



# EVERGREEN CEMETERY IN HILLSIDE VANDALIZED

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

People in Newark, Elizabeth, Hillside and other communities across New Jersey are upset and furious over how Evergreen Cemetery management has treated vandalism at the cemetery. And not just any vandalism, but the digging up of caskets and apparent disappearance of bodies.

It is something out of a Dr. Frankenstein horror movie, with lawsuits and class-action suits being filed and coffins being stacked up seven deep.

Evergreen Cemetery is located in parts of Elizabeth, Hillside and Newark, New Jersey. The architectural style is mid-19th century revival, late 19th and early 20th century revivals and late Victorian style. Officially located at 1137 North Broad Street, Hillside, Union County, the cemetery has burial plots and crematoria. The cemetery has been listed on both the New Jersey Register and the National Register of Historic Places since 1991.

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# LOCAL 108 & ESSEX COUNTY VACCINATION EVENT



Photos By Dhiren Shah

By Walter Elliott

**MAPLEWOOD** - Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Union Local 108 officials, after 2 p.m. May 11, can say they are doing their part in getting people their COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus vaccines.

Local 108, in league with Essex County, "Local Talk" and other partners, had helped vaccinate 65 people who came to their headquarters here at 1576 Springfield Ave., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday.

The headquarters parking lot, like with their previous community food distributions, was turned into a venue for two tents. One

tent was where people who wanted to be vaccinated were screened before being let into the union's conference room. The other tent was used as a seating area for those who took advantage of the free breakfast that was available.

Several Essex County Sheriff's officers brought two of their trailers and a roadside message board to the lot. Some worked with Maplewood police officers to direct what traffic the "Vaccination Opportunity" had generated.

It was within RWDSU's conference room where most of the county's health department staff gave out a choice between the first-of-

two-shot Moderna and the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

Another headquarters room served as the 15-minute post inoculation waiting area before staff members sent patients out with county proof-of-vaccination cards. Those who got Moderna's vaccine were given appointments for their second shot on their cards.

Those who made appointments or had walked in also had the opportunity for diabetes and glaucoma screening.

"If we got 10 people or 100, it was worth

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PAGE 16



**Editorial**

**Dhiren Shah**  
Editor-In-Chief

*Hello Readers,*

Vaccination is in full force. On May 11, Local 108 partnered with Essex County and successfully vaccinated 65 persons. They had expected and planned for 50 persons to be vaccinated, but luckily within a short period of time, 65 came and got the vaccination of their choice, Moderna or Johnson and Johnson. Local 108 served free food and drinks to everyone. Charles Hall did an excellent job, and he deserves congratulations.

President Biden has also been doing an excellent job, as far as vaccination is concerned. He has a goal of at least 70% of the population getting vaccinated before July 4th, 2021. As I understood, the population means legal and

illegal residents, because they can infect other persons as well.

India is getting worse as far as the coronavirus is concerned. The daily new cases are still about 350,000 and daily deaths are over 4,200. To put it in perspective, there are more people dying PER DAY in India than the entire population of Newark.

Is the system failing over in India? Is the government not doing enough? I agree with some of the critics I talked to who are against Indian prime minister Narendra Modi. When there were very few cases, Modi announced a lockdown, but his administration did not have a good plan to maintain control. Modi has left it on the state governments.

There are three types of people there. One group is very fearful and has disciplined themselves to follow the health department's rules. Another group does not bother following the rules and do not cover their faces with masks. They want to enjoy their life and refuse to listen to

the WHO (World Health Organization) guidelines. The third group follows the rules, but when it comes to travelling, they go out and travel to different states or vacation spots. When they come back, some of them gets COVID-19. Although they do regret catching it, by then it's too late.

Biden stopped people coming from India on May 5, 2021. However, many came in the last push for traveling to the US and brought a new COVID-19 variant. There are cases in California and New Jersey where the India variant has been confirmed. So far, we do not have good information about the India variant, but it is believed that vaccination is not effective against it.

Also, India has a shortage of oxygen, ventilators, medicines and understanding of prevention of coronavirus. There are many home remedy experts who pop up and try to sell their ideology without any proven history of the treatment they have suggested. The whole world is trying to

help, but it is a little late. Hundreds of thousands get the virus every day. I hope they follow the rules and come out ahead without any loss of life.

Liz Cheney, the daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney and a representative from Wyoming, has been removed from her leadership role in the Republican Party. She was the House GOP conference chair, which is the third most powerful GOP position. She is an outspoken critic of Donald Trump, and has said many times that Trump is lying, especially about the 2020 election and January 6 Capitol Riot.

Trump was in favor of Cheney getting removed from this post. In return, Cheney said that she will make sure that Trump never gets back near the Oval Office.

*Have a wonderful week.*

*I'll talk to you next week.*

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**WEATHER FOR THE WEEK**

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Periods of Rain	Partly Cloudy
HI 71	HI 74	HI 74	HI 73	HI 72	HI 71	HI 76
LO 50	LO 53	LO 53	LO 55	LO 56	LO 55	LO 53

**EVERGREEN CEMETERY  
IN HILLSIDE VANDALIZED**

(Continued from page 1)

According to an rlsmetro article posted on April 26, 2021, the following occurred. On Sunday, April 25, visitors to the Evergreen Cemetery in Hillside got a nasty surprise. They saw coffins stacked up high as seven deep with at least one of the coffins opened and rodents inside the casket with the body, states rlsmetro, which is owned by RLS Media.

The article goes on to say that a woman who went to see if her grandmother was buried received the shock of her life. Management reportedly told the woman that there were only five secured graves side by side. RLS Media reported that the woman found out that the cemetery were stacking up eight to ten caskets on top of each other.

News 12 New Jersey reported on April 28-29, that the deceased woman, Paula Smith, died from complications of the coronavirus, aged 60. The family told News12 that there was a funeral, with the family watching as the white casket was lowered into the ground. Relatives said that nothing was out of the ordinary, so everyone left prior to the earth being put on the grave.

The next thing the family knew, something was totally wrong. When the alarmed relatives came to check on the condition of the burial, they found Paula Smith's casket outside the grave and open, with rodents inside.

At first, cemetery management refused to answer any questions from the family of Paula Smith. News 12 reported that both the family and the media outlet attempted to contact cemetery management and did not get any answers. The family were told to get a lawyer and contact the state. News 12 were told to contact the board of directors.

It took the Evergreen Cemetery management an incredible ten days, April 25 - May 5, 2021, to release a statement. When Evergreen Cemetery fi-

nally released its statement on May 5, this is what it said.

“Evergreen Cemetery is aware of allegations that are circulating in regards to the management of its grounds. As a result of the recent publicity the New Jersey Cemetery Board is conducting an investigation of Evergreen Cemetery. The Cemetery is fully cooperating with the investigation. The Cemetery is deeply distressed by these allegations and is releasing this statement to provide information to all of the families who have loved ones buried here and those who have been questioning the procedures that are in place. Simply stated, Evergreen Cemetery has never relocated a casket or body except in response to a legal order. A casket can only be relocated with a permit and court order. In those extremely rare cases when a casket is moved, the funeral director is present and the Cemetery's involvement is limited to locating the gravesite and occasionally helping with the excavation.

“Evergreen Cemetery is a non-profit cemetery founded in 1853. Because it covers 115 acres, it has deer, foxes, rabbits, squirrels and groundhogs. If a groundhog becomes a nuisance it is relocated by a professional exterminator. There is no rat problem.

“When there are no other options, headstones and flat stones are temporarily moved to the side in order to allow access to new gravesites without damaging the existing stones. The locations of all graves throughout the cemetery are carefully marked and the headstone and flat stones are returned to their exact locations as soon as possible. This is a seldom used but sometimes necessary procedure.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically impacted the operations of Evergreen Cemetery. While many members of the public were able to stay at home isolated, Evergreen Cemetery's employees worked overtime, often seven days a week. They risked exposure to the virus and one foreman was hospitalized with COVID, placed on a ventilator and missed several months of work. This, combined

with the inability to find additional employees willing to work in a cemetery during a pandemic, caused some landscape maintenance to be deferred. The situation is being addressed and the cemetery expects to be back to its park-like condition in the near future.

“Evergreen Cemetery strenuously denies the allegations of poor management or mistreatment of any individuals buried on its grounds. Evergreen Cemetery expresses its sincerest condolences to those who have been misinformed and would like to assure the public that it is taking this matter very seriously and will provide further updates once they are available.”

While Evergreen Cemetery was staying mum, Dahlia O. Vertreese, the mayor of Hillside, spoke to the community. In a televised interview released by NJ 12 May 3, Mayor Vertreese said, "It is a travesty what is going on here. The Attorney General's and prosecutor's office need to be involved, like yesterday. Like everyone else I can't

understand or I don't have a reasonable explanation as to how or why this has happened. And I do think people deserve answers."

News12 NJ reported that the families of the deceased filed class-action lawsuits against Evergreen Cemetery. Also, the families plan on exhuming the remains of their relatives in order to find out if the remains are still there.

State Assemblyman Jamel Holley is reported by News 12 to want these guilty of desecration held criminally responsible. He wants the state to investigate what is going on.

Attempts to reach Assemblyman Holley via phone and email were unsuccessful at press time.

It should be noted that vandalism at Evergreen Cemetery is not limited to New Jersey. “Local Talk” research has found similar incidents in Illinois, Maine, Colorado, Texas, and Virginia. The timeline of these runs from 2010 - 2021. Local talk will report on these in an upcoming article.

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## UNITED STATES

### **Ransomware Strikes Pipeline**

The era of 21st Century computer malware just struck one of the main veins of American energy.

On May 7, the Colonial Pipeline, which stretches from Houston, Texas to New York and supplies petroleum based resources to 45 percent of the East Coast, was hit by a ransomware cyberattack that shut down its operations. The attack was so severe that two days later, President Biden declared a state of emergency.

"The President continues to be regularly briefed on the Colonial Pipeline incident. The Administration is continually assessing the impact of this ongoing incident on fuel supply for the East Coast. We are monitoring supply shortages in parts of the Southeast and are evaluating every action the Administration can take to mitigate the impact as much as possible. The President has directed agencies across the Federal Government to bring their resources to bear to help alleviate shortages where they may occur," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki posted in a statement.

While looking for answers, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) confirmed that the DarkSide group was responsible for the attack. It is strongly believed that the Russia government had a hand in sponsoring the action.

### **Civil Rights Charges for Chauvin & Others**

A federal grand jury in Minneapolis, Minnesota, returned two indictments that were unsealed May 7. The first indictment charges former Minneapolis Police Department officers Derek Chauvin, 45; Tou Thao, 35; J. Alexander Kueng, 27; and Thomas Lane, 38, with federal civil rights crimes for their roles in the death of George Perry Floyd Jr.

The three-count indictment alleges that all four defendants, while acting under color of law, willfully deprived Mr. Floyd of his constitutional rights, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242. Specifically, Count One of the indictment alleges that on May 25, 2020, Chauvin held his left knee across Mr. Floyd's neck, and his right knee on Floyd's back and arm, as George Floyd lay on the ground, handcuffed and unresisting, and kept his knees on Mr. Floyd's neck and body even after Mr. Floyd became unresponsive.

The indictment alleges that Chauvin's actions violated Mr. Floyd's constitutional right to be free from the use of unreasonable force by a police officer and resulted in bodily injury to, and the death of, Mr. Floyd.

Count Two of the indictment charges that Thao and Kueng willfully failed to intervene to stop Chauvin's use of unreasonable force, resulting in bodily injury to, and the death of, Mr. Floyd.

Finally, Count Three of the indictment alleges that all four defendants saw Mr. Floyd lying on the ground in clear need of medical care and willfully failed to aid him. The indictment alleges that by doing so, all four defendants willfully deprived Mr. Floyd of his constitutional right not to be deprived of liberty without due process of law, which includes an arrestee's right to be free from a police officer's deliberate indifference to his serious medical needs. The indictment alleges that this offense resulted in bodily injury to, and the death of, Mr. Floyd.

A separate, two-count indictment also charges Chauvin with willfully depriving a Minneapolis resident who was then fourteen-years-old of the constitutional right to be free from the use of unreasonable force by a police officer, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242. Count One of this indictment alleges that on Sept. 4, 2017, Chauvin, without legal justification, held the teenager by the throat and struck the teenager multiple times in the head with a flashlight.

The indictment alleges that this offense included the use of a dangerous weapon - a flashlight - and resulted in bodily injury to

the teenager. Count Two of the indictment charges that Chauvin held his knee on the neck and the upper back of the teenager even after the teenager was lying prone, handcuffed, and unresisting, also resulting in bodily injury.

Both indictments charge violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242. 18 U.S.C. § 242 states that it is a crime for an official acting under color of law to willfully violate a person's constitutional rights. If government employees, like police officers, use or misuse the power provided to them by their position, they are acting "under color of law."

An indictment is merely a formal accusation of criminal conduct. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The charges announced today are separate from the Justice Department's civil pattern or practice investigation into the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Police Department that the Attorney General announced on April 21. The charges announced today are criminal, while the pattern or practice investigation is a civil investigation that will be conducted separately and independently from the criminal case, and will be handled by a different team of career staff from the Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The charges announced today are also separate from, and in addition to, the charges the State of Minnesota has brought against these former officers related to the death of Mr. Floyd. The federal charges allege different criminal offenses; specifically, they allege violations of the U.S. Constitution, rather than of state law.

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Pamela S. Karlan and Acting U.S. Attorney W. Anders Folk for the District of Minnesota commend the investigative efforts of the FBI and the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in this matter, and thank the Minneapolis Police Department for its cooperation in the investigation.

The federal criminal cases are being prosecuted by Acting U.S. Attorney W. Anders Folk

of the District of Minnesota, Special Litigation Counsel Samantha Trepel and Trial Attorney Tara Allison of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Samantha Bates, LeeAnn Bell, Evan Gilead, Manda Sertich and Allen Slaughter of the District of Minnesota.

## EUROPE

### **Banning Conversion Therapy**

Following Queen Elizabeth's Speech on May 11th, Minister for Women & Equalities Liz Truss has confirmed that the UK Government will take legislative steps to ban conversion therapy.

Legislation will be introduced, protecting people from the coercive and abhorrent practice of conversion therapy in the UK.

Many forms of the practice are already prevented under current legislation, but this new ban will ensure that it is stamped out once and for all.

New funding will also be made available to increase the support available for victims of conversion therapy, the first time a government has offered this in the UK. This support is expected to be in place by summer.

"As a global leader on LGBT rights, this government has always been committed to stamping out the practice of conversion therapy," Truss said. "We want to make sure that people in this country are protected, and these proposals mean nobody will be subjected to coercive and abhorrent conversion therapy."

"Alongside this legislation, we will make new funding available to ensure that victims have better access to the support they need."

As soon as parliamentary time allows, and following a consultation, the ban will be introduced in parliamentary legislation. The accompanying consultation will seek further views from the public and key stakeholders to ensure that the ban can address the practice while protecting the medical profession; defending freedom of speech; and upholding religious freedom.

This announcement furthers  
(Continued on page 7)

# SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

A former Orange High School all-state player has come back to his community, and is giving back to the youth there.

This past weekend, former New York Guardians XFL football star Jamar Summers held his first ever Ambitious youth camp for area local youth. Over 300 attended this event at Bell Stadium in Orange. The ages ranged at the camp from 5-18, and the 14-18 group had fundamental drills to challenge themselves.

There are many local NFL and former Orange High School football players that Summers played with or against while in high school. Current Giants player Jabrill Peppers took part in this camp, as well as



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former Orange all-state player, Rutgers alum, and Green Bay Packer Willington Previlion, Tennessee Titan Akrum Wadley, former Seattle Seahawks legend Marshawn Lynch, Baltimore Raven Marcus Peters and San Francisco 49er Josh Johnson.

Talking about the camp, Summers said, "I wanted to allow for an opportunity for children in the community to enjoy themselves." Meanwhile, Orange Tornadoes Head Coach Randy Daniels said that the event was "all about giving back to the community."

Sharon Bagley was in attendance and was happy that Summers hosted this camp. Her son Malcolm Bagley was an all-state player at Orange High but was killed in an incident of gun violence. She was proud of Summers and his work with the event.

**VACCINATION** (Continued from page 1)

it," Hall told "Local Talk" from his office May 13. "Our union wanted to make sure that our members, who are essential workers, and our community are safe."

Hall talked with "Local Talk" before the event opened at 10 a.m. Tuesday and just before its 2 p.m. closing. The president of the AFL-CIO-affiliated local first sat under the breakfast tent, fielding phone calls and questions from organizers and prospective patients.

"Our members work in supermarkets, nursing homes, are teamsters (truckers) - essential workers," explained Hall. "Many of them are from this area (Essex County), work in low-wage jobs and are black and brown."

Some of Local 108's members and their families had their work hours reduced or became unemployed soon after the global pandemic reached here in March 2020. Hall, his officers and partners started out distributing

food bags this time last year.

The first food giveaway, which was opened to the greater community and May 11's vaccination was a seasonal departure for Hall. He would normally be ramping up preparations for the annual Memorial Day African American Heritage Parade in Newark.

Other aspects of the pandemic, sickness and death, began to set in among Local 108 and other families in the pre-vaccine stage. It made the pandemic personal.

"There were weeks," said Hall, "where I was attending funerals for members and families."

Hall and Local Community Engagement and Outreach Liaison Taieta El-Amin, when the opportunity to get COVID vaccines arose, called Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo and Anibal Ramos, Jr. - the latter as the county's director of citizen services.

DiVincenzo (D-Roseland) and Ramos  
(Continued on page 7)

# Finance At Your Fingertips



Moses Ayiku, Jr. MBA OP/ED

## The Role Of The Economy In Our Financial Decisions

happening around us and more specifically, in the economy.

An economy refers to the institutional arrangements in place that direct all resources in diverse directions. Economics studies how society utilizes its resources to satisfy the various needs and wants of people.

When we are making our financial decisions, the economy must be understood on a basic level at the least. For example, if you want to buy a home or a car, you will want to assess the current state of the economy before making your decision. Timing is everything. Most people would not opt to buy a car or a house at a time when interest rates are rising.

Alternatively, those buying stocks would not want to buy stocks at a time when stock prices are rising through the roof. After all, the stock market is simply that, a market. To make money in the stock market a basic principle would be to buy low and sell high. In other words, one ideally should look for stocks whose prices have fallen and are expected to rise. That way the chance of earning large capital gains exists. This is quite like a businessman that would buy electronics at a low price and then add their margin to make a healthy profit.

Covid has impacted the global economy and for years to come it will continue to do so. When the pandemic started in 2020, many companies had to make tough decisions. Some decided that it was a prudent move to let their staff go. With many businesses operating from home and shut down to the public, some businesses could not survive and had to shut their doors permanently.

As a result of the pandemic, we saw unemployment rise. Those who were unemployed had to go into their savings to survive. Keep in mind, we did not foresee the pandemic so planning for it was out of the question. That is why we always advise people to save for an emergency fund as a top priority. Life brings changes in our circumstances that at times are beyond our control. Emergency funds are meant for those unplanned situations that will im-

Personal financial management has various aspects; income is generated, then we have to decide how to use this income. Budgeting is one way to track our money and make the most out of it. In the budgeting process we should get to the point where we factor in saving. Saving is the lifeline to the future.

Tomorrow will come. As a result, we need to prepare for that. Once we are saving, we need to set up our emergency fund. An emergency fund can be structured to cover our expenses for 3, 6 or 12 months in case the worst happens, and we lose our job with no income coming in. After we have accomplished that, we can now turn to investing our money.

Stocks are a long-term investment vehicle that will give us an opportunity to grow the value of our money with time. Apart from investing our money, we have other goals that we need to target. Should we buy a house or rent? What about getting a new car or buying a used car? We could also lease instead of buying a car. We want to go on vacations occasionally.

To avoid creating a financial hole for ourselves, it is prudent to make adequate financial plans for vacations such that we do not distort our finances. We need to buy food, clothing, gas and pay bills. There are many financial decisions that we have to consider. In all of these, one major reality is that all financial decisions must always be made with due consideration to what is

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## ESSEX COUNTY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Weekly Statistics from May 5 - May 12, 2021

Municipality	5-5-2021	Deaths	5-12-2021	Deaths
Belleville	5678	110	5654	110
Bloomfield	5287	118	5286	119
Caldwell	607	16	611	16
Cedar Grove	1527	119	1536	119
East Orange	7027	296	7058	301
Essex Fells	191	2	191	2
Fairfield	869	31	875	31
Glen Ridge	393	13	395	13
Irvington	4613	223	4644	227
Livingston	1820	84	1823	85
Maplewood	1283	36	1286	36
Millburn	817	10	823	10
Montclair	2265	72	2262	72
Newark	36775	961	36651	975
North Caldwell	487	6	485	6
Nutley	3039	64	3024	64
Orange	3522	130	3520	131
Roseland	470	16	473	16
South Orange	845	16	853	16
Verona	988	18	992	18
West Caldwell	1057	52	1053	52
West Orange	4567	228	4555	228
<b>Total</b>	<b>84127</b>	<b>2621</b>	<b>84050</b>	<b>2647</b>

### OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of May 12, 2021)

**NJ: 881,635 cases / 23,234 deaths (Plus 2,648 probable)**

**United States (approx.): 32.8 Million / 583,200 deaths**

**Worldwide (approx.): 159.85 Million / 3.32 Million deaths**

**The CDC has given formal recommendation for use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on 12 to 15-year-olds.**

pact our income negatively.

With the successful development of vaccines, we knew there was light at the end of the tunnel. People are being vaccinated and this gives us hope that soon we will return to some type of new normal. Businesses are reo-

pening and beginning to hire.

Unfortunately, one major problem the pandemic created for our economies worldwide is that it distorted and destroyed aspects of the global supply chain. A global supply chain is  
*(Continued on page 10)*



**VACCINATION** (Cont. from pg 5)

(D-Newark) called Sheriff Armando Fontoura (D-Fairfield) to bring up some of the latter's officers to support the vaccination event. Sheriff's officers have been performing similar tasks across the county's five regional COVID vaccination centers.

"I can't thank DiVincenzo and Ramos enough for their help," said Hall. "I want to thank our members' companies to allow them to get vaccinated without losing a day's pay. That includes City Supermarket, Supremo, Xtra and Pueblo."

Hall and "Local Talk" were interrupted by a man who identified as an employer from up Springfield Avenue. He asked if his employees could get their shots here and if they had to pay anything.

"Bring them up - it's free," said Hall, "and have breakfast on us."

Hall publicized the event through "Local Talk," social media and word of mouth." That announcement includes an educational element.

"I'm aware that some black and brown people are apprehen-

sive about the vaccine," said Hall. "There's a history. My attitude is that vaccines can save lives and the lives of families and lives in the community."

Local 108's handbills included that "There have been over 237 million doses administered to date in the U.S." President Joseph Biden aims to have 70 percent of the 330 million Americans vaccinated by July 1 for herd immunity.

Gov. Phil Murphy is looking for a similar state goal: more than six million of the state's nine million residents.

Murphy, however, noted in his May 3 Coronavirus briefing May 3 that 16 of the state's 565 municipalities have 40 percent or less of their populations vaccinated. Those municipalities of 10,000-plus residents include Newark, at 38 percent; Orange, 36; East Orange, 32 and Irvington, 29.

"This isn't going to be a competition between towns or meant to shame any community," said Murphy (D-Rumson). "Having these numbers out there for everyone to see is important to ensure that everyone is working and pulling together."

**WORLD NEWS** (Cont. from pg 4)

the UK's position as an international leader on LGBT equality, having legalized same-sex marriage and introduced one of the world's most comprehensive legislative frameworks for protecting LGBT people from violence and discrimination.

**AFRICA**

**Congo Attack Proves Fatal**

The United Nations Security Council strongly condemned the

May 10 attack on the UN peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in which one Malawian blue helmet was killed.

The attack, which took place near the town of Beni in the restive North Kivu province, was carried out by suspected members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) armed group.

In a press statement, Security Council members "condemned in the strongest terms" all attacks and provocations against the UN peacekeeping in the DRC (known by its French acronym,

**BANKRUPTCY**

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- ▶ Stop Wage Garnishments!
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LOW RATES: ONE PHONE CALL MAY REDUCE YOUR STRESS!

David Witherspoon, Attorney-at-Law, is a Debt Relief Agency. A firm dedicated to helping individuals find relief under the Bankruptcy Code.

"Those four towns you mentioned," said Hall Tuesday afternoon, "are the ones where many of our members and their families live and work in."

Murphy has meanwhile directed state, county and municipal level governments to reach out and into their underserved communities as part of his "Operation Jersey Summer."

Essex County, for example, is among those who are switching gears. DiVincenzo, citing monthly regional vaccination rates dropping from 28,000 to

4,000 among all five regional centers, closed all but the Essex County College-Newark and former West Orange Kmart.

The county, instead, is partnering with the likes of Local 108 to bring the vaccinations to the neighborhoods.

Local 108 and the county will reopen their "Pop-Up" center here for May 11 patients who got their first Moderna shots. They are invited back for their second shots June 8. Details are to be announced.

MONUSCO).

They "stressed the importance of MONUSCO having the necessary capacities to fulfil its mandate and promote the safety and security of the UN peacekeepers, pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions."

The members also reiterated their full support for the UN force and expressed their deep appreciation to the mission's troop and police-contributing countries.

In a separate statement, Secretary-General António Guterres

also denounced the attack.

He recalled that attacks against UN peacekeepers may constitute a war crime, and called on the Congolese authorities to investigate the incident and swiftly bring those responsible to justice.

"The Secretary-General reaffirms that the United Nations, through his Special Representative in the DRC, will continue to support the Congolese Government and people in their efforts to bring about peace and stability in the east of the country," the statement added.

**NEW JERSEY TRANSIT CORPORATION  
FISCAL YEAR 2021 REQUEST FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ TRANSIT), under Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, and under provisions of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21), gives notice of its intent to apply for Federal Fiscal Year 2021 federal financial assistance, Federal Fiscal Year 2020, Federal Fiscal Year 2019, Federal Fiscal Year 2018 and Federal Fiscal Year 2017 carryover funds from the following programs: \$427.18 million under 49 U.S.C. Section 5307 for operating and capital assistance; \$248.00 million under Section 5309 for Capital Investment Grant Program; \$206.17 million under Section 5337 State of Good Repair; \$8.89 million under Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities; \$11.98 million under 49 U.S.C.; Sections 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities and Section 5311 Rural Transportation Program; \$89.75 million of Federal Highway Authority; and \$39.61 million of Discretionary funding for a total of \$1.03 billion.

Federal operating funds will be matched as required with funds provided by the State of New Jersey and local recipients in conformance with Federal and State guidelines. NJ TRANSIT intends to provide the non-Federal share of capital projects through credit for toll revenues. The Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Federal program is described below.

**FISCAL YEAR 2021 FEDERAL PROGRAM  
Proposed Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
Capital Lease Payments	85.37
Cumberland County Bus Program	1.02
Dual Power Locomotives	70.43
Elizabeth Intermodal Station Reconstruction	25.08
HBLRT Weehawken Tunnel Repairs	4.83
Lyndhurst Station Reconstruction	11.58
Perth Amboy Intermodal ADA Improvements	10.69
PL42 Locomotives	9.30
Preventive Maintenance - Bus	113.93
Preventive Maintenance - Rail	88.05
SANDY Dmg 06NLR 4 NPS Storm Protection	0.48
SANDY Rsl 08MAS 4 ROC Unit Substations	6.42
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$427.18</b>

**Proposed Section 5309 Capital Investment Grant Program  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
Portal North Bridge FFGA	\$248.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$248.00</b>

**Proposed Section 5337 State of Good Repair  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
PL42 Locomotives	41.38
Preventive Maintenance - Bus	4.53
Preventive Maintenance - Rail	160.26
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$206.17</b>

**Proposed Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
Bus Operations Control Center	6.26
Howell Garage CNG Compressor Replacement	1.08
Wayne Bus Garage Modernization	1.55
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$8.89</b>

**Proposed Section 5310, 5311  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
Local- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Ind. w/Disabilities	7.47
Local- Rural Transit Program Contracts	4.51
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$11.98</b>

**Proposed Federal Highway Authority (FHWA)  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
CMAQ/5307 Local Initiatives DVRPC	1.01
CMAQ/5310 Local Initiatives DVRPC	0.99
HBLR Route 440 Extension	8.00
Multi-Level III Rail Car Purchase	75.00
Newark Intermodal	0.50
Underwater Hoboken Ferry Funds	4.25
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$89.75</b>

**Proposed Discretionary Funding  
(in Millions of Dollars)**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>FEDERAL</u>
Articulated Buses	17.27
Electric Bus Acquisition for Route #25 at Hilton Garage	7.07
Public Transportation Covid-19 Research Demonstration Grant Program	0.60
Wayne Bus Garage Modernization	14.67
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$39.61</b>

**A. Property Acquisition/Environmental, Economic, and Social Aspects**

Any property acquisition or relocation that may be required will be conducted in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the law and regulatory requirements. As appropriate, the social, economic, environmental, and relocation aspects of the projects will be investigated. If required under applicable laws and regulations, interim findings may be presented at a future public hearing and further public comment will be solicited. Prior to the implementation of any of the projects and to the extent required, NJ TRANSIT may prepare an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to Federal regulations. The availability of this document will be made known by publication in the same manner as this notice. NJ TRANSIT will adhere to all Federal statutes and regulations affecting structures or properties eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places.

**B. Comprehensive Planning**

NJ TRANSIT projects are developed in coordination with the following planning organizations: The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, which is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Northeast New Jersey urbanized area; the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, which is the designated MPO for Camden, Mercer, Burlington, and Gloucester counties; and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, which is the designated MPO for Cumberland, Salem, Atlantic, and Cape May counties. The MPOs are the forums for local decision-making concerning the proposed projects. The projects are developed in consultation with local elected officials, interested citizens, and providers of private bus services.

**C. Private Enterprise Participation**

Through the comprehensive planning process administered by the MPOs and ongoing communication with NJ TRANSIT's Office of Private Carrier Affairs, NJ TRANSIT continues to discuss with private carriers their participation in the capital program. In addition, NJ TRANSIT encourages, to the maximum extent possible, the participation of the private sector in the development and implementation of public transportation in the State of New Jersey.

**D. Senior Citizens and Individuals with Disabilities**

Services to be provided will be consistent with NJ TRANSIT's program of reduced interstate and intrastate rail and bus fares for senior citizens and individuals with disabilities. Every reasonable effort will be made to plan and design program elements involving facilities generally available to the public with careful consideration of the special needs of senior citizens and individuals with disabilities.

**E. Public Input**

NJ TRANSIT invites public comments on the above projects and its performance. Request for additional information on NJ TRANSIT's program of projects, written comments and/or requests for a public hearing should be sent to Joyce J. Zuczek, Board Secretary, Office of the Secretary to the Board, NJ TRANSIT, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246 by **May 28, 2021**.

Based on comments received in response to this notice and information made available, NJ TRANSIT may modify the above program before final submission to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and will make a determination, pursuant to FTA regulations, as to whether a public hearing is in order. The above list of proposed projects will become the final list of projects unless notification is provided in the same manner as this public notice.

Kevin S. Corbett  
President & CEO  
New Jersey Transit Corporation

# The Doctor Is In



**Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED**

## Is It Possible To Catch The Coronavirus After Being Vaccinated?

Ever heard the popular saying, ‘never say never?’ Well, our article today is going to be very much on that theme.

The consensus now is that getting a vaccine essentially eliminates your risk of getting the coronavirus. I mean, that’s the whole point of getting a vaccine. There has been so much work over the last few months to ensuring that a vaccine is available for use. Much of that work has yielded unprecedented success, with vaccines being available for use today.

Essentially, what the corona-

virus vaccines do is ramp up the body’s immune response to the coronavirus before even getting the virus. This way, when the body eventually encounters the virus, it is better equipped to fight it. And for a novel vaccine, released just around a year after the coronavirus first hit the US, the results have been superb.

This effectiveness is undoubtedly due in part to the new mRNA technology, which doesn’t actually see a dead or weakened strain of the virus injected to the body, as is common with most viruses. What I’m getting at is, the coronavirus vaccine is very effective and safe, and that’s what the general population believes.

This is why it came as a huge shock to Robin Hauser, who got the virus after being vaccinated. And not just him now, but there have been a few cases around the country where people test positive for the virus after being fully vaccinated. Emphasis on fully now, because taking one shot of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccine only guarantees about 50-80% protection from the virus.

Even after getting both vaccine doses, scientists estimate that it takes two weeks before the person can actually be said to be fully immunized from the virus. There have been reports of people getting the virus after taking one shot, and this isn’t too out of place. But this isn’t what



happened with Hauser and many others, as they got the virus more than two weeks after getting their second vaccine shot. As you may imagine, this led to few eyebrows being raised in the public space, particularly among those that never supported the vaccine in the first place.

So, can you actually get the coronavirus even after being fully vaccinated? Yes, absolutely, and cases like this are referred to as breakthrough cases. While these cases are extremely rare, they are possible. Breakthrough cases aren’t peculiar just to the coronavirus, though. Virtually all vaccines don’t 100% guarantee protection from infection. The chances of getting the infection are, in reality, extremely low but not absolutely absent. Take the coronavirus, for in-

stance; your chances of getting the virus after getting vaccinated is less than 0.5%.

But even if there’s a 0.0001% chance, it means infection may still arise. And that’s the case with Hauser and several others. But there is really nothing to fear on this front, though, because the chances of hospitalization or death are practically zero.

Aside from the individual’s immune system not getting totally primed to fight the infection, there are still other reasons breakthrough cases may occur, like poor vaccine administration. This is common in underdeveloped regions where the vaccines are in poor condition before administration due to poor storage, or they are administered wrong-  
*(Continued on page 12)*

**FINANCE** *(Continued from page 6)*

the worldwide system that a business uses to produce products or services. Supply chains are about production and distribution. Good and services are produced worldwide and moved from location to location. When you travel from one state to another, especially by road, you will see many trucks on the road carrying goods meant for stores, the malls and other business entities.

There is a process by which goods are produced and then sent to locations where people are willing to pay for them. Imports and exports are constantly taking place and constitute part of the global supply chain. Covid has altered many supply chains. As a result, we expect that in the coming months we

will see some of the adverse impacts of Covid distorting our supply chains.

Currently, many restaurants for example are reopening to the public. However, last year, as these businesses closed and laid off their employees, those workers found other sources of income and or other jobs. A year later their previous jobs are now available, but those workers are elsewhere, and many do not intend to go back to their old jobs. The problem restaurants are facing is that they are having challenges hiring new people! This of course will affect the ability of these restaurants to fully cater to their customers.

In the gas sector, we did not travel much during Covid. With quarantine, we all consumed less gas in 2020. Most people were working from home and didn’t

need to travel to work. The drivers who normally transport our gas were also laid off. They also had to find alternative sources of income. A year later, gas transport companies are struggling to hire qualified drivers to distribute gas. Consequently, we have started seeing an increase in gas prices.

During the pandemic, we were all advised not to travel. The travel industry was especially hit by the pandemic. With no one traveling, airlines made large losses. Some airlines pivoted to moving medical supplies and other goods. Hotels were empty as people were not traveling. Some hotels came up with creative ways to attract clients. They created work packages for the public. In other words, some hotels provided daily rates for people to rent their rooms for

work purposes. This was a way of providing an option of workspace to those who could not concentrate on work at home.

With increased levels of vaccinations, we expect that more people would begin looking at their travel plans. People are fed up quite naturally, after being cooped up for one year plus because of the pandemic and would want to travel. We can expect that the travel industry will continue to see an uptick in customers as everyone tries to move on with their lives.

With so many of us staying at home and not able to spend as much as we normally do, Americans have saved a lot of money. As the economy reverts to a new normal, expect those who saved money to start spending some of it. This will boost businesses.  
*(Continued on page 14)*

# TOWN WATCH

**DISCLAIMER:** The following items are primarily drawn from first responders. Responders' accounts may not be their full activity range. Grand juries hand down indictments when evidence presented them warrant a trial. Named suspects/defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

**NEWARK** - A former Municipal Council candidate was among the eight candidates of even towns whom the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission issued for filing violations.

The NJLEC has fined council candidate Shawn X. McCray, along with seven others, for having filed sworn campaign donation statements years late. McCray, as of April 7, was fined \$450.20 for filing his candidate sworn statement "nearly six-and-a-half years late" from his 2014 campaign.

A majority of registered ward voters placed McCray, who ran on his own "New Hope for the Central Ward" banner, third to challenger Gayle Chaneyfield-Jenkins and incumbent Darrin S. Sharif in an eight-way election. May 13, 2014. Chaneyfield-Jenkins defeated Sharif in the June 10 runoff.

McCray, a Newark native and lifelong resident, finished second to winner LaMonica R. McIver in the 2018 Central Ward regular and runoff elections. The Central High School Boys Basketball coach regularly airs TheGrind podcast.

A Victory Gardens council candidate was fined an overall \$45,600 for failing to report contributions or making a sworn statement from his 2015-17 campaigns.

The state commission levied \$53,405.76 in fines from their May 5 and April 7 rounds of violation announcements.

**IRVINGTON** - The alleged trespasser who township police and Essex County Sheriff's Officers "apprehended" in Irving-

ton Park 5:30 a.m. May 7 was not an ordinary suspect.

Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers said that the suspect, who matched the description by residents at Levental Avenue and Wolf Place at 1:30 a.m. Friday, had to be treated like a cub.

Responding IPD officers, while taping off the county park, called for backup from sheriff's officers and the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife.

The suspect, who Irvingtonians reported to authorities rummaging through garbage cans and then up a tree, was a mature black bear. It is the first bruin sighted and removed since one by the Burch Charter School/St. Leo's Roman Catholic Church on June 8, 2018.

Fish and Wildlife wardens tranquilized the bear and transported it to a more natural habitat beyond "Local Talk" Land. It had taken the bear about four hours to walk about 1.1 miles or 10 blocks north to the park.

"I've told residents who asked me that this bear came to Irvington Park because it knows how safe, clean and enjoyable all of Essex County parks are," said Sheriff Armando Fontoura. "Patience and tolerance paid off in making sure that neither the bear nor any of our Essex County residents were harmed."

**EAST ORANGE** - What started as a fatal shooting of a Newark man in a Third Ward house's after-hours party here May 1 has resulted in the arrest of another Newark man 48 hours later.

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II and East Orange Police Chief Phyllis Bindi announced that they have arrested Terance Nelson, 34, in the murder of Shakur Robinson, 34. Nelson is accused of walking into the basement of a house on the 510 block of South Clinton Street, shooting Robinson in the head at 3:30 a.m. May 1 and walking away.

Robinson, a father of two and an International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 210 member, was declared at the scene.

Neighbors told responding EOPD officers and ECPO Homicide Task Force detectives that one of the house's occupants have held post-2 a.m. parties "on most weekends" and that the oc-

cupant's family members were involved with party operations. The same residents said that they had told authorities of the parties.

It is not known whether Nelson and Robinson were acquainted with each other. Early morning traffic, including NJTransit's No. 94 buses, was detoured during the field investigation.

Nelson is being held on a count each of murder, an ex-felon possessing a weapon, possessing a weapon without a permit and possession thereof for an illegal purpose.

**ORANGE** - The Orange Water Department and its manager, Suez North America, while stressing that Orange's water is safe to drink, has passed along an April 27 notice from the DEP that they violated two water quality standards since Jan. 1.

The state agency told Suez and OWD that it had exceeded standards for pH balance and orthophosphate 78 times - so far - since Jan. 1. By "so far," The DEP is sampling and testing periods run until June 30.

Orthophosphate is a chemical added between Orange's well fields in Millburn and East Hanover and the Chestnut Street pumping station. The chemical is used to prevent corrosion and lead buildup in pipelines and fixtures.

The DEP asserts that Suez had failed to adjust to the DEP's tighter pH and orthophosphate standards that took effect Jan. 1. Suez has since readjusted. The state agency files the Tier 2 Public Notice when the exceedances go beyond nine days within a six-month period.

Orange Water and Suez have meanwhile been adjusting their water quality process to adhere to the DEP's new PFOA content standards since March 15. The agency set stricter standards than the federal EPA to reduce the amount of the "nonstick" PFOSA family of "forever" chemicals.

**WEST ORANGE** - Councilwoman Michelle Casalino asked Council President Cindy Matute-Brown, Mayor Robert Parisi and the May 4 Township Council meeting's virtual audience for, and was granted permission, to open the session with a moment

of silence for "longtime Deputy Mayor Zal Velez."

"Zal loved this community," added Parisi. "He served as Deputy Mayor for almost 30 years, working with three administrations and has always been a trusted voice and friend to many. He had an infectious optimism, making it impossible to ever be with him and not feel good about the world."

Then-Mayor Sam Spina first appointed Dr. Gonzalo "Zal" Velez Deputy Mayor in the 1990s. Mayors John McKeon and Parisi kept him there.

Velez and wife Josie came here from their native Philippines in 1974. Zal used his doctorate in Education to serve as Education Commission during President Ronald Regan's Administration 1981-89 and to run the International Cultural and Education Association.

Velez, under his "Cristo Rey Aluman" pen name, wrote three Philippine historical novels and the "Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary." The longtime Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner has raised funds and supplies for Typhoon Haiyan victims and underprivileged Smokey Mountain children.

The father of Mary Jo and the late Anthony, grandfather of seven and brother of Alberto and the late Teodoro died from respiratory failure April 28. A Funeral Mass was held in Our Lady of Lourdes, prior to internment at East Hanover's Gate of Heaven Cemetery, May 7.

**SOUTH ORANGE** - The four-way race for three Village Trustee seats up for May 11's election, although votes are still being counted through press time, has been called in the "Devoted, Dependable & Diverse" team's favor.

Essex County Clerk Christopher Durkin, with 12 of 13 polling precincts reporting Tuesday night, has DDD's Braynard "Bobby" Brown as its top vote-getter with 1,029 votes or 32.05 percent. The former NFL football player will start his first term on or by July 1.

Incumbent Karen Hartshorn Hiltron gets her second term with 1,008 or 31.39. Running mate William "Bill" Haskins received his first term at 991 or 30.86. Haskins and Brown will

(Continued on page 12)



*From  
The  
Pastor's  
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**The Celebration  
Of Heroes**

Please join me in a follow-up reflection on *The Celebration of Heroines*, which spoke to our communities' great mothers and women. In this reflection, I speak of *The Celebration of Heroes*, which directs us to fathers and men who have been faithful, especially during this pandemic.

These heroes have not followed the unscrupulous behaviors or lack of courage that borders on the risks that have led to the destruction of many. Instead, they have demonstrated that as birth fathers and caring men, they are protectors of their families and have not been unwilling to wear their masks and take the vaccinations, thus showing how much they are careful.

My focus on the celebration of heroes goes beyond the fathers who have been faithful in the pandemic, however. The

world around us today is projecting mostly on men who think that prestige, power, and personal needs, are more important than the care of their families and forgetting that the community about them is always more blessed when heroic men inhabit it.

Yes, I have heard so much of the news lately giving attention to the violence of men. The stories of sexually abusive men, such as the soldiers in war zones, men who rape women, men who seem not to care about their responsibility as fathers, are constantly in the news. As I listen to the news, I wonder whether our women and children can bypass such news to see that some fathers and men can be celebrated as heroes.

Maybe, you might say that I am jealous for my men, and truly I am because I have often wished that our world had more men upon whom our women and children can depend as heroes. Yes, it frustrates me, at times, that too many of our brothers-men are not living up to the calling of God for us to act as men of character, integrity, honesty, decency, trust, and love, as we are to be. At times in history, there seems to be a shortage of

the kind of hero men of which I am thinking.

When God called Noah to build the Ark. And the comment on Noah was: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." (Genesis 6:8, 9, 11-13 KJV)

In the same way, God called Abraham, and the comment is that: (God looked at) Abraham and said of him, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Genesis 18:19)

There are multiple other examples in Scripture, and we need

only cite the above, but it is clearly demonstrated that there has to be a search for hero men often in history. There is good reason why Josiah Gilbert Holland, the great American novelist and poet, in the mid-19th Century wrote his most famous poem:

*God give us men. The time demands  
Strong minds, great hearts,  
true faith, and willing hands;  
Men whom the lust of office  
does not kill;  
Men whom the spoils of office  
cannot buy;  
Men who possess opinions  
and a will;  
Men who have honor; men  
who will not lie;  
Men who can stand before a  
demagogue  
And dam his treacherous  
flatteries without winking;  
Tall men, sun-browned, who  
live above the fog  
In public duty and in private  
thinking.*

Yes, we are truly at the moment in history when need fathers and men can be celebrated as heroes. And just let me hope if you have read the above, you have been challenged to be a hero man.

**TOWN WATCH** (Continued from page 11)

succeed the retiring Walter Clarke and Steve Schnall. Neil Chambers, running his "Vote for Kids" solo campaign, mustered 183 for 5.7.

The above results are unofficial for more than the usual fortnight allowance for challenges and recall. Durkin and Board of Elec-

tions Superintendent Linda von Nessi are allowing Vote By Mail Ballots that were put in the Village Center Sloan Street gazebo dropbox by 8 p.m. Tuesday to be counted.

VBMs that were postmarked Tuesday and sent via the U.S. Postal Service will be welcomed in Durkin's Newark Hall of Records office - so long as they are received on or by 4 p.m. May 17. Durkin, in a Tuesday

afternoon report, said that 1,732 VBMBs, or 12 percent of the village's registered voters, were mailed.

The village's trustee contest was "Local Talk's" sole May non-partisan municipal election this year. Similar elections were held in Verona, Cedar Grove and 11 other New Jersey towns.

(Continued on page 14)

**THE DOCTOR IS IN**

(Continued from page 10)

ly. Another possible cause of breakthrough cases is a new strain or variant of the virus, as is common now in some parts of the world.

Most of the people against vaccination usually argue that if you can still get the virus after being vaccinated, why get vaccinated in the first place? To start with, in a study conducted among California healthcare workers, only 7 out of 14,990 vaccinated people got the virus. That's a whopping 0.04%! Yes, 0.04%. This is pretty low, I'd say. So, it's not like break-

through cases are common occurrences.

Then again, we are in a fight to eradicate the coronavirus as soon as possible. That isn't possible if cases keep rising, and vaccination is a tested and trusted way of keeping cases low. There's also the fact that hospitalizations and deaths are practically eradicated with vaccinations, even in breakthrough cases.

To summarize, the coronavirus may still arise after full vaccination, albeit unlikely, but these breakthrough cases pose minimal risk of hospitalization, death, or even showing symptoms in some cases.

All of these further reinforce

the pleas of health workers to still maintain coronavirus guidelines in populated areas after vaccination. Stay safe.

*This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board Certified Internist & Board Eligible Pediatrician, who works as a Hospitalist, and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless. He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice Mobile Medicine NJ.*

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Legally Speaking



Cassandra Savoy, Esq.  
OP/ED

Heads Up!  
The Landlord-Tenant  
Court Is "A-changin'!"

The Supreme Court of the State of New Jersey is about to overhaul the Landlord Tenant Court!

While Covid-19 exposed the deficiencies in the system, and the unparalleled emergency triggered the suspension of residential evictions and the suspension of all landlord tenant trials, the system was already sorely in need of an overhaul. In March 2021, a special committee established by the Court's Chief Justice, Stuart Rabner, issued a re-

port making eighteen recommendations aimed at improving the system. Some of the recommendations are designed to streamline the landlord tenant court process and others will likely have a greater impact of tenants.

Housing policy in New Jersey is tenant-friendly, and the new recommendations support that policy: "Housing stability is one pillar of our society." The Legislature holds that stability in housing benefits everyone. Even a temporary loss of housing can trigger other dire consequences including, but certainly not limited to, loss of employment, interruption in education, strained or broken connections with family, friends and support systems. Property owners rely on steady rent payments to meet debt, pay property taxes and maintain and operate the buildings.

Government indirectly relies on rent payments from tenant to landlord to fund public operations and maintain communities. At least from a policy standpoint, New Jersey's Anti-Eviction Act seems secure. Consequently, the goal of the Judiciary neutrality, transparency, and access so as to safeguard the rights of all parties especially those who navigate the court process without a lawyer. The

courts must maintain efficiency and bolster procedural supports so that all attorneys and parties have options to resolve matters via settlement or judicial determination.

One of the most significant recommendations is that landlords may be required to submit at the beginning of the process his legal rationale for filing the complaint. That might require submitting leases and perhaps payment histories along with the complaint. Currently, Landlord tenant complaints are reviewed only for sufficiency, that is to say, reviewed to see if the Complaint is signed; whether representation by an attorney is required, whether payment of appropriate filing fee has been made.

The recommended review would cover more substantive areas with respect to legal sufficiency such as statutory jurisdiction so that problems with complaints are identified and remedied as early as possible. This early, enhanced review would not prevent parties from raising issues - including as to jurisdiction or other potential factual disputes - before or at trial. To the renter this might mean that Landlords will require a new signature on a renewal rather than

the tenant's agreement to same terms and the payment of an increased amount.

Landlords will want to make their positions rock-solid so as not to be knocked out of court before they get started. You can rest assured that if more is required of the landlord, the landlord will pass that along to the tenant. To the landlords of smaller rentals, two-, three-family units, it would mean actually keeping good records, having signed leases and other paperwork that is often tedious for them to maintain, but should be required.

I think the most significant recommendation advises that the Judiciary should expand opportunities for resolving landlord tenant cases before trial by establishing a Landlord Tenant Legal Specialist (LTLS) Program. The program would include trained legal staff to conduct required case management conferences, confidential settlement conferences, and other administrative functions that support judicial functions.

I, for one, am looking forward to seeing what changes are actually implemented. From my review, all of the recommendations will improve how citizens are served in the court.

FINANCE (Cont. from page 10)

When businesses get more customers and make more money, they in turn will hire more people and spend more to provide what the public is willing to pay for.

In that sense we could be looking at an economic boom. When one factors in the various stimulus programs that injected trillions of dollars into the economy, we can all have a cautious

but optimistic view of how the economy will perform in the future.

In part of the country, many people are trying to buy homes, the problem is that we have a historically low stock of houses on the market for sale. This in turn is causing housing prices to rise in various areas. Why, because with a limited stock of houses, those that want to buy homes are pushing the prices up as they bid for the homes.

The above issues raised entail positive as well as negative impacts. All of us need to regularly monitor what is happening in the economy on a regular basis. As we get information about the economy, it can assist us in our financial planning decisions. Listening to the economic, business, and financial market news on a daily basis is one way to ensure that we are on top of what is happening in the economy. This is something that we

all need to be doing if we are to make well informed financial decision.

Please feel free to share with me your questions and experiences on stocks and investments. I will do my best to respond, and, in some cases, I will write on some of these questions.

Your questions and comments can be sent to [localtalk-news@gmail.com](mailto:localtalk-news@gmail.com)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 12)

**MAPLEWOOD** - The South Orange-Maplewood School District's \$159.6 million 2021-22 budget, featuring a 3.2-percent local tax levy increase, is now in the hands of Essex County Superintendent Joseph Zarra for his inspection and approval. Copies have also been furnished to the respective South Orange and Maplewood municipal govern-

ments.

A majority of the two-town board of education passed the \$159.683,232 budget on a May 3 5-3-1 split budget. SOMSD BOE Members Elissa Malespina, Johanna Wright and Kamal Zubieta dissented; Susan Bergin was absent.

The overall budget, as introduced March 15 by Schools Superintendent Dr. Ronald Taylor, is \$2.54 million - or 1.6 percent more - than the current \$157,141,232 million spending

plan.

The new budget reflects several line item increases, starting with a 22.51 percent increase in state aid to \$22.5 million. Trenton, through the state Education Department, added to the current \$5,880,802 in part to help defray the expense of renovating the Seth Boyden Demonstration and Clinton, Jefferson and Tuscan elementary schools.

They are four of the district's 10 schools whose improvements will be otherwise being funded

by last year's \$157 million bond issue. The bond issue, on the other hand, boosts the district's debt service by 45.98 percent to \$9,311,827.

Although the overall district budget has increased by the two percent maximum, 87 percent of the revenue comes from Maplewood and South Orange property owners. The two-town district property tax increase is separate from what Maplewood, South Orange and/or Essex County el-

(Continued on page 15)

**TOWN WATCH** (Continued from page 14)

ders set.  
 "If we purport to care about those families who are less financially stable right now," asked dissenter Zubieta, "then why aren't we worried about the money in their pockets?"

**BLOOMFIELD** - A Newark man will be seeing a lot of the Bloomfield Municipal Court this month after his second arrest for allegedly shoplifting from a hardware store here 26 days apart in April.

Bloomfield Public Safety Director Samuel DeMaio said that officers had responded to a shoplifting call from the Home Depot on April 26. They were met by the store's loss prevention officer and a detained Alexander Carrion, 37.

The LPO accused Carrion of taking a \$199 Ryobi toolset and "attempting to walk past all points of sale" without paying.

Those here at 1 Municipal Plaza and 60 Orange St. may have asked, "You, again?" to Carrion, who was last picked up by BPD at Bloomfield Avenue and Berkeley Place April 1.

Carrion, that Thursday, matched the description the LPO gave of a man who ran away from the store with a "\$299 electric chainsaw."

Carrion, both times, was given a summons with a court date. Both the toolset and the chainsaw were recovered.

**MONTCLAIR** - Township residents and officials may well remember when the late Olympia Dukakis won Best Supporting Actress for her role in "Moonstruck" at the 60th Academy Awards April 18, 1988.

Dukakis, 89, who died in her Manhattan apartment May 1, was unexpectedly bestowed a Golden Globe that January for portraying Cher's worldly mother. She made it onto the academy's stage, held her Oscar statue high overhead and shouted, "Go, Michael!" to first cousin and Presidential candidate George Dukakis.

Dukakis, to some, became an overnight sensation. The daughter of Lowell, Mass. textile workers, however, had been working some 58 years before the Oscar spotlight fell on her and Montclair.

"I went from buying budget jeans and working 10-to-12 hours daily in the theater to getting parts and money a lot better," recalled Dukakis from the century-old Montclair home she and husband Louis Zorich had been raising Christina, Peter and Stefan and since 1970. "I never let the success get to my head."

Dukakis, who was born in Lowell June 20, 1931, had 130 off-Broadway play roles and some television credits when author Nora Ephron cast her in 1986's "Heartburn." The Boston University Master of Fine and Performing Arts

degree-holder had been teaching acting at NYU for 15 years.

She and Zorich co-founded and ran the Whole Theater Company here 1971-90. Dukakis, when a camera crew filmed her reaction to being nominated by the academy at their Upper Montclair home, made a point of mentioning the Whole Theater.

The "Moonstruck" awards started a string of movie and television credits, from "Steel Magnolias" to the 1993-2019 "Tales of The City" series. That string continued when she and Zorich - the Whole Theater closing in 1900 and their children grown - left Montclair for NYC in 2000.

Brother Apollo Dukakis announced her sister's death on Facebook. Four grandchildren are also among her survivors; Louis died in 2018. No public memorials have been announced as of press time.

**GLEN RIDGE** - Not all of the recycling materials borough residents put curbside are not reaching Atlantic Coast Fibers's Passaic transfer plant - and this is by an interim design.

The Borough Council had approved what Business Administrator Michael Zichelli calls May 6 "a temporary arrangement with Atlantic Coast with another vendor" for the time being.

Atlantic Coast's Passaic plant has not been able to take all of Glen Ridge's recycling since it suffered a major fire Jan. 29-30. The blaze, which brought 25 fire departments among four counties in mutual aid, did an estimated \$22 million in damages.

What was left of ACF's Passaic plant was demolished. The company has since transferred its clients' materials to their Lakewood, Neptune and Tinton Falls facilities when practical.

**BELLEVILLE** - Township building code inspectors may be filing a report while you read this about how a Silver Lake backyard deck had collapsed Monday, injuring seven people - including three firefighters.

A Belleville Fire Department spokesman said that a group of officers suffered minor injuries when the back porch deck of a Belmont Avenue house gave way at about 4:45 p.m. They, and a fourth person who was injured, were taken to RWJ Barnabas Clara Maass Hospital for treatment and released.

The firefighters and a local EMS ambulance crew were returning a resident back to her home through a sliding back door. It is not known whether that person was among the injured.

The incident was first captured by a WNBC News 4 New York traffic helicopter. Its footage was also carried Tuesday by News12 New Jersey.

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\*As our Community is impacted by another wave of COVID-19, the Heart Center of the Oranges is here to safely assist our patients. We encourage patients to take advantage of our Telemedicine visits to prevent the spread of the virus. We encourage everyone to come in for the flu shot as soon as possible – *Dr. Rajiyah*

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<b>Newark:</b> 202 Stuyvesant Ave.	Tel. 973-374-8807
<b>West Orange:</b> 77 Main Street	Tel. 973-324-2090
<b>West Orange:</b> 95 Main Street	Tel. 973-736-5552
<b>West Orange:</b> 92 Old Northfield Road <small>(currently closed for renovations)</small>	Tel. 973-736-5552