared for her mother for the last five years, sought help from the group because she was unable to go through the pictures and material she had accumulated during that time, Wagner said.

"She was asking for guidance with her book and how to put her life back together again," Wagner said.

Maloney, 50, who was a teacher before caring for her mother full time, was associated with the Summit Organization based in Redwood City for six months before she "found the strength to pull away," Wagner said.

During that time, Wagner was asked to spend more and more money on courses that would help her. Wagner said, the last being a \$12,000 trip to Hawaii for a seminar.

The suit alleges fraud, breach of

contract and emotional distress.

Summit officials at the Redwood City office refused comment on the lawsuit last week. The group's attorney, Donald Neimer of San Francisco, was out of town and could not be reached for comment.

### Penalty hearing continues for convicted Brea murderer

The death-penalty hearing of a Brea man convicted of murdering a woman seven years ago was to continue this week in Orange County Superior Court.

County Deputy District Attorney Richard King last week told the jury during opening statements in the hearing that Robert Lloyd Sellers deserves to die in the gas chamber for the rape and murder of Savannah Anderson of Irvine.

Defense attorney Jennifer Keller was expected to call several witnesses

Please see NEWS 6

## COMMUNITY LETTER

### If historic house is moved, what will happen to trees?

I'm writing in response to the Orange County Register Community Edition front page cover story and photo of the historic Brea house on the corner of Berry and Imperial Highway, "A house with a history," Sept. 2.

Eleven years I've lived in the tract across the street from the house, yet did not at all recognize the house in the photo. The photo was taken from an angle that was from the secluded driveway.

The city commonly sees the house from Imperial Highway. The massive

trees, framing the house are an identifying factor not in the photo. I'm concerned that many other readers may not have recognized the house from the photo, either.

My reaction to the news of the house possibly being sold or moved is fear that it will be moved away from that pristine location with the sculpted towering trees framing it. I have seen no other such trees of their distinction anywhere else in Brea. I'm worried that if the house is (regrettably) moved that those landmark trees will then be at the mercy of the site architect.

Without a location such as this house, that represents Brea's quality past and complements the city's modern growth, Brea will look like any other monotonous town of no visual historical significance. The article did not mention if the possible moving of the house would be limited to the

boundaries of Brea.

It would be a loss to our city's appearance, if the present value of land dictates whether a historical landmark will be preserved and appreciated or dismantled, moved away from its site ... on the main highway through town.

Please use your influence to further inform the citizens of Brea of the current negotiations regarding this property.

D.H. Girtner  
Brea

### Correction

Buffums and Bullock's department stores, the two major anchor stores at La Habra Fashion Square, did not close recently because of remodeling or a delay in mall improvements, as was incorrectly reported in the Nov. 11 Orange County Register Community Edition business article, "Mall tenants impatient for remodeling."

### Fullerton College accepting winter, spring applications

Applications are being accepted for both the winter short courses and the spring semester at Fullerton College.

Registration for winter short courses is scheduled for Dec. 15, while continuing students will have spring priority registration between Jan. 7 and 14, 1987. New and returning students will be eligible to register Jan. 15-21.

### MILITARY NOTES

Navy Airman Apprentice **Mark Posik**, son of Lorae Almgren of La Habra, has completed the Aviation Electrician's Mate Course.

A 1985 graduate of Sonora High School, Posik joined the Navy in November 1985.

Spec. 4 **Mark Coenen**, son of Darlene and Ron Rich of Brea, has been decorated with the Army Achievement Medal in West Germany.

The medal is awarded to soldiers for

meritorious service, acts of courage, or other accomplishments.

Coenan is a combat signaler with the 293rd Engineer Battalion.

Airman 1st Class **Steven Mazel**, son of Gary Mazel of Brea, and Julie Thomas of Lake Elsinore, has graduated from the U.S. Air Force security police specialist course at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Mazel is a 1986 graduate of Elsinore High School.

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Send letters to the editor about issues in your community, and information about events open to the public in your area, to The Orange County Register Community Edition, P.O. Box 80, Anaheim, Calif. 92801. Letters must be signed and dated and include the address and telephone number of the sender. Please give headline and date if referring to a specific article. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters may be edited.

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## WALNUTS AND DRY FARMING

The 1903 Orange County Directory had a full page advertisement for "2000 acres of choice orange and walnut land with water, Randolph area, (later Brea), - if interested contact Townsend and Robinson Investment Company, Long Beach, California".

There is some record of older citrus planting dating back to 1916. Very likely the 80 acre J. D. Siever walnut grove was planted in the mid teens. There are those in Brea who remember picking up walnuts for the Sievers in the Fall of the year.

If you were involved in picking up and hulling the nuts, your hands became very stained. The blacker your hands got, presumably the harder you had worked. Some years the nuts would drop free from the hull, and other years it was a problem. The Sievers had a huller and dryer located on their property. Walnuts had to be dried to a certain moisture content before they could be delivered to a packing house.

One of the early lemon plantings was made by Victor Hualde, one of Brea's early settlers. The 40 acre grove was located south of where Lambert Street goes under the Orange 57 Freeway. In 1941 this grove produced 1000 boxes of lemons per acre which for Orange County at that time was good. When the Union Oil Company acquired this property is uncertain. However, it was a part of the Union Citrus operation when I arrived in Brea in 1935.

m e m o r a n d u m

DATE: August 13, 1986  
 TO: Edward G. Wohlenberg, City Manager  
 FROM: William R. Kelly, Director of Development Services *WRK*  
 SUBJECT: DURKEE HOUSE

In accordance with City Council instructions, the possible relocation of the Durkee House from Berry Street and Imperial Highway to a site south of the existing Senior Center in Arovista Park, has been under review by a staff sub-committee. The sub-committee is comprised of Chairperson Bill Higgins, Richard Mitchell, Margo Mohn and Paulette Ramsay.

Initial conclusions indicate that it is possible to relocate the house to a position facing west on the property currently leased to the golf course, south of the Senior Center.

The total approximate cost for relocation, reconstruction and other related expenses is in the area of \$200,000-\$400,000. This includes approximately \$50,000-\$75,000 for relocation, with the remaining costs for installation, assembly, site improvements, modifications to the golf course, and other miscellaneous remodeling, such as air conditioning, plumbing, and electrical improvements.

Maintenance of the structure is estimated at approximately \$62,000 per year. This estimate includes landscape maintenance by City forces and custodial services under contract.

Given the significant amount of funds involved in relocation, and concerns over the adequacy of available parking at this location, the Task Force formulated other suggestions relative to this structure. These are (1) Relocate the Durkee House to some other property in the downtown core, (2) Identify an alternate location in Arovista Park, or (3) Leave the house where it stands and try to work a new project around it. These alternatives were not carefully evaluated pending direction from the City Council as to whether or not they choose to expend the funds necessary for relocation.

Please advise as to the appropriate course of action.

WRK:ec.105b

cc: Patrick McCarron, Director of Development Services  
 Ret Wixted, Director of Community Services  
 Bill Higgins, Maintenance Superintendent  
 Richard Mitchell, Building and Safety Manager  
 Margo Mohn, Community Services Manager  
 Paulette Ramsay, Technical Services Manager  
 Jack Rider, Director, Brea Foundation  
 Frank Schweitzer, Brea Historical Society



(Star-Progress photo by Brian H. Greene)

**SLATED FOR DEMOLITION** — The Sievers-Durkee home will be demolished Tuesday unless a solution for moving the home can be reached today. Located at Berry Street and Imperial Highway

for 69 years, the home was built by Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers. Mercury Insurance Co., owner of the property, wishes to build a parking lot on the site to serve its nearby office.

# Here today, gone tomorrow



(Star-Progress photos by Jack Hancock)

**ONLY A MEMORY** — The 69-year-old Sievers-Durkee home, formerly located at the corner of Imperial Highway and Berry Street, was demolished this morning after efforts to move the Brea landmark to a new site fell through. Above is a view of the home on Monday, looking south toward Imperial Highway. Today at 10:30 a.m., a view from Imperial reveals all that remains of the 10-room home of Brea pioneer J.D. Sievers are the tall trees which once framed the structure, above right.



BREA LA HABRA

THE ORANGE COUNTY

# Register

September 2, 1986



Chris Carlson/The Register

The landmark Durkee House has stood for almost 70 years at Berry Street and Imperial Highway.

## A house with a history

Home that survived earthquakes, fires now faces another threat: developers want the land under it

By Shelley Helton  
The Register

**Y**ou can't miss it as you turn north from Imperial Highway on Berry Street.

Perched upon a knoll behind a jungle of foliage is a pale green stucco-and-wood house that for nearly 70 years has been a Brea landmark.

Called the Durkee House, it is a treasure trove of history. It survived an oil fire that destroyed

surrounding citrus groves; weathered the 1933 earthquake that brought down the pillars at Brea-Olinda High School; had been the home to a Basque boxer; and the location of wild parties and festive weddings.

The sturdy 5,000-square-foot home situated on a prime piece of Brea real estate also is out of place among the industries that surround it.

A reminder of days when Brea was a sleepy town of farms and oil fields, the two-story house may not survive much longer. It's fate may be the wrecking ball.

The Durkee House and its 2.2 acres of land are for sale. Potential buyers have included a female

Please see HOUSE/19

# HOUSE: After 70 years, threat

FROM 1

## now is from increasing land values

attorney planning to turn the house into offices; a Texas oil man looking for a home; and several developers seeking the land for industrial uses.

"Everybody's interested," said Glen Fullerwider, trustee for the estate in which his wife, June, and her sister Maxine Vanderburg are heirs. "But when we start talking value, suddenly you find out (the house) is not quite suited to their needs."

The heirs, however, have agreed to give the house — named after the last owner-occupant, Florence Durkee who died in February at the age of 84 — to the Brea Historical Society, if the purchasers of the property on which it sets plan to demolish it.

The society, however, must pay to have the house moved to a new location, which could cost as much as \$400,000.

The city formed a four-member task force July 1 to determine the cost and feasibility of moving the house. The task force sent a memo outlining its findings to Brea City Manager Edward Wohlenberg on Aug. 13.

The issue probably will come before the Brea City Council on Sept. 16, Wohlenberg said.

"We have to determine how big of a priority this is to the community," he said. "This is a piece of real estate with real economic value that has nothing to do with its historical aspects. It's not an insignificant undertaking."

Bill Higgins, the task force chairman, said he recommends the city buy the property and retain the house as a museum and park. The house has more historical significance if left on its current site, he said.

"It's a landmark where it is," Higgins said. "It's sad when you see something like this go. You can never replace it."

Fullerwider would not disclose the market value of the house and land. But Higgins said the property is "rumored" to be worth \$1.1 million to \$1.6 million.

Other options for the house contained in the task force report include moving the house to a site on the Brea Municipal Golf Course near the Brea Senior Center or finding another location in the 35-acre Arovista Park.

To move the home and reconstruct it on another site would cost between

\$200,000 and \$400,000, Higgins said. Yearly maintenance would run another \$62,000 a year.

The cost could be funded with a combination of money from the society, Brea Foundation and city.

The entrance way to the grand home, unique among the modest dwellings built to house Brea oil workers, is now covered with pine needles that have fallen from the two trees that arch more than 10 feet above its sloping roof.

The trees shade the house, helping to keep its interior cool during the 100-degree weather that baked Brea recently. The noise of Imperial Highway traffic creates a constant whirl through the rooms of the house, which were emptied soon after Florence Durkee's death.

Four eucalyptus trees stand guard over the winding gravel driveway that leads from Berry Street to the house's front door. The gardener mows the lawn once a week and a tenant in the guest house waters the overgrown gardens, once the pride of Florence Durkee and previous owners.

The large foyer that leads into the 10-room house is cool. There are cedar-lined, walk-in closets; and walnut floors, staircase and moldings. There's even a secret compartment where former residents hid their valuables, behind a wooden panel in the dining room near the kitchen doorway.

The faded floral wallpaper appears to be original, echoing the post-World War I years when the house was built.

According to Dean Millen, a longtime Brea resident and a member of a 10-man consortium that eventually bought and divided the property, J.D. Sievers built the house around 1918.

Sievers, who had a street named after him in Brea, was a member of the school board and director of First National Bank of Brea. His brother, William, reportedly built a similar home at Imperial Highway and Harbor Boulevard where a Gemco store now stands. Another home similar in design sits on Las Palmas Drive in Fullerton and has been refurbished by its current owner.

The Sievers lived in the Berry Street house until 1926 when a oil fire de-

stroyed 80 acres of the citrus groves surrounding the house, Millen said. The blaze, touched off when lightning struck two Union Oil underground storage containers, missed the Sievers home.

The Sievers settled with Union Oil when the petroleum giant agreed to buy the house and property. Union Oil then found itself in the farming business, running about 2,300 acres of avocado, lemon and orange groves, Millen said.

For a short time, the Bastanchury family assisted in the farming operations, occasionally using the home to throw elaborate parties. In 1931, Union Oil enlisted the help of Joseph Neuls to run the orchards. Neuls moved into the home with his wife and three children.

Neuls bought the home in 1940 when a group of 10 Brea businessmen divided up 460 acres of Union Oil land, including the property on which the Sievers House — which became known as the Neuls House — was located. Neuls acquired title to the house and about 12 to 14 acres of land.

Neuls' only surviving child, Dale Hodkins of Brea, remembers life on the ranch as lonely. As a teen-ager, Hodkins said, she longed to live in town with her friends.

"Fifty years ago it was more country," she said. "There were no street lights and orchards all around. There were just a few houses up on the hill on Imperial and nothing across the street from us."

Unlike other Brea residents, who romanticize about the stately home with its rich history, Hodkins said she doesn't care what happens to the old house. She passed up a chance in 1948 to buy the home from her father for \$45,000.

"It doesn't mean anything to me," said Hodkins, who was married in the house. "I remember the termites and the rats that ran up the walls."

Florence Durkee, however, did not want the house torn down, Fullerwider said. She first suggested in 1973 that the home become the headquarters for the historical society.

Durkee, along with her sister and brother-in-law, Ruth and John Randolph Bell, bought the house in 1956. She moved there after her brother-in-law died.

"Florence Durkee always had a strong feeling toward historical societies, both locally and nationally," Fullerwider said. "She did not particularly want to destroy the house."

Karl Fanning, president of the Brea Historical Society, said the group seeks to preserve the house because "it belonged to a pioneer family. It's an illustration of a fine-quality home of the late teens and early 1920s in the California bungalow style."

But, Fullerwider said, he is in "no big hurry" to sell the house. "We're just letting people come to us," he said. "They have to see what they're up against. We're talking \$75,000 to \$80,000 just to get it up to standards."