

Tuition increase for 2012

JAMEE L COX
Editor in Chief

Despite their best efforts, the University of Houston System (UHS) Board of Regents approved an increase in tuition for the 2012 fiscal year.

Although UH Chancellor Renu Khator expressed earlier this year that a rise in tuition costs would be a last resort, students will ultimately have to fill the gap left by cuts in state funding.

"We did not want to raise tuition, and we did everything possible to reduce costs through all other available means. We understand the financial burden many of our students face, however, the UH System could not absorb the cut in state funding we currently face on our own," said UHS Board of Regents Chair Carroll Ray.

The UHS is reportedly faced with losing \$80-\$100 million in state revenue over the next two years, and this loss is compounded by the five percent funding reductions that were imposed in 2010.

The tuition increase equates to approximately four percent for resident undergraduate students enrolled full-time. For University of Houston-Downtown students, the increase will be about \$90 more per semester for full-time enrollment.

Part-time students will see an increase of approximately five percent, and some degree programs at UH main campus will see an increase of nine percent.

All four universities in the UHS were asked to look at other areas for cost reductions. Reductions in operational efficiencies, changes in hiring of faculty and staff, consolidations in services and even the consolidation or eradication of low producing degree programs, however, the system still fell short of the \$42 million goal.

The system has announced that the revenue generated from the increased tuition will go to student success initiatives, scholarships, academic advising and programs dedicated to student retention and graduation.

The 2012 fiscal year will begin Sept. 1, 2011.



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Student debt largest ever

Uwire—A young Best Buy customer picked up two CDs and went up to the cashier. He gave her a credit card. It was declined. He gave her a second credit card. Again, it was declined. He gave her a third and a fourth. Only the fifth went through.

This extreme scenario, which N.C. State U. lecturer Ed Weems recounted, is all too relatable to college students. The average student graduates with \$4000 in credit card debt and almost \$20,000 in student loans, according to PNC bank and the N.C. State Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid.

Consumer Reports recorded that student loans have recently surpassed credit cards as the largest source of debt in the U.S. and it's likely to reach \$1 trillion this year, meaning 2011 seniors will hold the largest average debt to date for college students.

"A lot of people have it in their head that, 'It's ok if I borrow a lot of money because I'm going to get a degree, and I am going to make a lot of money,'" Kathryn Zellmer, collections specialist at the University Cashier's Office, said. "Let me tell you how many engineers call me and tell me, 'I thought that if I got an engineering degree from N.C. State I'd be set for life.'"

With the struggling economy and job scarcity, students who borrow are having more trouble paying off their debts. Yet with University tuition more than doubling since fall 2001, more students are turning to loans for school: from 13 percent of undergraduates in 2001 to more than 47 percent in 2011, according to University Planning and Analysis reports.

Rachel Cruze, public speaker on finances and face of best-selling author Dave Ramsey's youth-finance product line, said there is concern for the toll the mounting debt and interest takes on students' futures.

"Your income is your number one wealth building tool," Cruze said, "And if it's tied up with monthly payments because you're in debt, it's going to be a lot more difficult to become wealthy."

The economy is not the only issue. Cruze and Zellmer point to lifestyle and wrong assumptions about money as major contribu-

tors as well.

"[Students] live their lives in the moment and don't think about how the four years they are in college can affect the next 40 years of their life," Cruze said.

To get on solid financial footing, Melissa Hart, personal finance professor in the College of Management, suggests everyone fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form because if nothing comes of it, only a couple hours will be lost.

Hart also said to borrow no more than your first year's salary after graduation in your chosen field. In other words, don't borrow more than your field will help you pay back. Cruze also said she recommends the hundreds of scholarships, both publicly and privately funded, that take only a few hours to apply for.

Maria Brown, associate director at the Cashier's Office, said there are options to fit your needs. There is a monthly payment plan that allows students to pay what they can afford and lessen the amount of loans required.

"If you can afford a couple hundred dollars a month, get that much in loans and then do a monthly payment plan," Brown said. "Over four years, those little payments you've made will have added up."

Cruze, however, said she recommended eliminating debt altogether.

"There are plenty of jobs that college students can do to make money in order to pay for school," Cruze said. "You might have to make sacrifices in order to pay cash for school, but it will be worth it when you're 30 and all of your friends are still paying for college."

Zellmer said she believes that eliminating debt isn't practical for those putting themselves through college, certainly not without sacrificing the coveted four-year college and dorm experience. However, especially if a student is undecided on a major, Zellmer said there are plenty of options.

"There is nothing wrong with going to a community college first and dipping your feet in exactly what you want to do and how you want to spend your money," she said. "After all, your degree is still from N.C. State."

Other ways to avoid debt are things students don't usually think about at their age: budgets and emergency funds.

"Write your income at the top of the page and then write down all your expenses – rent, groceries, utilities, books, eating out – and total them at the bottom," Cruze said. "If your income is greater than your expenses and you live within your budget, you will be on the right track. If your expenses are greater than your income then you need to look at cutting some of your expenses or increasing your income."

Hart said this is an easy way to avoid the scenario of having \$20 or \$30 in your pocket, it disappearing and you not knowing where it went. Credit card management becomes even more logical.

"Pay your card off every month on time," Weems said. "If you can't afford to pay it off this month, don't buy it."

Creating room in your budget isn't necessarily as hard as it may seem. Many students think their iPhone is a necessity, according to Brown, when a simple \$10 per month pay-as-you-go phone will suffice. Hart pointed out that a night on the town would not go under the "food" budget entry.

Cruze said she suggests an emergency fund of at least \$500 to cover that unexpected doctor's appointment, a plane ride home or a blown tire. A few extra hours to save an emergency fund can allow you to do as Cruze recommends—cut up the credit cards.

"You have to make sacrifices, which include getting rid of the credit card and saving for emergencies so you don't use the credit card as a crutch."

The overarching, simplest step to avoid unnecessary debt is to research, think through, and be deliberate about financial decisions, according to Cruze.

"Even though you're in college, you still need to think about how your decisions will affect you later in life," Cruze said. "Talk to anyone who has graduated and they'll probably tell you the same thing. If you are able to graduate from college with no debt and a job, you'll be well on your way to being a potential millionaire."

Dateline:Downtown is looking for :

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If interested, please email information to CoxJa@uhd.edu or call 713-221-8192 to schedule an appointment.

Half-Price Books launches online savings

Students now have more options for textbook savings

AARON STOMMEL
Staff Writer

Half-Price Books has instituted the Half-Price Books Marketplace, an online storefront where users can search for, and purchase, new, used and out-of-print books, including textbooks.

By definition, Half-Price sells a large amount of their inventory at half-price, sometimes less, depending on the quality of

the item being sold. Their system can make for very inexpensive textbooks, that is, when the customer can find them.

In the past, a prospective customer would need to scour the bookcases themselves at each individual location or rely on the kindness and competence of a store employee to ferret out that one last title they needed. It was usually only with a lot of hard work, and a little bit of luck, that the needed textbook was ever found, sometimes a week or two after classes had begun.

Now the stars and planets have aligned, prayers have been answered and finding all needed textbooks can be possible with just a few keystrokes or one phone call to one store.

"Having to search and pay for books these past three years has been a pain in my pocket. Once you become a college student nothing is

free anymore. I think it's great that Half-Price Books will have an online store. This gives me more opportunities to save money," said UHD senior Sydnecia Zenon

Half-Price Books has partnered with Monsoon Commerce, a business that provides assistance for retailers wanting to grow online sales and Alibris, a Website much like Amazon except that it specializes in books, movies and music.

According to the Half-Price Books Website, their Marketplace is able to offer over 20,000 titles from individual sellers around the world as well as titles from each Half-Price Books location. Additionally, through their partnership with Monsoon and Alibris, they are able to offer more than 120 million items, including music and movies, stocked by independent sellers from 45 countries. The added

benefit of this service is that Half-Price Books now has an inventory list of most items sold within each store. This means that a customer no longer needs to depend on having experience in treasure hunting and no more calling every store within driving distance to have an employee search the shelves for that book.

Inexpensive textbooks are now just a phone call and store database away or, if preferred, only a mouse click away from a trusted retailer.

Students should exercise caution when using this or any other site to buy textbooks because it is easy to purchase the wrong edition since these retailers often stock out-of-print editions as well.

Previous editions are usually less expensive, but may not include all the chapters needed for class assignments.

I now pronounce you...

TAYLOR LUCE
Staff Writer

New York is now the sixth state in the U.S. to legalize same-sex marriage, following in the footsteps of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire and the District of Columbia.

Governor Cuomo signed the bill into legislation June 24, only ten days after introducing it and urging the senate to vote before their summer recess.

"New York has finally torn down the barrier that has prevented same-sex couples from exercising the freedom to marry and from receiving the fundamental protections that so many couples and families take for granted," Governor Cuomo said in a June 24 press release.

These fundamental protections range from spousal benefits for state employees to hospital visitation and inheritance rights.

The bill is actually an amendment to an existing law already on the books; the Domestic Relations Law. It modifies the law in three significant ways:

- A marriage that is otherwise valid shall be valid regardless of whether the parties to the marriage are of the same or different sex
- No government treatment or legal status, effect, right, benefit, privilege, protection or responsibility relating to marriage shall differ based on the parties to the marriage being the same sex or a different sex
- No application for a marriage license shall be denied on the ground that the parties are of the same or a different sex

The act also affords protections for religious organizations, exempting them from civil discrimination lawsuits if they deny their services or facilities to same-sex couples. This provision was the turning point for some republican and democratic hold outs who



worried that marriage equality would mean persecution for those whose religion would prevent them from complying with anti-discrimination laws.

Seemingly to assuage the fears of the anti-gay marriage groups, the act has a self-destruction button written into it.

The clause states "that if any part [of the Act] is deemed invalid through the judicial process and after all appeals in the courts, the entire Act would be considered invalid." But, after such a long, strenuous process to push the bill through the senate--marriage equality activists have been trying in New York since 2006--the clause feels like more of a challenge to those who would like to see only male/female marriages legal.

With their fight over for now, same-sex couples living in New York can look forward to unabashedly asking the question: "Will you marry me?"

UHD President names Lisa Montgomery as Vice President for Student Success

Houston - University of Houston-Downtown President Bill Flores announced the appointment of Lisa M. Montgomery as Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management.

Her appointment, effective Aug. 12, is subject to ratification by the University of Houston System Board of Regents at its Aug. 17 meeting.

"We are very excited that Dr. Montgomery is joining UHD," Flores said. "She has a proven record of achievement and leadership in the student affairs arena."

Montgomery comes to UHD from Charlotte, N.C., where she served as vice president, enrollment services/student success for an urban, private liberal arts university. As the chief student affairs officer, she coordinated and implemented enrollment related technology to improve operations and student service delivery.

"I am thrilled to be joining the University of Houston-Downtown....I was so impressed by the institution overall and specifically the vibrant energy of the faculty and staff as well as the focus and desire of the students with whom I interacted during my campus visit," Montgomery said.

She has more than 20 years experience in higher education student affairs and student

services. She has served as vice president of student development and enrollment management at Houston Community College - City University of New York; dean of students, Housatonic Community College, Bridgeport, Conn.; executive assistant to the vice president for student affairs, State University of New York, Stony Brook, N.Y., and dean of students at Kendall College, Evanston, Ill.

Michael Dressman, screening committee chair, associate vice president for academic affairs and vice provost, said, "The search committee was impressed by the range of Dr. Montgomery's experience and her knowledge of the current research on student success."

"During the interview process, Dr. Montgomery indicated that anytime a student has a problem, even if the problem is not directly in her

area, she felt she must respond to help the student locate the best possible person to help solve the problem. That is consistent with our goal at UHD to do what we can to help students be successful."

Montgomery has a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Virginia, a Master of Science degree in college administration from Florida State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree with an English major from the University of Central Arkansas.



UHD alumni involvement needs improvement

LUCHA MORALES

Managing Editor

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) Alumni Association is growing at a steady rate, and is expected to continue growing as the number of UHD graduates continue to rise, yet alumni involvement remains low.

“There has been historically low involvement of alumni at UHD,” said Johanna Wolfe, Vice President of Advancement of External Relations for the Office of University Advancement. Wolfe believes this is largely due to the reputation that UHD holds as being a commuter school.

The Office of University Advancement is in charge of promoting relationships within the community, and with individuals and alumni that promote philanthropic gifts to UHD - this includes fundraising for scholarships. While alumni are encouraged to give back, much of the funding comes from the community outside of alumni.

“It is not uncommon to receive support from other entities,” said Wolfe.

“Active students make active alumni.”

— Johanna Wolfe

Vice President of Advancement of External Relations

Recent consideration for giving is focused on scholarships.

“We are currently looking for something that has the greatest and broadest impact; scholarships is a need that everybody understands,” said Wolfe.

A large majority of UHD students attend school on institutional and departmental scholarships provided by UHD’s philanthropic efforts.

“Typically when you are doing fundraising you have much more success when people give money to what really moves them and what is important to them,” said Wolfe.

Even so, there are many types of donation opportunities available to alumni and the community that are donor driven.

The recent budget cuts have made efforts to promote alumni involvement difficult due to staffing. Wolfe also believes that UHD, “needs a more strategic plan to address the problem of alumni at UHD.”

Over 2,000 students graduated from UHD in 2010. Graduates in good academic standing automatically become UHD alumni. As of 2010, there are 29,669 UHD alumni. This number is a vast contrast to the 10 alumni the university had in 1975, after opening its doors in 1974.

Miriam Morales, a 2001 UHD graduate and alumni, has been active with the Scholars Academy at UHD. An Applied Mathematics



major, she has given presentations to UHD students regarding statistics, public health, research and clinical trials. She also plans to participate in the upcoming Freshmen Common Reader Experience. Alumni are matched with incoming freshmen and given books to read. Both share their views on the book, and alumni are encouraged to share their college experience with the freshmen.

Morales feels many alumni are just not in the position to make donations to UHD, but could give something even better - their time.

“I have been working hard for ten years since I graduated to get where I am today. Only recently am I in a position to begin making plans for giving,” said Morales.

According to a survey completed by CareerBuilder, only 44 percent of employers planned to hire recent college graduates in 2010. Yet, this trend since 2007 has seen improvement. The National Association of Colleges and Employers reported an update of a 19.3 percent increase of employers who plan to hire recent college graduates for 2011. This turnaround in employment could mean a jumpstart for UHD’s fundraising efforts. While fundraising might experience an improvement, it is unclear if actual alumni involvement within the university might improve.

Wolfe feels students need to be engaged in the university while attending college.

“Active students make active alumni. If people aren’t engaged in the university as students, it’s very difficult to engage students as alumni,” said Wolfe.

To learn more about UHD alumni or how you can give back to the university, visit <http://www.dt.uh.edu/alumni/> for an overview of alumni benefits and giving opportunities.



Have you ever been so overwhelmed with a research assignment that you did not know where to begin or know what resources to consider? Have you ever procrastinated on an assignment that was due the next day? If so, the W.I. Dykes Library can help!

The library offers a great service called "Ask-A-Librarian". This service allows you to get in touch with one of the 13 librarians on campus that can help you work through your research questions. There are five ways to utilize this service; from the library's homepage www.uhd.edu/library, on the left side of the computer screen, click on the Ask-A-Librarian link. From there, you will see your options for asking a librarian for assistance.

1. E-mail – Use the Ask-A-Librarian form to send an e-mail with your question. A librarian will respond within 24 hours, though, during hours of operation, a response is usually provided within the hour your question is submitted.
2. Online Chat – Instant message with a librarian by using LibChat. This service is available Monday through Friday from Noon to 4:00 p.m.
3. Telephone – Call the Library Information Desk during library hours
4. Research Consultation Appointment – Schedule an appointment to meet with a librarian to get in-depth assistance for your research
5. Library Information Desk – Stop by the Information Desk during library hours. We still love the good old face-to-face interaction. Remember, we are here to help you so do not be afraid to Ask-A-Librarian.



Sexual activity is a normal human behavior with a large amount of variation. From a health standpoint, it is important to note that there are considerations with being sexually active, including sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, and emotional issues.

Dating violence is also a possibility with sexual activity as well. Not being sexually active is always a choice for any person. In addition, having a relationship does not necessarily mean that sexual activity is required to show caring for a partner. Caring

can be demonstrated by holding hands, kissing and hugging, not just intercourse.

If you do engage in sexual activity, remember that your partner may not understand your wants, needs, feelings, or limits. A person should only participate in sexual activity that they are comfortable with.

To prevent sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, remember that sexual activity requires planning such as:

- Having a latex condom available for sexual activity
- Knowing how to correctly use a condom
- Using a latex condom for all kinds of sexual intercourse, including oral and anal sex
- Use a new latex condom each time

Remember that each time you have sex with your sexual partner, you are exposed to everyone your partner may have had sex with. Talk with your sexual partner about their previous exposure to sexual transmitted diseases and safe sex.

Sexually transmitted diseases include:

- Chlamydia
- Hepatitis
- Genital herpes
- HPV (Human Papilloma Virus)
- HIV
- Syphilis
- Trichomonas
- Gonorrhea

If you have unprotected sexual intercourse, be sure to see your health care provider for any possible exposure to sexual transmitted diseases as the signs of infection may not be immediately noticeable by you.

Future articles will include specific information on sexually transmitted diseases.

–Robert Hanks, PhD, FNP-C, RNC
Faculty Practice at UHD Student Health Services
Assistant Professor-Clinical

New parking meters; new fines for violators

AMANDA WHITE
Staff Writer

The City of Houston has started the planned facelift of the public parking lot behind the University of Houston–Downtown's (UHD) Student Life Center, and has also increased the fines for other parking violations.

The City began the much-needed makeover by installing new solar powered meters that will serve multiple parking spaces.

When the transition to new meters began, the city switched from a single meter per parking space, to the "left-right" meters per two parking spaces, and finally settled on the solar powered meters.

The cost for parking has been reduced from one dollar per hour to 75 cents per hour, but the city will recoup the loss by extending the

effective hours for the meters an additional 5 hours. The previous meters were cut off at 6 p.m., making it possible for students taking evening classes to catch a break on parking.

One student said, "The price is not an option; because the money helps fund the school." However, students should be aware that this parking area is owned by the City of Houston and not UHD.

The City has decided to start cracking down on unauthorized drivers who park in disabled parking spaces. Drivers who park in a disabled parking space without an official disabled persons tag from the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles will face a \$500 fine, which is double the amount of past violations.

It is unclear when the city plans to start the repavement of the lot, but it is sure to compound the already packed parking issue.



The parking lot behind the Student Life Center (marked with "P" above) has new, solar powered parking meters installed.

Moderately Confused
 by Jeff Stahler



Pearls Before Swine by Stephan Pastis



Dilbert by Scott Adams



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HOW TO PLAY:

Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.
 Look for the solution in the August 22 edition of *Dateline:Downtown*

Today's Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14	15	16		17	18	19	20	
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|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Flour type | 108 College stat | 8 Ornamental shrub | 57 Menu term (2 wds.) | 100 Blueprint, briefly |
| 7 Wide valleys | 109 Hayseed | 9 Standoffish one | 58 Shinto or Zen (abbr.) | 101 Pop-up item |
| 12 Impassive | 113 Tiaras | 10 Finales | 60 Mesh fabric | 102 Atomizer |
| 17 Explorer Zebulon — | 114 Ember | 11 Date regularly | 61 Spur on | 103 Install a lawn |
| 21 Ogled | 115 European capital | 12 Preserved salmon | 63 Memsahib's nanny | 104 Moolah |
| 22 Endangered layer | 117 Rounded roof | 13 Doctrine | 65 Bonze or friar | 105 Dines at home (2 wds.) |
| 23 Ditto (2 wds.) | 118 Tempt | 14 He gave us a lift | 66 Morays and congers | 106 Polished, as text |
| 24 Coffee dispensers | 119 Cattle calls | 15 Debt memo | 67 Crow's-nest cry | 107 Perches |
| 25 Nightmare | 120 Scarlet — | 16 Vies | 69 Convergence points | 108 John Calvin's city |
| 26 Chaos | 122 Legal matter | 17 Fiddle around | 70 Tear to pieces | 110 From Seoul |
| 28 Round stoppers | 123 — la vie! | 18 Annoying | 71 Startled cry | 111 Surface |
| 29 Thai temple | 124 Gets down to business (2 wds.) | 19 Difficult | 72 Bop on the head | 112 The preferred evil |
| 30 Small waves | 127 Sidecar occupants | 20 Winding curves | 74 Pasture noises | 113 Coffee option |
| 32 Hilo guitars | 129 Racer Luyendyk | 27 Fresco | 75 Completely | 114 Blast furnace fuels |
| 33 Dainty | 130 Cay | 31 Mamas' bandmates | 76 Volcano goddess | 115 Made a cake |
| 35 Term paper abbr. (2 wds.) | 131 Annoy | 34 Green-egg layers | 78 Conclusion | 116 Like a wolf's howl |
| 37 Harvest machine | 132 Paleolithic art period (2 wds.) | 36 Pool length | 79 Hit the sack | 119 Fr. miss |
| 38 Worry too much | 133 Dear, as memories | 38 Dissemble | 81 66 and I-80 | 120 Shoe preserver |
| 39 Glues tight | 134 Game with pawns | 39 Municipal | 82 Good, to Pedro | 121 Costa — |
| 40 Majestic | 135 Closet liner | 41 Washday units | 83 Really likes | 125 Bonfire remains |
| 42 Garden produce | 136 Breadwinner | 43 Pork cut | 84 Son of Val and Aleta | 126 Merchandise ID |
| 43 X-ray blocker | | 44 Pub brew | 85 "Alice" diner owner | 128 Berlin article |
| 44 Ritual | | 46 FedEx units | 86 Exist | |
| 45 Kind of bear or orbit | | 47 Hudson Bay tribe | 87 Ventricle neighbor | |
| 47 Roll of stamps | | 48 Rises to the occasion | 88 Stag attender | |
| 48 Stalactite sites | | 49 Blouse parts | 89 Niche | |
| 49 Brokaw's network | | 50 Muddy Waters' genre | 91 Jots down | |
| 52 Washboard — | | 51 Floor covering | 92 Self-move firm (hyph.) | |
| 53 Prudish person | | 53 Purple fruit | 93 Wine served warm | |
| 54 Hindu mystics | | 54 Caterwauls | 94 Battery size | |
| 55 Seaweed derivative | | 55 Fusses | 96 Eye shadow | |
| 59 Large antelopes | | 56 Sprout | 98 Ringing sound | |
| 61 Close or Miller | | | | |
| 62 Sheik's cartel | | | | |
| 63 Jane Eyre's pupil | | | | |
| 64 Remedies | | | | |
| 65 Grimace | | | | |
| 66 Jug | | | | |
| 67 Not right or wrong | | | | |
| 68 Hung on to | | | | |
| 69 Sponge rubber | | | | |
| 70 Film spools | | | | |
| 72 Fissure | | | | |
| 73 Compass pt. | | | | |
| 74 Strong connection | | | | |
| 75 Has vibes | | | | |
| 76 Eeyore's friend | | | | |
| 77 Conditions | | | | |
| 80 Spoor | | | | |
| 82 Cowboys' beds | | | | |
| 83 Withhold | | | | |
| 84 Dye-yielding plant | | | | |
| 85 Rum drink (2 wds.) | | | | |
| 87 — lang syne | | | | |
| 88 Calcium source | | | | |
| 89 Davit | | | | |
| 90 Fish-eating eagles | | | | |
| 91 Eggnog time | | | | |
| 92 Common practice | | | | |
| 94 Daddy's sister | | | | |
| 95 Chair parts | | | | |
| 96 Trite | | | | |
| 97 Roach and Linden | | | | |
| 98 Truck front | | | | |
| 99 Psychic skill | | | | |
| 100 — voce (softly) | | | | |
| 101 Seize | | | | |
| 102 Concrete foundations | | | | |
| 104 Kind of diver (hyph.) | | | | |
| 107 Lady's man | | | | |

Check the
 August 22
 edition of
 Dateline:Downtown
 for the solution to
 this week's puzzle.

