



STATE POLICE ARREST 19 IN "OPERATION FALLING SPIRES"

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RUTGERS BOARD OF GOVERNORS CRITICIZED AS BEING A "RUBBER-STAMP"

PAGE 14



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LOCAL 108 HOLDS 6TH VACCINATION EVENT

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L to R: Monica Colon, Jasper Panel, Shelton Thurman, Abraham Asabor (Business Agent of Local 108), Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, Barbara Lozaw. Photos By Dhiren Shah

CUOMO RESIGNS



After months of brutal and damaging details about his alleged inappropriate conduct with women, the state of New York's highest ranking official is stepping down.

On Aug. 10, NY Gov. Andrew Cuomo held a press conference concerning the allegations made against him. After a few minutes, Cuomo eventually announced that he was resigning as the state's governor, effective 14 days from Aug. 10. After that, Lieutenant Gov. Kathleen "Kathy" C. Hochul will take over, becoming the 57th governor and first woman in the history of New York to serve in that capacity.

"I think that given the circumstances the best way I can help now is if I step aside and let government get back to government, and therefore that is what I'll do, because I work for you, and doing the right thing, is doing the right thing for you," Cuomo said during the announcement.

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SUSPECT IN CUSTODY FOR MURDER OF COLUMBIA HIGH STUDENT

PAGE 11



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Turn
To
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Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The City of Orange, by a resolution from Councilwoman Tency Eason, banned cannabis businesses in the city. Councilpersons Jamie Summers-Johnson and Adrienne K. Wooten stated in the distribution of their letter to residents that concerning the referendum, more people voted in favor of the question (to have cannabis businesses). However, as everyone knows, referendum questions have a yes vote most of the time because the majority of the voters do not read the question, and vote yes anyway. Also, the city of Orange has a voting percentile so low that it is not a real judgment by the referendum in my opinion. People voted for councilpersons to read, understand and make judgments with the best of their ability. If the majori-

ty of the council says yes, all should accept the judgment.

The biggest news this week is the resignation announcement by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, effective 14 days from August 10, 2021. This comes after the huge investigative report of New York Attorney General Letitia "Tish" James. Letitia James was elected as the first African American and woman to head the office of the NY Attorney General on November 6, 2018. It is a 3-year term, and her term will end by this November's election. She has declared that she will run for the post of Governor in 2022.

Current Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul will be the first woman to serve as governor of New York and also the first one who is not from New York city. Hochul is President of the NY Senate and chairs the Regional Economic Development Councils. I hope she brings real business to benefit the people of the state. So far, she has visited all 62 counties at least once in a year since she got elected.

According to Wikipedia: "In 26 states, the governor and lieutenant governor are elected on the same ticket, ensuring that

they come from the same political party. In 17 states, they are elected separately and, thus, may come from different parties. Among the seven states without a separate, full-time office of lieutenant governor, two states have a post of lieutenant governor that is filled by the highest officer of the State Senate. In Tennessee, the full title of the leader of the Senate is 'lieutenant governor and speaker of the Senate.' In West Virginia, the title of lieutenant governor is assigned by statute to the Senate President."

Recently in New Jersey, Richard Codey became acting Governor for three days before Jim McGreevey was sworn in 2003. After McGreevey's resignation, Codey became Acting Governor, and served about 14 months there (not elected).

A \$1.2 trillion infrastructure resolution has been passed in the Senate. Hopefully, it will give a boost to the economy. However, debt to future generations will have to be paid. In 2019, our national debt was about \$22.7 trillion, which is about \$69,063 per person living in the U.S., including babies. In 2020, it increased to \$27.9 trillion, which is

\$80,885 per person, including babies. With this bill and the way we are distributing (donating) money to everyone, soon the debt will cross over \$100,000 per person. We must watch our rising debt. Ten years ago, the debt was \$13.56 trillion.

Finally, some good news. Saikhom Mirabai Chanu is an Indian weightlifter. She won the silver medal at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in the women's 49 kg category. Mirabai Chanu has won world championships and multiple medals at the Commonwealth Games. When she was going to her training, truck drivers used to give her a FREE ride. Once she won the medal, she came back to her home and invited all the truck drivers for a lunch who gave her a ride. She thanked each of them for helping her and supporting her to win the medal. She bowed to each of them and gave some presents. Her kind-hearted and humble gestures impressed me. India hardly wins medals at the Olympics, but she has no ego. What a sight of humanity!

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>
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Scattered T-Storms	PM T-Storms possible	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy / Rain
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Save Our Birthdays!

COVID-19 is the gift that just keeps on giving. For real, every day, a new study comes out, somehow worse than the previous one, showing just how much damage the virus has wreaked. It's getting tiring now, I know, but we're not about to stop talking about it.

On today's episode of COVID-19 bad news, there's an

emerging study about the effect of COVID on birthdays. I don't want to bore you with the full details, but apparently, households with a birthday had 8.6 more diagnoses per 10,000 individuals than households without a birthday. The diagnoses increase to 15.8 with children. There's more. Households in areas of high community transmission had a 31% increase in COVID-19 diagnoses compared to areas with low community transmission.

The summary of all of that is - more birthdays equal more COVID cases, especially in children. Of course, there are many more factors that come into play here, but one thing we are certain of is that COVID rears its ugly heads more during birthdays.

It's actually not hard to imagine why. I mean, birthday gatherings aren't exactly the most COVID-friendly occasions with all of the shouting and hugging. In fact, all gatherings generally are this way. But the fact that parents are becoming warier and warier of all celebrations for their kids is indicative of the ob-



vious fact that COVID has instilled a level of fear in us that we really shouldn't be dealing with.

Now, children can't have the birthdays they deserve. Take me back to the days when kids went sleepless for days looking forward to their birthdays with their friends and family members. When all parents had to worry

about is cleaning after the party and not whether their kids may have contracted one of the worst viruses to ever surface on the planet.

This fear is even more heightened among parents living in regions with low vaccinations. It was only some weeks back

(Continued on page 14)

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STATE POLICE ARREST 19 IN “OPERATION FALLING SPIRES”

Seized Narcotics Stamps Linked to 15 Fatal and 42 Non-Fatal Overdoses Statewide

NEWARK - The New Jersey State Police have arrested 19 suspects and dismantled 3 drug mills producing heroin in Newark, during an eight-month investigation dubbed “Operation Falling Spires.” The suspects distributed narcotics in wax folds stamped with the same brand names that have been linked to 15 fatal and 42 nonfatal overdoses across New Jersey.

In December 2020, detectives with the New Jersey State Police Gangs and Organized Crime North Unit began investigating alleged drug activity at the Garden Spires community complex in Newark. Based on information obtained during the investigation, detectives discovered that multiple drug mills were being operated out of the complex and were a distribution point for narcotics in the area.

On May 19, detectives with the State Police Gangs and Organized Crime North Unit along with members of the Trafficking

North, Crime Suppression North, T.E.A.M.S, K9, Fugitive, Aviation, Troop “B” Tactical Patrol, Crime Scene Investigations North, and Hazmat Units, United States Marshal Service, Newark Police Department, and Paterson Police Department executed search warrants at 7 apartments in the Garden Spires complex. As a result of the searches, detectives arrested 9 suspects and seized 4 guns, 500 grams of heroin/fentanyl mixture, 5 grams of crack, hollow point ammunition, high-capacity magazines, narcotics packaging materials, and several different stamps used to brand packaged narcotics.

Drug traffickers market their “brand” of drug by ink-stamping the outside of a wax fold with a unique image, word, or phrase such as “Frank Lucas,” and “SRT,” which are all examples of stamps that were recovered. The stamps “Frank Lucas” and “SRT” have been linked to a total of five fatal overdoses in

New Jersey.

During the on-going investigation, detectives arrested an additional 10 suspects.

“We cannot end New Jersey’s opioid crisis unless we dismantle the state’s distribution networks for fentanyl and heroin,” said Acting Attorney General Andrew J. Bruck. “Under Colonel Callahan’s leadership, the New Jersey State Police is focusing its investigative resources on those individuals and criminal organizations most responsible for fatal overdoses.”

“These operations are designed to target drug distribution networks and choke off the supply line of deadly opioids. Shutting down distribution where it originates prevents lethal brands of stamps, like those seized in this operation, from entering our communities, which greatly reduces both overdoses and fatalities,” said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police. “We

will continue to work with our partners dismantle narcotics trafficking networks through aggressive enforcement, and we will also work with our communities to combat the opioid epidemic through education, partnership, and outreach initiatives.”

“The Division of Criminal Justice is incredibly grateful for the work of our law enforcement partner, the New Jersey State Police under the leadership of Colonel Callahan,” said Division of Criminal Justice Director Lyndsay V. Ruotolo.

“Their work in this investigation and other sophisticated and strategic investigations like it hold those who profit from the suffering of others accountable for their alleged crimes, and removes lethal drugs from our neighborhoods thereby saving lives.”

This case is being prosecuted by the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice.



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SENATE REACHES DEAL ON BILL

UNITED STATES

After months of back and forth wrangling, lawmakers in one house have come to an agreement of sorts.

In a 69-30 vote featuring 19 members of the GOP, the Senate passed a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill. The Democrat-powered legislation now heads to the House for approval.

“Big news, folks: The Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal has officially passed the Senate. I hope Congress will send it to my desk as soon as possible so we can continue our work of building back better,” President Biden posted on Twitter.

Despite the apparent victory on the matter, it is not guaranteed that the legislation will get approval, as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said that she would not bring it up for a vote until a larger \$3.5 trillion “human infrastructure” plan is approved in the Senate.

It is unclear on if Pelosi’s threat will hold weight in the Senate, particularly with Arizona Senator Krysten Sinema, who forced a bipartisan agreement on the infrastructure bill after announcing that she would not support the previous version of it.

While budget bills only need a simple majority to pass in either part of Congress, the Democrats have the slimmest margin in the Senate, and any defection, especially in the case of moderate Democrats like Sinema and West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin, would instantly kill the legislation without Republican support.

U.S. CLAIMS GOLD AT THE BUZZER

OLYMPICS

The 2020 Tokyo Olympics (as played in 2021) have come to an end, and the United States not

only won the most overall medals, but literally took the gold right at the end.

Thanks to a women’s volleyball win over China, the U.S. overtook that nation in the number of gold medals won, giving the Americans 39 compared to the other’s 38. Overall, the U.S. garnered 113 medals, with the most silver (41) and the most bronze (33) as well.

In two huge events, once again, U.S. basketball reigned supreme. The women’s team beat host nation Japan in the gold medal game 90-75. The win gave Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi five career gold medals, while coach Dawn Staley decided to move on from the games with her gold medal in hand. This marks the seventh straight time the U.S. women have taken gold in this event.

In men’s basketball, the U.S. men survived a tough France team they lost to earlier, winning 87-82. This marks the fourth consecutive Olympics where the men from the U.S. have taken the gold.

Meanwhile, with some Jersey flavor, Jessica Springsteen took silver with the women’s equestrian team in the event, with Sweden taking gold. She is the daughter of “The Boss” himself, Bruce Springsteen.

CONCERN GROWS OVER CLIMATE CHANGE

WORLD

Scientists are observing changes in the Earth’s climate in every region and across the whole climate system, according to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report, released today. Many of the changes observed in the climate are unprecedented in thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion - such as continued sea level rise - are irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years.

However, strong and sustained reductions in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases would limit climate change. While benefits for air quality would come quickly, it could take 20-30

years to see global temperatures stabilize, according to the IPCC Working Group I report, Climate Change 2021: the Physical Science Basis, approved on Aug. 6 by 195 member governments of the IPCC, through a virtual approval session that was held over two weeks starting on July 26.

The Working Group I report is the first instalment of the IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), which will be completed in 2022.

“This report reflects extraordinary efforts under exceptional circumstances,” said Hoesung Lee, Chair of the IPCC. “The innovations in this report, and advances in climate science that it reflects, provide an invaluable input into climate negotiations and decision-making.”

The report provides new estimates of the chances of crossing the global warming level of 1.5° C in the next decades, and finds that unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5° C or even 2° C will be beyond reach.

The report shows that emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities are responsible for approximately 1.1° C of warming since 1850-1900, and finds that averaged over the next 20 years, global temperature is expected to reach or exceed 1.5° C of warming. This assessment is based on improved observational datasets to assess historical warming, as well progress in scientific understanding of the response of the climate system to human-caused greenhouse gas emissions.

“This report is a reality check,” said IPCC Working Group I Co-Chair Valérie Masson-Delmotte. “We now have a much clearer picture of the past, present and future climate, which is essential for understanding where we are headed, what can be done, and how we can prepare...”

“...It has been clear for decades that the Earth’s climate is changing, and the role of human influence on the climate system is undisputed. Yet the new report also reflects major advances in the science of attribution - understanding the role of climate

change in intensifying specific weather and climate events such as extreme heat waves and heavy rainfall events.”

“Climate change is already affecting every region on Earth, in multiple ways. The changes we experience will increase with additional warming,” said IPCC Working Group I Co-Chair Pan-mao Zhai.

The report also shows that human actions still have the potential to determine the future course of climate. The evidence is clear that carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the main driver of climate change, even as other greenhouse gases and air pollutants also affect the climate.

“Stabilizing the climate will require strong, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and reaching net zero CO₂ emissions. Limiting other greenhouse gases and air pollutants, especially methane, could have benefits both for health and the climate,” said Zhai.

U.K. HITS 75% RATE

EUROPE

Three quarters of adults in the UK have now received both doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, as the public continues to do what it can to protect themselves, their loved ones and their community.

A total of 86,780,455 doses have been administered in the UK, with 47,091,889 people receiving a first dose (89%) and 39,688,566 people receiving both doses (75%).

Data from Public Health England (PHE) shows COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against hospitalization from the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant. The analysis shows the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is 96% effective, and the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is 92% effective against hospitalization after 2 doses.

The latest data from PHE and Cambridge University shows that around 60,000 deaths, 22 million infections and 66,900 hospitalizations have been prevented by the vaccines.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson
(Continued on page 15)

Finance At Your Fingertips



Moses Ayiku, Jr. MBA OP/ED

Starting A Business: Part 5

Last week we focused on the importance of writing a business plan and the options available for doing so. Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of people that deny the relevance of a business plan. While we can simply say that it is a matter of different strokes for different folks, the reality is that a business plan is simply a basic business tool. One is better off with it than without.

After all, before taking a risk with your time and money, wouldn't you want to have an idea of how much you could be making, the risks involved in that industry, the key marketing strategies used in that industry, pricing trends, customer characteristics what works and what doesn't?

We are all aware that raising money for investments is not easy. It makes sense therefore, to ensure that you have as much information as possible about the business that you are about to enter. A key part of the business plan is the planning aspect. With a good business plan, you would have a step-by-step strategy for getting the business off the ground and ensuring success. As the old saying goes, failing to plan is the same as planning to fail.

We also touched on raising funds for a proposed business. This is definitely one of the most challenging parts about setting up a business. It is not easy and what complicates it even more is the fact that everyone has a different financing profile. We however noted the dominance of self-financing as well as financing through friends and families as a core driver of many new

businesses. They have worked in the past and will continue to work in the future. To get your business started having a great business plan to guide your operations as well as funding are crucial to your success. However, the battle is far from over just because you have financing and a business plan.

The next stage is implementation or the setting up of the business. This must be done well to bring the project to successful fruition. There are several things one has to take care of. One of them is successfully setting up the business so that it starts generating revenue. Equipment, location, personnel, management, banking needs are amongst some of the key set-up issues that need to be resolved.

Years ago, I was approached by a businessman to assist in him relocating his food factory from the U.S. to Ghana. The businessman wanted to take advantage of the Ghana Investment Code, which provided various incentives for businesses to be set up in Ghana. Some of the incentives included reduced or no duty for shipping equipment and other major production inputs.

My client had me write his business plan and I signed a contract making me the financial representative of the client. This meant handling all requests for information from the banks that my client was trying to raise money from to start the business. We encountered very savvy bankers who asked tons of questions. They basically wanted to know whether we had a grip on the business. Through our meetings and business plan, we were able to answer most of their questions. Any questions we couldn't answer were areas we then delved further into to obtain further information. After all, it would only benefit us further to know more about the business.

Suffice it to say we were able to raise about \$1 million in financing. Then we turned our attention to setting up the factory. Indeed, that is where we faced a major challenge that could have derailed the project. The equipment was shipped and when it arrived, we immediately hired engineers upon recommen-

(Continued on page 12)

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CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY
CHAPTER 13 BANKRUPTCY

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

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Belleville	5740	116	5795	116
Bloomfield	5444	124	5498	125
Caldwell	629	16	634	16
Cedar Grove	1588	121	1598	121
East Orange	7320	315	7383	315
Essex Fells	193	2	194	2
Fairfield	896	31	902	31
Glen Ridge	411	13	417	14
Irvington	4882	233	4922	234
Livingston	1895	88	1913	88
Maplewood	1373	37	1388	37
Millburn	840	10	851	10
Montclair	2351	72	2372	72
Newark	37649	1015	37985	1018
North Caldwell	504	6	510	6
Nutley	3102	66	3131	66
Orange	3626	137	3651	136
Roseland	481	16	483	16
South Orange	910	16	923	16
Verona	1012	18	1030	18
West Caldwell	1072	54	1084	54
West Orange	4655	232	4684	232
Total	86573	2738	87348	2743

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of August 11, 2021)

NJ: 920,268 cases / 23,945 deaths (Plus 2,720 probable)

United States (approx.): 36.1 Million / 618,500 deaths

Worldwide (approx.): 204.38 Million / 4.32 Million deaths

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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 - Predawn motorists who use the McCarter Highway part of NJ Route 21 were subjected to predawn delays in the area of Third Avenue Aug. 6 while an overturned tractor-trailer truck there was uprighted and towed away.

A Newark Police Division Traffic Bureau report states that the southbound truck, owned by the Frito-Lay Corp., had lost control while running south on 21 and crossing the Third Avenue intersection at about 4:30 a.m. that Friday.

The truck, in the report, felled a light pole alongside the Exxon Tiger Mart at 1437 McCarter Hwy. and crossed into the highway's northbound lanes. The vehicle flipped onto its passenger side at the Conoco station at 1434 McCarter.

The truck driver, who got out through the cab's passenger door, was not seriously injured. Nor was the driver of a silver four-door car seriously injured after NPD said was struck either by the pole or the truck while at the Exxon station.

The station at 1434 McCarter had recently switched from the Gulf Oil brand to Conoco. The Continental Oil Company was a Midwestern brand until it and Phillips 66 merged in 2002. ConocoPhillips then entered or re-entered the East Coast market.

It is not known whether the Frito-Lay truck was making a local delivery. The truck, which carried a trailer-sized Doritos banner may have reminded passing drivers of comedian-pitch man Jay Leno's 1990s line: "Crunch all you want; we'll make more!"

IRVINGTON - Police officers

here and from Newark converged at their respective North Ward and Vailsburg section borders in response to a shooting report Aug. 4.

Officers found an "unconscious but breathing" man in Vailsburg Park, across Oraton Parkway from 106 South Devine Street 1:15 p.m. that Wednesday with a serious gunshot wound to the head. The victim was rushed to Newark's University Hospital.

NPD, however, took the investigatory lead. The Essex County park and 106 So. Devine St. are a half-block north of the Irvington border. Southbound Devine and Oraton Parkway leads into the Garden State Parkway's Exit 144 toll gate and Irvington's Myrtle Avenue.

EAST ORANGE - A virtual funeral service for retired judge Sherry A. Hutchins-Henderson followed a 9 a.m. walk-through visitation here at Orange's St. Matthew AME Church, her home house of worship, Aug. 11.

Hutchins-Henderson, 62, a city native who was a New Jersey Superior Court-Newark judge for the last 15 years, died Aug. 4. Her 2006 appointment by Gov. Richard Codey and 2013 tenure confirmation peaked a four-decade law career. She and husband Dr. Eugene Henderson, a higher education consultant, retired to West Orange in 2018.

Sherry Hutchins, Clifford J. Scott High School Class of 1977, attained a BA in business administration from Rutgers in 1981 and her Juris Doctorate from the Howard University School of Law in 1984. She was admitted to the New Jersey and Pennsylvania bar associations in 1984 and in Michigan in 1988.

Hutchins first worked as a legal advisor for the US Securities and Exchange Commission in 1984 before becoming vice president at Michigan National Corporation's legal department in 1988. She worked from Newark as an assistant attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office-New Jersey District's criminal division 1992-2006.

Hutchins married Henderson in 1994 and raised Jena Marie Henderson and Halima Henderson. Hutchins-Henderson contributed to the East Orange School District mentoring program, the Girl Scout Council of

Greater Essex and Hudson Counties, the National Black Prosecutors Association and the Association of Black Women Lawyers, among other organizations. She was an East Orange Hall of Fame 2019 Inductee-Enterprise Category.

Sisters Pamela Davis-Duck, Pandora N. Hutchins, Dr. Sonja Hutchins-Eke and Ivy Hutchins-Best are also among her survivors. Parents John and Winnie Hutchins, Deacon and Deaconess of Orange's Ebenezer Baptist Church, predeceased her.

ORANGE - A majority of the City Council - after six months of taking public comment and bill tabling - has banned the establishment of Cannabis-Based Businesses for the next five years Aug. 4. Their 5-2 split vote on the ordinance, pending Mayor Dwayne Warren's signature on or by Aug. 24, will align Orange with Glen Ridge and Nutley as "no-CBB towns" in Local Talk territory.

Ordinance 14-2021, sponsored by North Ward Councilwoman Tency Eason since its March 16 introduction, was carried by Eason, East Ward Councilman/Council President Kerry Coley, West Ward Councilman Harold Johnson, Jr., and at-large councilmen Clifford Ross and Wheldon "Monty" Montague III at about 9:25 p.m. that Wednesday.

Their passage was made before an estimated Council Chamber audience of 20 and an Orange TV/YouTube livestream. Orange TV's Zoom function was down, leaving the public to comment either in writing in advance or by personally attending the meeting.

Coley, speaking for "the majority of the Council," said that Orange's elders had some uncertainties about the state's establishment of CBB regulations. Temporarily banning CBBs into 2026, he reasoned, would give them more time to research the matter.

All municipalities statewide had 180 days from Gov. Murphy's Feb. 22 CBB establishment bill signing to get back to the state to allow (whole or in part) or ban CBBs. Orange Law Department Attorney Avram White, filling in for City Attorney Gracia Montilus, said that the state would impose the six CBB clas-

ses on towns that do not decide by Aug. 22 - but leave them with licensing power.

"The Mayor, at a May 5 Open House (on CBBs) said he would send a revised ordinance; the City Clerk didn't receive it until June 15," said Coley. "A majority of the Council sent the Mayor a list of questions; to this day, we've had no reply. Absent of the input from the Administration, a majority of the Council has come to the end of the road and will vote for the ordinance."

"By a 'majority of the Council,' did you include us?" asked Councilwoman Adrienne Wooten, who also spoke for South Ward Councilwoman Jamie Summers-Johnson. "We weren't included. Just like with the Municipal Budget, this (Ord. 14-2021) is our document. Our job is to legislate - not the (Mayor's) Administration.

Wooten and Summers-Johnson, who held two CBB open houses, voted against the 2021-26 CBB ban bill.

WEST ORANGE - A Funeral Mass for lifelong township resident Craig Waldron, Jr., 30, was held in Verona's Our Lady of the Lake Church Aug. 2.

Waldron was identified by the State Regional Medical Examiner as the driver of the GMC SUV that had gone off the Garden State Parkway and crashed in Bloomfield July 27.

A New Jersey State Police-Bloomfield Barracks spokesman said that the car was heading north on the GSP when it veered left into a wooded area of the center median by milepost 153.7 at 11:15 a.m. July 27.

The vehicle slammed into several trees while going down an embankment, entrapping the driver and causing a fire. Bloomfield Fire Department and local EMS helped with the closing of two northbound left lanes, the extinguishment, and the recovery. Northbound traffic was backed out 3.5 miles out to Exit 150 - Hoover Avenue, Bloomfield.

Waldron, who was born Feb. 24, 1991, was a West Orange High School Class of 2009 graduate who parlayed his 2014 broadcast journalism degree from Penn State University into a profession in pharmaceutical

(Continued on page 15)

SUSPECT IN CUSTODY FOR MURDER OF COLUMBIA HIGH STUDENT

By Walter Elliott

MAPLEWOOD - Authorities announced that they have a suspect in Moussa Fofana's murder and the wounding of a fellow Columbia High School classmate Aug. 6 - two months to the day after the evening shooting here at the Underhill Sports Complex.

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II and Maplewood Police Chief Jim DeVaul said that Thursday that their officers had arrested Yohan Hernandez, 20, of Newark, Aug. 5. Neither Stephens nor DeVaul would say how Hernandez was arrested or what made the Newarker a suspect.

Hernandez is being held in Newark's Essex County Correctional Facility on a count each of purposeful murder, attempted aggravated assault to cause serious bodily injury, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and possession of a handgun without a permit.

Hernandez is accused of shooting Fofana, 18, and a second student-athlete while on the Underhill Field grounds at 9:39 p.m. June 6.

One man, a CHS football linebacker, was treated at Newark's University for "non-life-threatening gunshot wounds" and was released a few days later.

Fofana, a CHS junior and member of the Cougars soccer team, was declared dead at the scene at 10:24 p.m.

Mother Hawa Fofana had enrolled Moussa into Maplewood Middle School after they both settled here in 2014. Although Moussa was born in New York City, he had lived with his grandfather in Liberia for six years.

The loss of the affable soccer player caused the two-town community to raise more than

\$50,000 as a reward for information of the shooter - five times greater than what the Essex County Sheriff's Office crimestoppers.com usually posts.

At least two "Justice for Moussa" rallies and marches were held in June and July. Officials - including Maplewood Mayor Frank McGehee - have consistently reassured the public that Moussa's murder care was the ECPO and MPD's top priority.

Stephens and DeVaul's arrest announcement from the former's Newark office brought a wave of relief that rippled through the Maplewood-South Orange community and was felt as far away as Monrovia, Liberia.

"Today's arrest is the beginning of justice for Moussa," said Mayor McGehee that Thursday afternoon. "I'm thankful that Ms. Fofana can start to have true closure and my thoughts are very much with her at this time. When we spoke earlier today, she was in good spirits. As a community, we'll continue our efforts to support Ms. Fofana and her family."

Dr. Robert Taylor, Superintendent of the South Orange-Maplewood School District, echoed that "sigh of relief" in his Aug. 9 statement. He also thanked the two-town community as well as law enforcement "to see that justice is served for Moussa."

"We thank our South Orange and Maplewood communities: our District staff, students and families; township officials, former Mayor Fred Profeta, and the Board of Education for their support and rallying cry on behalf of the Fofana family.," said Taylor.

The SOMSD superintendent also thanked the Stephens and the ECPO, DeVaul and the

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SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

The Olympic games this year in Tokyo have come to an end, but there was some representation from Essex County. Newark native Ezinne Kalu traveled to Tokyo as part of the Nigerian women's basketball team. She played at Science Park High School, and even became the first player in girls' basketball program history to have a jersey retired, before heading to Savannah State University. While Kalu and Nigeria fell short to Tram USA in Group B, the out up a good fight, only losing 81-72.

This coming week, the National Football League will fully open up its preseason schedule. The annual "MetLife Bowl" will pit the New York Giants against the New York Jets on Aug. 14.

As for New Jersey's high school football teams, summer workouts have begun for local area Essex County teams like the Orange Tornadoes, East Orange Campus Jaguars, Bloomfield Bengals, Irvington Blue Knights and more. It will be exciting to see which area teams improve from last season. This time, conditions willing, there will be fans there to attend the games.

MPD, Essex County Sheriff Armando Fontoura and his officers, FBI-Newark Office and Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch, Jr. and Acting US Attorney Rachel A. Honig and the US Attorney's Office-New Jersey

District "for their support and commitment."

Hawa Fofana also issued the following Aug. 6 statement: "My family felt a great sense of relief this afternoon upon learning of
 (Continued on page 13)



From The Pastor's Heart

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

The Lust For Power

Maybe so much has been going on otherwise, that speaks to the lust for power, that some of the most egregious things are taking place around us that we have not been taking notice. And very likely, we are not alone.

Many seem to be so confounded that they turn off the news because they do not wish to be challenged at this time. I am thinking, for example, of the release of a letter to the News Media that was written by Jeffery Clark, the head of the Justice Department's civil division. During the last days of the Trump Administration, the letter was intended to secure the election for Mr. Trump. It was addressed to Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp (R) and state legislative leaders.

The draft, dated December 28, 2020, claimed that the Department of Justice was "investigating various irregularities" in the presidential contest and that it had "identified significant concerns that may have impacted the outcome of the election." It offered the recommendation that the Georgia legislature "convene in a special session so that its legislators are in a position to take additional testimony, receive new evidence, and deliberate on the matter."

The letter also describes as "consistent with its duties under the U.S. Constitution" as it pertains to the selection of presidential electors. It went on to suggest that an alternative slate of electors - that is, electors for Mr. Trump - might be accepted on January 6, should the legislature demand that happens. Under-

standing that Kemp had already risen to the defense of the results in the state, Clark claimed in the letter that the legislature could simply call itself into session to make that determination.

Since the intentions of the letter were not carried out, what happened on January 6, 2021, in the insurrection in the Capital was the last-ditch effort to secure the presidency for Mr. Trump. For the four years of his administration and even before, Mr. Trump had been stating that the election system was rigged and that votes were being stolen and that he would do all that he could to secure the electoral system. Unfortunately, the most gullible did not understand what he was projecting, and they believed him. Until now, some will not let go of what is called "The Big Lie," that the election was stolen from Mr. Trump and thus the presidency.

Why the mention of the above? I am not just reciting the news, but I wish to draw your attention to the fact that many individuals throughout history have allowed "the lust for power" to draw them to do some of the most despicable things to have their way. They have committed any and every kind of violence to achieve power and stay in power. Do I need to mention the catalog of the contemporary officials worldwide who are in power and whose people are suffering starvation and other kinds of abuses because the lust for power is driving them?

In order not to burden you with the names of contemporaries, let me offer a short note on two of the most unsavory characters recorded in the Bible, namely the two sons of priest Eli (1 Samuel 2:12-25), Hophni and Phinehas, who are called "scoundrels" or "wicked" sons, depending on which Bible translation you read. What is said about them is that they "had no regard for the LORD."

In the performance of their

duties, while the people came to offer sacrifices, and while the sacrifices were being boiled in the caldrons, the sons of Eli would take long forks and take out the best pieces of the meat and claim it as their right to eat. They also would have sexual intercourse with many of the women who came to offer their sacrifices.

When their father, Eli, heard about their activities, he spoke to them but did not remove them from their offices. So, the Lord sent a prophet to rebuke Eli and let him know that his sons would be rejected as priests and that they would be killed. As predicted by the prophet, the day came when war broke out between Israel and the Philistines and the ark of God was taken away, and the two sons of Eli were killed in the battle.

When the news was reported to Eli, he fell backward from the wall on which he was sitting at the gate, broke his neck, and died. His daughter in law, the wife of Phinehas, went into labor, and while delivering her baby, she heard of the news of her husband's death and was only able to utter some last words in the naming of the child, Ichabod, meaning "the glory has departed from Israel."

The final phrase above is an appropriate description of the history of people and nations ruled by the lust for power. That is, many who have lusted for power and have been in their position do not care what happens to them, their nation or the people around them. To satisfy their lusts, they will hurt anyone who stands in their way. To hold on to power, they will subject themselves to any kind of moral pollution, lying, cheating, disposal of friendships, sexual abuse, and any kind of evil behavior.

Concerning the sexual sin that has brought to an end, what is perceived to be the successful career of most powerful characters, I take note of one commen-

tator who reflects on the sons of Eli thus:

"Some who make a high profession do not understand the sin of self-abuse and its sure results. Long-established habit has blinded their understanding. They do not realize the exceeding sinfulness of this degrading sin, which is enervating the system and destroying their brain nerve power.

"Those who have become fully established in this soul-and-body-destroying vice can seldom rest until their burden of secret evil is imparted to those with whom they associate. Curiosity is at once aroused, and the knowledge of vice is passed from youth to youth, from child to child, until there is scarcely one to be found ignorant of the practice of this degrading sin.

"The practice of secret habits surely destroys the vital forces of the system. All unnecessary vital action will be followed by corresponding depression. Among the young, the vital capital, the brain, is so severely taxed at an early age that there is a deficiency and great exhaustion, which leaves the system exposed to diseases of various kinds."

The point of emphasis in the above paragraphs is that certain kinds of practices (lusts) have become so planted through the years of habitual practices that even when people are in high offices, they will still engage in such habits until the habits bring them down into "the pit."

You who read this reflection might not think of yourself in a high office in the land, but how is your character? Can you be trusted with power? Remember that there remains a character test for all of us when we are offered power, and it might not be sexual lusts, but it might be lusts after material things or popularity or power itself. You might just like a high position and will do all, anything evil, to get it and stay in it. Remember these two things: INTEGRITY AND HUMILITY. They are not to be traded.

FINANCE (Continued from page 7)

dation, to install them. After a while, the engineers informed us that the equipment was not compatible and would need to be replaced. This was a real downer for us! Buying new equipment and shipping it would not only raise the cost of the investment, but it would also derail the timeline for when production could start.

We did not want all this. The business-

man spent time and money to determine the challenges in installing the new equipment. Eventually, he was able to find a solution where the engineers had said it was impossible. The equipment was installed successfully under his guidance and production was able to commence.

In the process of setting up your business, do not expect everything to go smoothly. Take all challenges that you face seriously and look for simple and effective tech-

niques to overcome them. Your overall success would be dependent on all of these.

In the next part we will continue with information about starting a new business. Please feel free to share with me your questions and experiences on starting a new business. 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 localtalknews@gmail.com.

SUSPECT IN CUSTODY FOR MURDER OF COLUMBIA HIGH STUDENT

(Continued from page 11)

the arrest in the shooting death of our beloved son. We would like to express our gratitude to law enforcement and to our entire community for their commitment to justice over the last couple of months."

Hernandez's arrest, however, has left a string of questions that may only be answered while the case progresses.

Authorities would not say whether the \$50,000 reward, \$10,000 of which was donated by Profeta, helped detectives find Hernandez.

"The investigation is ongoing," said ECPO spokeswoman Katherine Carter, "but, during the course of this investigation, we received information and leads from the community."

It is too early to know whether Hernandez's arrest will lead to more arrests. Several neighbors and witnesses around Underhill Field said they saw "several juveniles running" after shots were fired.

Whether Hernandez had allegedly targeted Moussa Fofana and/or his classmate - or if the bullets were meant for someone else or no one - is another open question. It is not known as of press time whether Hernandez has found a lawyer.

The SOMSD-owned Underhill Sports Complex is meanwhile getting its security system upgraded. Dr. Taylor, who announced changes to Underhill's security and access July 7, did not specify what the revamping entails.

Underhill neighbors have noticed that its field lights and pathway lights are on all night. Its gates have been locked since July 17 to all except student-athletes in the presence of their coaches.

The work at Underhill comes at the same time that new double-wide classroom trailers have appeared at the nearby Clinton Elementary School. The trailers are part of a district-wide renovation and expansion of its elementary schools paid for by a recent bond issue.

The school renovations and the Underhill security revamping are SOMSD separate projects.

A petition on Change.org is still taking signatures to prompt the two-town school board to rename Underhill as Moussa Fofana Sports Complex.

A Gofundme.com page is also taking donations towards Moussa's funeral expenses.



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LOCAL 108 HOLDS 6TH VACCINATION EVENT

Left to right: Marie Dorelien, Kristen Mucha, Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, Teresa Muse



For the sixth time, Local 108 held a vaccination event to help keep the community safe from COVID-19. As usual, it was held at Local 108's headquarters at 1576 Springfield Avenue, Maplewood, NJ 07040.

This time, it was not widely announced like it usually is, so they had less people on hand for vaccination. However, some of those who showed up came for their second shot, and one also came from Middlesex County, and the staff on site were quite courteous in helping him get vaccinated.

They had COVID-19 testing as well, and limited parking for the event was provided by the Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-

ter Day Saints.

On Aug. 9, the day of the event, Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo dropped by and paid a visit, exciting everyone. Also on hand were Monica Colon, Shelton Thurman, Barbara Lozaw, Marie Dorelien, Kristen Mucha, and Teresa Muse, all from the Essex County Division of Training and Employment - Community Mobile Vaccine.

Now around the neighborhood, people know that Local 108 is a good and convenient vaccination site.

RUTGERS BOARD OF GOVERNORS CRITICIZED AS BEING A "RUBBER-STAMP"

Recommended that new chair be elected

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

When Dr. Troy Shinbrot, the elected University Senate Faculty Representative to the Rutgers Board of Governors, tried to ask why Charlie Kratovil, editor of *New Brunswick Today*, was ruled out of order at the June 22 online meeting, he was shut down by the chair.

According to court documents, there were at least 70 different participants in the online meeting, held via Zoom. Attendees included BOG members; faculty; members of the press; administration and others. No one else except for Kratovil and Dr. Shinbrot were ruled out of order by Board Chair Angelson and then removed or banned.

Court documents show that Kratovil joined the online meeting at 1:00 p.m. and left at 2:26 p.m. Dr. Shinbrot joined the meeting at 1:11 p.m. and was removed at 1:31 p.m. Dr. Shinbrot was unable to rejoin the meeting. This occurred after Dr. Shinbrot asked whether the text

of the items the BOG was about to vote on was remotely controversial. At that point, Board Chair Mark A. Angelson declared Dr. Shinbrot out of order and ordered University Secretary Kimberly Pastva to remove Dr. Shinbrot from the meeting.

Furthermore, per the court documents, Dr. Shinbrot then experienced a disruption in his ability to watch and participate in the meeting, with the Zoom program abruptly removing him. When Dr. Shinbrot tried to re-enter the meeting using access with information he had been provided as a member of the BOG, he found that the Zoom program blocked him from doing so.

At 2:02 p.m., with the meeting still ongoing, Dr. Shinbrot informed the media by letter that he was resigning from the Board of Governors. The outgoing Faculty Representative told the BOG to replace Mr. Angelson "with a member who is aware and respectful of the laws of New Jersey."

Five days later, on June 27, Dr. Shinbrot sent a letter to other Board members criticizing both

the Board chair for his actions and the Board itself for being a "rubber-stamp disconnected from the community."

The full resignation letter reads, "You will have noticed at our last meeting that a Rutgers alum and a local member of the press was censored for requesting the text of motions to be voted on. You will also have noticed that I was expelled from the meeting for asking for an explanation. I appreciate the notes of support from several of you, but ultimately feel that the Board has allowed itself to become a rubber-stamp disconnected from community input. Consequently, I am resigning from the Board.

I remind those of you who have not (yet) communicated your support that Rutgers is a public, state, university that exists based on community goodwill. No part of Rutgers is compatible with censorship, with intolerance toward the press, or with expelling representatives without reasonable cause.

I urge you to resolve, now, to publish motions in advance of votes as requested in public

comment last meeting, and in the future to speak when something obviously, plainly, glaringly wrong occurs in Board meetings."

Dr. Shinbrot is a professor of Biomedical Engineering at Rutgers and a Senator of the Rutgers University Senate.

An earlier resignation letter, sent to media on June 22, states, in part, "The acts by the chair appear to be in violation of the NJ Open Public Meetings Act, which states among other things that "...all meetings of public bodies shall be open to the public at all times. Nothing in this act shall be construed to limit the discretion of a public body to permit, prohibit or regulate the active participation of the public at any meeting."

In view of these facts, and the ongoing and worsening refusal by the chair of the Board of Governors to listen to community input, I am hereby resigning from the Board. I urge other members of the Board to replace the chair with a member who is aware and respectful of the laws of New Jersey."

THE DOCTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 4)

that kids got approval from the CDC to take the vaccine, and even now not all kids can take the vaccine. But there's also the fact that many parents are reluctant to let their kids take the vaccine, considering the relatively high rate of survival among the kids that get the virus. The implication of all of these is that there will always be this lingering fear, at least for the foreseeable future, among parents in

these regions about letting their kids participate in birthdays and similar events.

I don't want to run in circles here. The problem is clear. The solution? I'm clueless at this point. Until a few weeks back, I was quite confident in the ability of our vaccines to marshal the virus and put an end to it for good. Then, the Delta variant came, and things got even more complicated. Now, there are discussions about a third dose when only 51% of the population has been fully vaccinated. There is a whole world of things that could

go wrong before we get the required mark for herd immunity, and if recent trends are anything to go by, luck is firmly on the virus' side.

Notwithstanding, we can still play our parts in ensuring we limit the havoc this virus will cause.

Wear a mask. Get vaccinated. Let's save our birthdays!

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.

References

- <https://yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/p/covid-19-the-worst-birthday-gift>

CUOMO RESIGNS

(Continued from page 1)

In response to Cuomo's resignation, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio released the following statement on Governor Andrew Cuomo's resignation: "Make no mistake, this is the result of survivors bravely telling their stories. It was past time

for Andrew Cuomo to resign and it's for the good of all New York."

"Today closes a sad chapter for all of New York, but it's an important step towards justice," said New York Attorney General Letitia James in a statement. "I thank Governor Cuomo for his contributions to our state. The ascension of our Lieutenant Governor, Kathy Hochul, will

help New York enter a new day. We must continue to build on the progress already made and improve the lives of New Yorkers in every corner of the state. I know our state is in good hands with Lieutenant Governor Hochul at the helm, and I look forward to continuing to work with her."

Despite his resignation, Cuomo remained adamant in his de-

fense, with his attorney suggesting that the office of Attorney General Letitia James tilted the investigation to convict Cuomo rather than search for the facts.

Cuomo's decision to step down was called upon by many in his party, including the likes of NJ Gov. Phil Murphy and President Joe Biden.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 6)

son said: "Our incredible vaccine roll-out has now provided vital protection against the virus to three quarters of all UK adults. This is a huge national achievement, which we should all be proud of.

"It's so important that those who haven't been vaccinated come forward as soon as possible to book their jab - to protect themselves, protect their loved ones and allow us all to enjoy our freedoms safely."

The government is working closely with the NHS to make it as easy as possible to get

a vaccine, including through 'grab a jab' pop-up vaccine sites across the country - for example, at London-based club Heaven last weekend (August 8) as well as football stadiums and festivals up and down the country.

People can make an appointment through the national booking system either online or by calling 119, and can use a vaccination center, walk-in center, or one of the pop-up vaccinations centers that are now in shopping centers, workplaces and high streets.

All adults in the UK are able to get their second doses after 8 weeks. This will mean every adult has the chance to have 2 doses by mid-September.

People will be required to prove they've had 2 jabs to enter nightclubs and other venues where large crowds gather by the end of September.

From August 16, double-vaccinated people will also no longer be required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. People will continue to be advised to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to detect the virus and variants of concern and anyone who tests positive will still be legally required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

sales. He had worked with Curative Laps December 2020-March 2021 in scaling up their COVID-19 testing program-- and went to his last job, with Exact Sciences.

"C.J.," a passionate golfer and NY Giants fan, is survived by parents Craig T. and Kathleen Waldron, grandfathers Dr. Robert J. Waldron and Frank Rauschenberger, sister Paige and brother Jake. Memorial donations may be made to Penn State's thon.org/take-action.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - A Funeral Mass to remember and celebrate the life of David Codey Durkin was held at the village's Our Lady of Sorrows R.C. Church July 31 - where a similar Mass was held for father Raymond M. Durkin in 2014.

Durkin, 50 who died in his Florham Park home July 27, worked the last 18 years as a longshoreman for APM Terminals of Elizabeth. South Orange-Maplewood locals, however, remember "Super Dave" or "D-Man" for his Columbia High School athletics.

Durkin was born Dec. 5, 1970 in Orange's St. Mary's Hospital - and into the Codey-Durkin family of Essex County public servants or politicians.

Father Raymond M. was chairman on the county and state Democratic committees. Brother Christopher would become Essex County Clerk. Gov. Richard Codey was his godfather.

David grew up with Raymond M. and mother Joan Codey Durkin plus brothers Christopher, Raymond, Jr. and Timothy and sister Maureen in Maplewood and went to CHS. The Cougars basketball player particularly excelled in lacrosse, earning All-American honors in his senior year. The CHS Class of 1989 graduate continued to set lacrosse records while at Montclair State University.

Wife Allyson Rhatican Durkin, sons Jack and Ryan and daughters Elizabeth and Claire are also among the ILA Local 1804-1 member's survivors. Funeral ar-

rangements, including a private cremation, were arranged by Codey-Jones, of Caldwell.

Memorial donations may be made to: Seton Hall Prep's "Brendan P. Tevlin '13 Memorial Field Fund, 120 Northfield Ave., West Orange; and/or the Good Vibes & Easy Living Foundation, 25 Lombard Dr., W. Caldwell 07006.

BLOOMFIELD - The report of a township teenager's May 17 sexual assault became public knowledge in a Paterson courtroom after a State Superior Court judge granted an Aug. 3 pretrial detention of a Passaic man.

Judge Marilyn C. Clark granted the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office request to continue holding Eloy Tomay Coyotl, 32, of Passaic in that county's jail without bail until his trial.

Coyotl is accused of pulling the teen into his vehicle while both were on a Bloomfield street May 17. The victim told Bloomfield and Passaic police and PCPO attorneys that Coyotl drove into Passaic - where he committed the sexual assault while in the vehicle.

Bloomfield officers joined their Passaic city colleagues in interviewing the victim and witnesses. The PCPO took the investigation's lead since the sexual assault took place in their jurisdiction. Coyotl, said Passaic County Prosecutor Camelia and Passaic Police Chief Luis Guzman, was arrested without incident July 30.

Cotoyl was charged on a count each of luring, kidnapping, criminal restraint at risk of serious bodily injury to the victim, endangering the welfare of a child with sexual contact, criminal sexual contact, aggravated criminal sexual contact and sexual assault through force or coercion.

Anyone who has any information on the May 17 incident or any other incidents involving the suspect are to call 1(877) 370-PCPO.

MONTCLAIR - Funeral arrangements for longtime township resident Dennis Thomas, better known as Kool & the Gang's "Dee Tee" or "D.T.," have not

been announced as of press time.

Thomas, 70, said a spokesman for the family and the band, had died here at home in his sleep.

Thomas, who was born Feb. 9, 1951 in Orlando before his family first moved to Jersey City. Thomas and six Lincoln High School friends founded what became Kool & the Gang - as the Jazziacs - in 1964. The jazz/R&B group had played as the New Dimensions and Soul Town Review before naming themselves after Robert "Kool" Bell in 1969.

Thomas' contribution to the band was manifold. The alto saxophonist, percussionist and flutist also doubled on sets as the group's master of ceremonies. The band's "budget hawk," carrying the night's proceeds in a paper bag stuffed into his horn was also its wardrobe manager.

Kool & the Gang, with its blend of jazz, R&B, Brazilian fusion and other influences, scored a series of award-winning pop hits 1978-86, including, "Celebration," "Get Down on It" and "Ladies Night." Royalties continued afterward through hip-hop sampling and Hollywood soundtracks.

Thomas, who the band called "the quintessential cool cat of the group, loved for his trendy clothes and hats and laid-back demeanor," last performed with them July 4 at the Hollywood Bowl.

Wife Phynjuar, daughter Tuesday, sons David and Devin, brother Bill and sisters Doris and Elizabeth are among his survivors.



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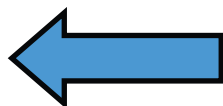
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