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U.S. DROPS FIRST ROUND OF SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA

"IT'S WHO YOU KNOW..." ORANGE CORRUPTION - PART II

President Biden giving remarks at the White House regarding Russia and Ukraine. Photo Courtesy White House

WASHINGTON - With Russia bearing down on Ukraine, the United States of America has followed through on a threat to do something about it.

On Feb. 22, President Joe Biden announced that the U.S. and fellow Western nations were levying strong sanctions on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. The news comes as the Russian Parliament gave their President Putin "permission" to advance the military outside of Russia, and declaring parts of Ukraine as "independent states."

The sanctions handed down are only the first in a potential wave of penalties against the former U.S.S.R. This round, called a "tranche," is focused on two Rus-

sian financial institutions - one of which is heavily involved in funding Russia's military - and Russian sovereign debt, which means that the country can no longer raise money from Western nations and cannot trade debt in U.S. and European markets. Also, sanctions are being imposed on Russian elites, commonly known as "oligarchs," and their family members.

"This is the beginning of a Russian invasion of Ukraine... If Russia goes further with this invasion, we stand prepared to go further as with sanctions," said Biden at a press conference.

"Yesterday (Feb. 21), the world heard clearly the full extent

(Continued on page 7)

By Walter Elliott

ORANGE - "How" corrupt is Orange may lie in its sociology as much as in investigators and a grand jury's findings the past decade.

"Local Talk" remembers a sociology textbook from the late 1970s where the U.S. Navy commissions a new battleship into service. The Navy draws up an organizational chart and personnel from its in-service fleet to populate and operate the new ship.

The new ship's crew, said the textbook, begins to develop the official and unofficial culture even before starting their shakedown cruise.

They, on one hand, learn who are proficient or well-

sued to their job titles. They also learn who are not-so-well suited and how to work around or bypass them despite the organizational chart.

This developmental association process - particularly in appointments, hiring and promotion - spawned the 105-year-old expression, "It's not what you know but who you know."

The developing culture develops a parallel with how strictly the crew goes by the governing rules. Which rules are "strictly by the book," and which are winked at or bypassed, are learned among crew members.

When then-City Council Legislative Research Officer Dwayne D. Warren was elect-

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Turn To PAGE 16



Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The world is getting worse, and life is becoming complicated. The ceasefire on the Cold War may be on the brink of ending. Ukraine has been a political center of war for the past two years. All the news with Ukraine and Russia. First, it was Donald Trump, then it was Rudy Giuliani, then it was Hunter Biden. Now it is Russia. Is getting the U.S. involved a political move for Biden, who wants his son Hunter Biden's case to be quietly pushed to the side? I don't know.

According to Politico in July 2021; "Last summer, federal officials in Delaware investigating Hunter Biden faced a dilemma. The probe had reached a point where prosecutors could have

sought search warrants and issued a flurry of grand jury subpoenas. Some officials involved in the case wanted to do just that. Others urged caution. They advised Delaware's U.S. Attorney, David Weiss, to avoid taking any actions that could alert the public to the existence of the case in the middle of a presidential election." "To his credit, he listened" said a person involved in the discussions, reported here for the first time. Weiss decided to wait, averting the possibility that the investigation would become a months-long campaign issue... Lawmakers from both parties have called for an investigation into Biden's finances, with Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., demanding Attorney General Merrick Garland appoint a special counsel to investigate Biden."

Why is no major media, except Fox News, talking about Hunter Biden, instead all the political connections targeting Trump? We are electing our representatives and senators to work for us, but it is a myth. They all are working for themselves or

their party or their friends and family, in my opinion.

Russia's Parliament approved and gave power to Putin for using force outside of Russia, if needed. Two regions are already under control of rebels. Putin has declared independence for eastern Ukraine, and Russia's military is already in eastern Ukraine. President Biden has issued tough economic sanctions which will impact oligarchs and Russian Banks. The U.K. and 26 other countries joined with Biden to impose the sanctions. Will this slow down Putin's plan to invade Ukraine? I don't think so. As Biden mentioned before, Russia has already made up their minds to invade Ukraine.

Due to redistricting, the Democratic Party has been split in Essex County. As I've heard, District 34 has been impacted big time. Senator Richard Codey (Dist. 27) and Senator Nia Gill (Dist. 34), both long time and popular senators, will be in the same district. So, it will be very interesting as to who party boss LeRoy Jones, as chairman of the

NJ Democratic Party, picks as the choice candidate. Maybe even Britnee Timberlake will join the race for State Senate! Then it will be a 3-way race. We all are curious to see the development for the primary elections in District 34.

In the 2003 primary election, Nia Gill won by over 1,000 votes against LeRoy Jones, running on a Democratic Party ticket with Sheila Oliver and Peter Eagler. Orange, Newark, West Orange, all non-partisan elections (or at least they're supposed to be), will be on May 10, 2022. Make sure you vote, and help the candidate of your choice get elected.

A jury found the three men who killed Ahmaud Arbery guilty on all counts in the federal hate crimes trial. This is a non-prejudiced judgment by the jury in my opinion.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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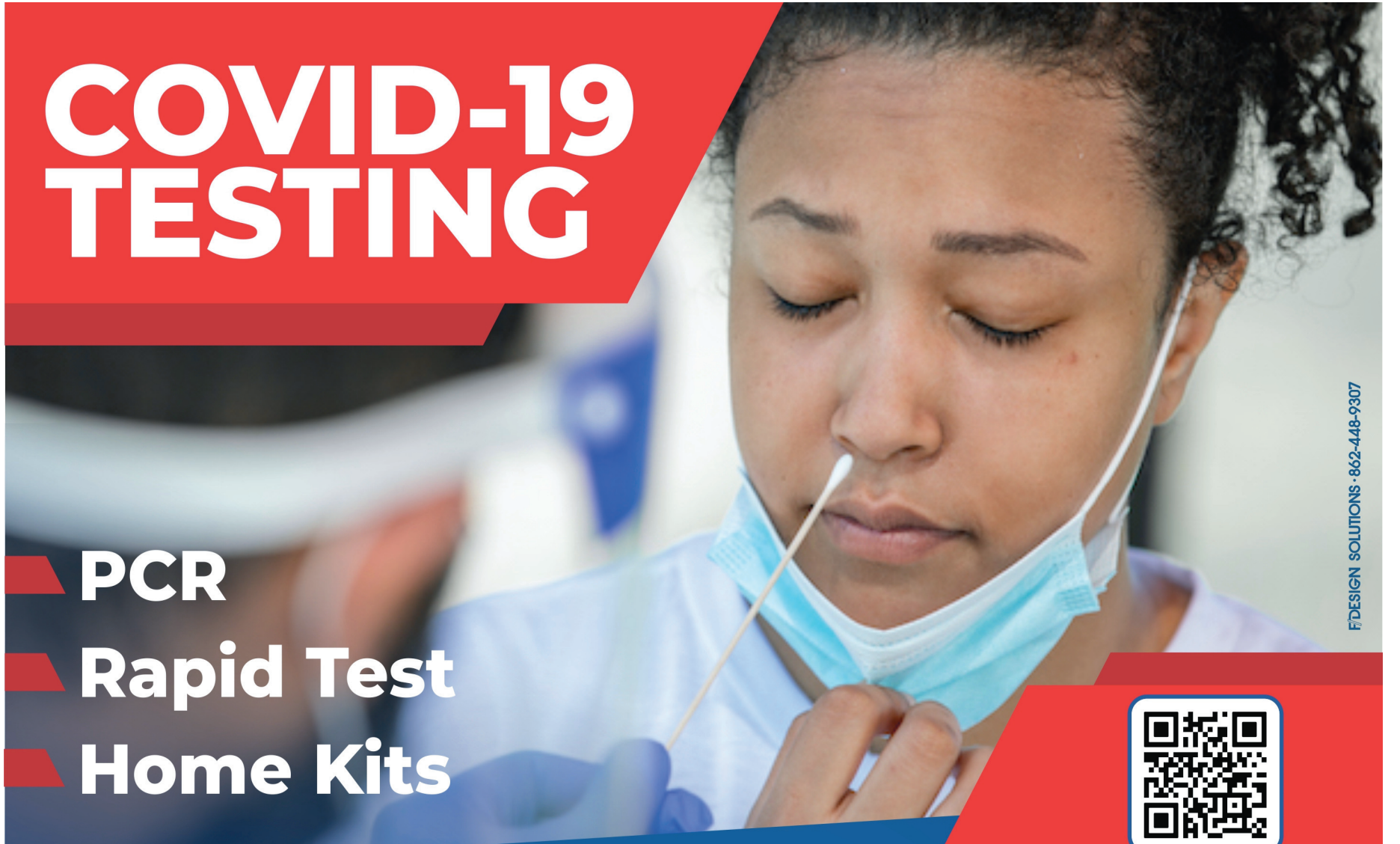
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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

| <u>THURSDAY</u> | <u>FRIDAY</u> | <u>SATURDAY</u> | <u>SUNDAY</u> | <u>MONDAY</u> | <u>TUESDAY</u> | <u>WEDNESDAY</u> |
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The Doctor Is In



Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

Dropping Mask Rules: The New Normal?

The last time I had to write anything about mask mandates, I was fuming. I'm not even joking here. That was when several people around the country started pushing for the mask mandate to be dropped. Some bodies and organizations foolishly obliged, only for us to be met with another upsurge in cases.

Some weeks before that, I had written on how it was far too soon for us to take masks off. Of course, this was due to the perceived feeling that many people were getting tired of the several COVID regulations, particularly the mask mandate. But the time wasn't right then. It was clear for all to see. Well, how about now?

As of Feb. 16, the seven-day average for the number of COVID cases is 129,000. That number stood at a whopping 800,000 a month earlier. It is clear that we are making progress. But don't get your hopes too high because this was also the theme before Omicron burst grandly into the scene. However, I cannot deny that we are making progress, largely due to increasing vaccinations.

But the question still remains - should we start transitioning back into normalcy? According to Dr. Fauci, if cases continue to fall and no new variants arise, the country "could be heading toward what we would consider more normality." Note the critical condition there - if cases continue to fall, and no new variants emerge. That's basically everything our transition into normalcy



hinges on.

There is no "new normal" without cases reducing, and, fortunately, they have been. But we must make sure we don't make the same mistake we made back then and undo all of the efforts we have put into fighting this damn virus. I get that eventually we have to abandon many of these COVID regulations, especially the mask mandate, but the question is when? I don't believe now is the perfect time, particularly for people that haven't been fully vaccinated.

We already established that we can enter into a period of normalcy once cases drop and new variants don't emerge, and you just guess how we can ensure that. Go on; take a wild guess. Of course, we can only prevent cases from rising if we follow the same regulations that have brought us here. We just need to persevere a little longer, but that's easier said than actually done.

Many states are growing tired of waiting for the government to lift nationwide mask mandates, and our own very New Jersey is one of them. Beginning the second week in March, New Jersey will stop requiring students and school employees to wear masks.

Again, I understand the weariness that is fast creeping in with the various mandates, but I believe we should still exercise

patience. Better still, we can reach a consensus where the full guidelines to escaping from these mandates are provided by the government and properly communicated to the public.

The story is a little different for fully vaccinated people. The goalposts are not as restrictive, and there is a greater degree of freedom with the COVID regulations. This is another of the tons of reasons to get vaccinated. That's our only escape route to normalcy.

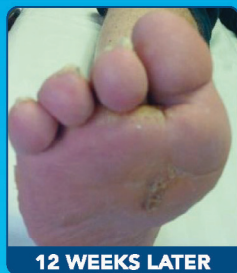
Stay safe.

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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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

The 2022 Essex County Tournament came to a conclusion at Essex County College this past weekend. Montclair Immaculate's girls' basketball team took the crown, thanks to a dominant 32 points and 18 rebounds from Tayla Thomas in a hard fought 67-59 win over the Lady Phoenix of University High School, who got 20 points from Mya Davis. This is the first ECT crown for Montclair Immaculate since 1990.

In the boys' basketball championship game, Seton Hall Prep (20-3) won a record setting 17th title over Central High 60-55. Jackson Bleeker netted 12 points, 4 rebounds and 3 assists in the game, while teammate senior Nick Dunneman had 11 points and 5 rebounds for the champion Pirates.

The Annual NBA All Star Game was won 163-160 by Team LeBron over Team Durant. Stephen Curry won MVP honors thanks to hitting on a rec-

ord 16 three-pointers, which made up 48 of his 50 points, two shy of Anthony Davis' game high record 52 from a few years back.

In other All Star Weekend news, Team Cavs won the Skills Competition, New Jersey native and Minnesota center Karl-Anthony Towns won the Three Point Shootout, and Knicks forward Obi Toppin won a lackluster Slam Dunk Contest. The highlight of the whole weekend in Cleveland was a celebration of the 75 Greatest Players in NBA History, in commemoration of the league's 75th Year.

In NASCAR, rookie driver Austin Cindric won the Daytona 500, while star African American driver Bubba Wallace finished second. Meanwhile, the U.S. Women's Soccer Team won a \$24 million settlement in their quest for equal pay with the men's team. Finally, Yankees legend Paul O'Neill will have his #21 jersey retired this season (that is, if there is a season.)

ORANGE CORRUPTION, PT. II

(Continued from page 1)

ed to succeed Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. as mayor in 2012, he did not look far among his supporters to find his city business administrator candidate.

Willis Edwards III was more than Warren's campaign manager. The former one-term State Assemblyman (D-East Orange, 2001-03) and East Orange Housing Authority Commissioner had studied at NJIT and was an adjunct instructor at Essex County College, among other local colleges and universities.

Edwards and Warren were reportedly fraternity brothers at either University of Massachusetts-Amherst or Rutgers School of Law-Newark.

Edwards was Orange's Business Administrator, "Deputy Administrator" or Mayor's Chief of Staff from July 1, 2012 until he left under New Jersey Superior Court order Dec. 31, 2015. The order, over the propriety of the deputy BA job title, included Edwards paying back \$268,705 in salary.

Edwards, as department head, directed the city's daily operations and applied city policies to various projects. Those projects included modernizing the Orange Public Library, updating the Freddie Pohill Law and Justice Complex and converting the Orange YWCA into the Orange Recreational, Educational and Cultural Center.

It was during those 41 months, and another six months afterward, that federal attorneys and a grand jury said that Edwards had offered and/or accepted bribes and kickbacks on several city contracts. The graft resulted in the city paying for inflated or non-existing goods and services.

The feds' accusations, the result of 5.5-years' search warrants, subpoenas and depositions, have resulted in seven sets of indictments against Edwards and six associates. The former department head, now in Lithuania, Ga., faces 31 counts and, if found guilty and sentenced to the maximum on all, up to 113 years in federal prison.

Four of the other seven - a former OPL director, two con-



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tractors and a tax preparer - have pleaded guilty 2019-20. Two of them are serving or have served their prison terms. One, in his testimony, had named Edwards.

A college term paper writer had pleaded not guilty April 16, 2021. An electrical contractor and mortgage broker has not entered a plea since his Feb. 27, 2020 arrest.

Edwards, as of press time, has not entered a plea since a federal grand jury handed down bills of indictment July 9 and Sept. 20, 2020.

None of the indictments so far nor the continuing investigation have included Warren's handling of Edwards' job positions nor of Edwards' salary during part of those 41 months.

Warren, after the City Council denied confirming Edwards as BA, named him Deputy Administrator and paid him BA-level wages. The DA position, however, is not in the city codebook's table of organization.

The council successfully sued the mayor in N.J. Superior Court-
(Continued on page 11)



ARBERY KILLERS CONVICTED OF HATE CRIMES

UNITED STATES

Following a two-week trial, three Georgia men were convicted today by a federal jury in the Southern District of Georgia for committing hate crimes and attempting to kidnap Ahmaud Arbery, a young Black man who was jogging on the public streets of a Brunswick neighborhood. Two of the men were also convicted of charges that they used firearms during that crime of violence.

Travis McMichael, 35; Travis's father, Gregory McMichael, 65; and William "Roddie" Bryan, 51, were each convicted of one count of using force and threats of force to intimidate and interfere with Mr. Arbery's right to use a public street because of his race.

In addition to the hate crime charges, the defendants were found guilty of attempted kidnapping. Finally, Travis McMichael was found guilty of using, carrying, brandishing, and discharging a Remington shotgun in the course of the hate crime, and Gregory McMichael was found guilty of using, carrying, and brandishing a .357 Magnum revolver.

"Today's verdict (Feb. 22) makes clear that the Justice Department will continue to use every resource at its disposal to confront unlawful acts of hate, and to hold accountable those who perpetrate them," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. "Although we welcome the jury's verdict, the only acceptable outcome in this matter would have been Mr. Arbery returning safely to his loved ones two years ago. No one in this country should have to fear the threat of hate fueled violence. No one should fear being attacked or threatened because of what they look like, where they are from, whom they love, or how they worship. And no one should fear that if they go out for a run, they

will be targeted and killed because of the color of their skin."

Evidence at trial revealed that on Feb. 23, 2020, defendants Travis and Gregory McMichael armed themselves with a Remington shotgun and a .357 Magnum revolver, respectively, and chased Mr. Arbery. The pursuit passed by the home of defendant William "Roddie" Bryan, who did not know Mr. Arbery, but decided to get into his own truck to join the McMichaels in their pursuit of Mr. Arbery. For four to five minutes, the three defendants pursued Mr. Arbery through the neighborhood and tried to box in Mr. Arbery with their trucks. During the chase, Mr. Arbery was running with his hands empty and in plain view. He never spoke a word to the defendants, and never made any threatening sound or gesture; rather, he repeatedly tried to run away from the defendants.

Ultimately, after Mr. Arbery had already changed direction multiple times, trying to escape from the defendants, Travis McMichael got out of his truck and pointed a shotgun directly at Mr. Arbery. When Mr. Arbery tried to defend himself, Travis McMichael shot him in the chest. Mr. Arbery, wounded, grabbed for the gun. During a struggle over the gun, Travis McMichael fired two more shots into Mr. Arbery, who then stumbled a few steps and fell face-first onto the pavement, where he died in the street.

Evidence at trial revealed that the defendants had strongly held racist beliefs that led them to make assumptions and decisions about Mr. Arbery that they would not have made if Mr. Arbery had been white.

The evidence at trial proved that race formed a but-for cause of the defendants' actions on Feb. 23, 2020, meaning that, without that factor, the defendants would not have chased down a Black man whom they assumed, without evidence, was a criminal.

All three defendants face sentences of up to life in prison.

All three defendants were previously convicted in a separate state trial with felony murder and multiple other felonies for their roles in Mr. Arbery's killing. The McMichaels were each sentenced to life imprison-

ment without the possibility of parole; Bryan was sentenced to life imprisonment with the possibility of parole.

The announcement was made by Attorney General Garland, Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, U.S. Attorney David Estes of the Southern District of Georgia, and Acting Special Agent in Charge Philip Wislar of the FBI.

This case was investigated by both the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the FBI, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tara Lyons of the Southern District of Georgia, and Deputy Chief Bobbi Bernstein and Special Litigation Counsel Christopher J. Perras of the Civil Rights Division.

U.K. ENDING COVID RESTRICTIONS

EUROPE

After months of lockdowns and strict regulations, one nation has had enough of COVID life.

On Feb. 21, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson gave a speech to Members of Parliament. During the speech, he made some key announcements about a long term plan for the United Kingdom to deal with COVID-19. While doing so, he wished Queen Elizabeth a speedy recovery, as the monarch herself is recovering from the virus, not long after her son Prince Charles had it.

"...While the pandemic is not over, we have now passed the peak of the Omicron wave, with cases falling, hospitalizations in England now fewer than 10,000 and still falling, and the link between infection and severe disease substantially weakened.

"Over 71 percent of all adults are now boosted in England, including 93 percent of those 70 and over, and together with the treatments and scientific understanding of the virus we have built up, we now have sufficient levels of immunity to complete the transition from protecting people with government interventions to relying on vaccines and treatments as our first line of defense.

"As we have throughout the past two years, we will continue to work closely with the De-

veloped Administrations as they decide how to take forward their own plans, and today's strategy shows how we will structure our approach in England around four principles.

"First, we will remove all remaining domestic restrictions in law.

"From this Thursday, February 24, we will end the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test, and so we will also end self-isolation support payments, although Covid provisions for Statutory Sick Pay can still be claimed for a further month.

"We will end routine contact tracing, and no longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those under 18 to test daily for seven days.

"And we will remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate.

"Until April 1, we will still advise people who test positive to stay at home. But after that, we will encourage people with Covid-19 symptoms to exercise personal responsibility, just as we encourage people who may have flu to be considerate to others...

The plan covers four main pillars:

- Removing domestic restrictions while encouraging safer behaviors through public health advice, in common with longstanding ways of managing other infectious illnesses
- Protecting the vulnerable through pharmaceutical interventions and testing, in line with other viruses
- Maintaining resilience against future variants, including through ongoing surveillance, contingency planning and the ability to reintroduce key capabilities such as mass vaccination and testing in an emergency
- Securing innovations and opportunities from the COVID-19 response, including investment in life sciences

The public is still encouraged to continue to follow public health advice, as with all infectious diseases such as the flu, to minimize the chance of catching

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WORLD NEWS (Cont. from pg. 6)

Covid and help protect family and friends. This includes by letting fresh air in when meeting indoors, wearing a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces when coming into contact with people and washing hands.

W.H.O. UNHAPPY WITH VACCINE OUTREACH

WORLD

The World Health Organization's (WHO) top official in Europe on Feb. 15 called on governments and health authorities to "closely examine" why there is low demand and acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines, as an "Omicron tidal wave" slams countries in the east of the region.

Over the past two weeks, cases of the virus have more than doubled in six countries across Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine, said WHO Regional Director, Dr. Hans Kluge.

"As anticipated, the Omicron wave is moving east - 10 eastern Member States have now detected this variant," he added.

For the eastern nations experiencing the wave, vaccination remains the best defense, he said, but less than 40 percent of those over 60 in Ukraine, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, have had a full course of shots.

"I call on governments, health authorities and relevant partners to closely examine the local reasons influencing lower vaccine demand and acceptance," the top WHO official said, "and devise tailored interventions to increase vaccination rates urgently, based on the context-specific evidence."

Dr. Klug called for four measures authorities need to take, to bring COVID "full under control" and end the acute phase of the pandemic in Europe.

- Maximize vaccine coverage, paying particular attention to those groups where uptake has been poor; coupled with vaccine sharing across borders.
- Help people to minimize the risk to themselves and others, through frequent self-testing, financial and other support for self-isolation, and wearing masks when mixing with other people indoors.
- Scale up access to effective antivirals and other evidence-based treatments in all countries.
- Support health systems to reduce the backlog of treatment resulting from the pandemic and as they plan ahead for a growing burden of so-called 'Long COVID.'

"These critical actions apply to east and west alike," the top WHO official concluded.

Biden and other leaders are still open to diplomatic avenues to resolve the matter. Meanwhile, in support of the sanctions, Germany has stopped all activity on the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline that would have helped Russia bring in a bounty of money by providing natural gas to Western Europe. All 27 European Union member states agreed to the sanctions, providing even more punch.

Of course, for every action, there is a reaction, and Russia is more than capable of retaliation.

"In addition to higher prices at the pump, it is not a matter of if, but surely when, the U.S. and/or other Western allies are subjected to Russian cyberattacks," said "Local Talk" Content Editor Kristopher Seals.

U.S. SANCTIONS RUSSIA

(Continued from page 1)

of Vladimir Putin's twisted rewrite of history... As I said last week, defending freedom will have costs for us as well and here at home. We need to be honest about that. But as we do this, I'm going to take robust action to make sure the pain of our sanctions is targeted at (the) Russian economy, not ours.

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CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY CHAPTER 13 BANKRUPTCY

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

| Municipality | 2-16-2022 | Deaths | 2-23-2022 | Deaths |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Belleville | 10248 | 143 | 10357 | 144 |
| Bloomfield | 11355 | 152 | 11432 | 155 |
| Caldwell | 1443 | 17 | 1450 | 17 |
| Cedar Grove | 3553 | 131 | 3562 | 131 |
| East Orange | 16710 | 368 | 16747 | 370 |
| Essex Fells | 446 | 2 | 448 | 2 |
| Fairfield | 1832 | 35 | 1842 | 35 |
| Glen Ridge | 1071 | 18 | 1079 | 18 |
| Irvington | 11496 | 274 | 11523 | 277 |
| Livingston | 5586 | 100 | 5624 | 100 |
| Maplewood | 4397 | 46 | 4414 | 46 |
| Millburn | 2860 | 17 | 2915 | 17 |
| Montclair | 5937 | 84 | 5968 | 84 |
| Newark | 76710 | 1200 | 76887 | 1211 |
| North Caldwell | 1150 | 10 | 1158 | 10 |
| Nutley | 6092 | 80 | 6138 | 80 |
| Orange | 7905 | 163 | 7936 | 164 |
| Roseland | 1255 | 21 | 1260 | 21 |
| South Orange | 2876 | 21 | 2888 | 21 |
| Verona | 2949 | 22 | 2962 | 22 |
| West Caldwell | 2423 | 60 | 2426 | 60 |
| West Orange | 12135 | 262 | 12170 | 262 |
| Total | 190429 | 3226 | 191186 | 3247 |

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of February 23, 2022)
NJ: 1,867,368 cases / 29,840 deaths (Plus 2,960 probable)
United States (approx.): 78.695 Million / 940,800 deaths
Worldwide (approx.): 428.823 Million / 5.914 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 - The Newark Police Division continues to mourn the loss of 21-year Off. Waldemar Arocho, going by the mourning bunting still up in front of the Donald M. Payne, Sr. Police and OEM Headquarters as of Feb. 17. The headquarters, in the South Ward, is also the NPD Fifth Precinct where Arocho, 42, was last assigned.

Arocho had also been assigned to NPD's North, West and Central wards' narcotics units since being sworn onto the force Aug. 1, 2001. Newark Public Safety Director Brian O'Hara said that Arocho had died in University Hospital Jan. 31 of "an illness unrelated to his job."

Waldemar Arocho was born in Mayaguez, P.R. and lived there until parents Wilfredo and Carmen moved here in 1988. He had graduated with the 107th Newark Police Academy Recruit Class.

Capt. Rasheen Peppers, who retired as Fifth Pct. Commander Feb. 1, recalled one of the times Off. Arocho went the extra step when UniverSoul Circus came to Weequahic Park last autumn. He raised money among his colleagues, said Peppers, so that "local kids without addresses can buy refreshments and souvenirs with their free tickets.

Brothers Wilfredo (Jr.) and Richard also joined "Newark's finest." Son Angel Arocho, 18, daughter Narirahiz Vega, 22, are also among his survivors.

Arocho's remains were interred at North Arlington's Holy Cross Cemetery, after a Funeral Maas at St. Lucy's Church here, Feb. 8.

IRVINGTON - Township fire inspectors are investigating three separate blazes that displaced at least 26 people among nine days here Feb. 12-20.

An IFD incident commander

needed to pull a second alarm upon arrival at a fire at 109 Berkshire Place Feb. 20. One person was taken to a local hospital for an unspecified injury. The 2.5-story wood frame house was seriously damaged.

IFD units responding to a fire at 77 Park Place 2:19 a.m. Feb. 14 found the top floor of the four-story brick apartment building ablaze. While "Irvington's bravest" kept the flames from reaching adjacent buildings, its spread to the roof via the cockloft made it a stubborn fire to quench.

The building's 24 occupants were temporarily housed by the local American Red Cross chapter.

Township firefighters promptly rescued two residents who were trapped while 11 Ellis St. was ablaze 10:10 p.m. Feb. 12. They saw the pair as well as flames coming from the second of the wood frame house's 2.5 stories.

Rescuing firefighters turned the duo to arriving EMS technicians who then took them to Newark's University Hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening smoke inhalation.

IFD units brought the house's two-alarm fire under control shortly afterward.

EAST ORANGE - A city resident and practicing attorney is calling for banning carotid artery neck restraints and chokeholds be barred from citizens' arrests after a recent incident in an Atlantic City pharmacy.

Tracey Cosby was in one of two of Atlantic City's Walgreens when she saw two Caucasian men making a citizens' arrest by "slamming a homeless elderly, mentally ill man of color onto the floor." One man, wearing a black coat, pinned the person's right hand and the other, in a green coat, put one of his knees on the subdued's neck.

Cosby - former municipal judge for two towns and previously president of the NAACP Branch of the Oranges and Maplewood - began recording the pinning just before the man on the floor began to shout, "I can't breathe." The man in green shouted to the bystanders, "Can you tell them (the police) to hurry up?"

Cosby identified herself as an attorney, called for the police and told the man in green, "He can't breathe, you're on his neck - he could die."

The attorney said the man in green spewed epithets at her, including, "liberal." He did not let

up on the prone man's neck until he noticed Cosby's cell phone.

ACPD officers arrived to take the pinned man into custody. Customers said that he tended to make threatening words and gestures; some questioned his sanity.

The officers, said Cosby, "seemed to have been informed that the vigilantes were law enforcement - although they were not." It is not known whether the subdued man was charged with anything. The man in green and man in black remain at large.

ORANGE - "Orange's bravest," with the help of colleagues from eight towns plus the Orange Police Department and DPW, put out a fire that ripped through a longstanding South Ward auto body shop here Feb. 15.

The first OFD units, dispatched to Fine Finishes Body and Fender Collision at 11 p.m. that Tuesday, found "a fire with small explosions" within 617 Scotland Rd. The battalion chief pulled a second "all OFD hands" alarm and a third for mutual aid.

Home fire units began evacuating adjacent buildings and attacked the blaze from Scotland Road and Beach Street until Montclair and Millburn brought their latter trucks.

Both "MFD": units directed their aerial cannons on the L-shaped building's roof. Heavy embers, however, threatened to set fire to the roofs of 613 Scotland Rd. and 518 Beach St.

Additional units from Montclair, South Orange, Maplewood, West Orange, Irvington and Belleville were also supplied mutual aid Nutley HazMat was called in due to paint and other chemicals inside the shop. Its smoke wafted across the Orange/West Orange Valley into Montclair and Glen Ridge.

OPD units rerouted all traffic between Tremont and Heywood avenues; buses on NJTransit's No. 92 and CoachUSA's No. 44 routes were among the detoured. DPW trucks spread salt on adjacent streets to minimize freezing.

WEST ORANGE - Township residents who remember Christina Yuna Lee, 35, joined those from Millburn, Manhattan and elsewhere in celebrating the music platform producer's life and her Feb. 13 violent murder.

Past and present township residents remember the Lee who went to Pleasantdale (now Kelly) Elementary and Roosevelt Middle schools through her freshman year at West Orange High Schools.

Those here and in other states said Lee was artistic, creative, caring and kind. Lee's family, however, moved to Millburn before her sophomore year.

The Rutgers University graduate - who previously worked for an NYC art gallery, Tom's Shoes and Marriott - became the senior creative producer for the online music platform Splice. Lee moved into a sixth-floor walk-up apartment at 111 Chrystie St. in Manhattan's Chinatown from New Jersey last year.

Street security recordings show Lee being dropped off by a ride-hail driver 50 feet before her front door 4:20 a.m. that Saturday. A man came out from a nearby alcove and quietly followed her up all six flights of stairs and pushed both of them into her apartment while she was unlocking the door.

Responding EMS technicians told arriving NYPD officers that they had to break down the barricaded door and found Lee with more than 40 stab wounds to her torso and signs of a struggle. Lee was declared dead at the scene.

They also found the suspect, who also suffered stab and struggle wounds, hiding under Lee's bed. They also found a bloodied kitchen knife. The suspect, 28, is being held on murder charges - but, as of press time, not as hate crimes.

A capacity St. Michael's Catholic Church, sanctuary of mourners witnessed or participated in Lee's Korean language Funeral Mass Feb. 18 in Palisades Park. A GoFundMe.com has been established to start a Lee memorial fund for the likes of SafeWalk escorts and urban open spaces. Runners have been taking one-mile fundraising laps past 111 Chrystie St. Feb. 21 and the next 34 Mondays in her honor.

SOUTH ORANGE - A village resident, as of Feb. 16, learned that a Presidential pardon does not shield him from similar state-level charges.

Ken Kurson, 53, took a plea bargain in New York State Court Feb. 16 by confessing to a count each to misdemeanor computer trespass and attempted eavesdropping.

Manhattan Criminal Court Judge Josh Hanshaft accepted the plea on the condition that Kurson performs 100 hours' community service leading to the charges being downgraded to harassment.

"The defendant is to lead a law-abiding life," said Judge

(Continued on page 12)

ORANGE CORRUPTION, PT. II

(Continued from page 5)

Newark in 2014. The Superior Court Judge ordered Edwards to leave the city government Dec. 31, 2015. A later judge ordered Edwards to pay \$268,705 in restitution; Edwards, however, had entered Chapter 13 bankruptcy.

Warren had Edwards finish out his time in City Hall as his chief of staff.

Edwards, earlier in his office, knew Franklyn D. Ore by way of the Orange Board of Education and Warren.

Warren had appointed Ore, now 51, to the board - only to dismiss him when Ore still lived in Jersey City.

Edwards had advanced contractor Ore money so the latter can incorporate Urban Planners. The department head, in 2015, had the city's contracted planner, The Nishuane Group, of Montclair, hire UP to join in the city's Central Avenue Redevelopment Area project.

Ore sent phony invoices to Edwards and Nishuane for work that was never done. Nishuane, out of its \$15000 contract with the city, cut \$33,220 in checks to UP August 2015-February 2016. Edwards then allegedly received kickbacks from Ore/UP.

Edwards, before leaving City Hall, informed Ore that there still was some of the city's discretionary funds left before Dec. 31, 2015. Ore/UP sent a phony \$16,000 invoice for "services" in the city's YWCA/Orange REC Center study. Some of that \$16,000 allegedly went back to Edwards.

Ore, as UP, and Edwards supposedly tapped into a \$50,000 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant that was given to OPL via Essex County. HUD and the county awarded the library after the latter had applied for a Saturday Literacy Program.

Edwards, on Ore's behalf, sent a \$36,000 bill to the library. The check the library sent was split between Ore and Edwards.

The Saturday Literacy Program, however, never took place. Essex County got the \$50,000 grant back years later.

The HUD grant's misuse made this a federal case. The U.S. Department of Justice-New Jersey District, the FBI and IRS's Newark field offices and the HUD Inspector's General Office have been involved since their serving search warrants on City Hall and/or the library July 22, 2016, Jan. 11, 2017 and Nov. 29, 2018.

Ore had pleaded guilty Jan. 13, 2020 to a count each of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and aiding and abetting the fraud of an organization that uses federal funds. He is serving an up to 20-year prison sentence.

Timur Davis, who was twice OPL director, had pleaded guilty to making false statements to HUD Feb. 13, 2020. Davis, who has had professional contact with Edwards 2012-17, faces maximums of a years' imprisonment and a \$100,000 fine.

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Davis confessed to falsifying the SLP paperwork and for signing an invoice for a \$49,000 HUD grant-funded HVAC chiller that never made it to OPL.

Two federal indictments said that Edwards, Davis and Shenandoah "Shane" Adams had conspired to file false job quotes in two other vendors' for the OPL chiller replacement contract March 11, 2015. Adams' VH Electrical and Plumbing LLC, as "lowest responsible bidder," was awarded the contract.

Adams also sent false progress reports on the chiller's replacement. Adams, as VH, was paid \$40,000 from the HUD Community Development Block Grant.

Adams, a principal of Adams Property Management and Investment Group, and Edwards were also charged with filing a false mortgage modification application April 7, 2014.

Edwards, on the form, said that his City

Hall job was his only income source - leaving out his \$45,000 salary as an adjunct instructor for "a New Jersey County College." Adams signed onto the application's authenticity.

Edwards and Adams entered a Home Affordability Modification Agreement Oct. 8, 2014. This pact led to \$95,590 of debt forgiven in July 2015 and the July 2017 removal of Edwards' Eat Orange property from the foreclosure rolls.

Adams was arrested Feb. 27, 2020 on six counts of wire fraud and two mortgage fraud counts. (The second, separate mortgage count involves qualifying a mortgage for an "Orange Individual No. 1.") He faces 20 years' federal imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

Computer service vendor Jeammari Zahore, 56, of Rahway, and Edwards knew each other via the then-East Orange General

(Continued on page 15)



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

The Curse On The Family

I do not know if you have observed it, but I am D. Robert Kennedy, and I bear part of my father's name, Robert N. Kennedy. But there is a curious reason that I started to use my second name in 1969 rather than my first name.

Presidential contender Robert F. Kennedy had died in 1968, and as I traveled in North America as a book salesman, I found the name worked for commercial reasons. Besides my complexion, many people assumed that I was connected to the late Robert F. Kennedy, and often enough, the question "How did you get that name?" surfaced. At such times I would let them know that it was my father's name, and then I would introduce my reason for being at their door as a salesman.

Let me not say more on the curious reason I used the name, but when my wife and I had our first son, we named him Robert D. Kennedy (Robert III). And he named his first son Robert I. Kennedy (Robert IV). Robert IV says that if he has a son, he will name him Robert V because the name has a lot of significance to him.

He thinks that we are certainly blessed. I affirm him, although, at times, I wish we had a little more resources to bring the comfort we need in this world. But on deeper reflection, I have to admit that we are truly blessed. That was how my father would say it before his passing away a few weeks before his 105th birthday. If we would say, "God is good!" he would respond, "No, God is better than good; God is great!"

Despite the financial limitations when we were growing up,

as a family, we are thankful that we have not suffered the kinds of calamities that have led many persons to argue that there seems to be something called "the Kennedy curse."

The Kennedys of Massachusetts, whose prominence and power have transformed the American landscape, have been said to be under a curse. "The Kennedy Curse" refers to a series of premature deaths by accidents, assassinations, and other calamities involving members of the Camelot family.

Researchers have raised the question of who might have put a curse on the family? A book released by Les Williams, "The Kennedy Curse: Shattered," claims that there is no Kennedy curse but simply an overpowering patriarch who pushed his children to extremes.

Williams states his claim thus: "Joe Kennedy (who) raised his children to believe that they were better than anyone else and that they had to win, every time and at any cost. His obsessive, driving ambition would influence the decisions his children made, and the way they lived their lives and this controlling, overbearing approach would have disastrous consequences for the family over the years."

Some individuals have argued that there is no real reason to think there is a curse or an answer for the exact person to have cursed the family if such a curse existed. On the other hand, others had argued that there is a curse and that it began when father Joe Kennedy, the family's patriarch, and his wife Rosemary, the matriarch, of the family, decided to submit their young Rosemary Kennedy to an experimental brain surgery that went drastically wrong. (*Collman, Ashley. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3332512/Rose-Kennedy-talks-daughter-s-lobotomy-banning-crying-cursed-clan-weigh-children-week-recently-uncovered-interview.html>*)

They wanted her to be as per-

fect as they thought their other children were, but due to her brain condition, she was not to be, and they were going to force her to be. The brain surgery made her worse than she had been, and there goes the curse for many.

I am not interested in the curse on the Joe and Rose Kennedy family. But it has been argued that there are many families in which one might trace incidences and coincidences in ways that make it seem that there is what many social scientists have named "Generational curse."

A generational curse has been described in different ways. One description states that the term **generational curse** refers to a negative cycle of behavior patterns, practices, or mindsets transmitted from generation to generation. Another states that a generational curse is believed to be passed down from one generation to another due to rebellion against God. So if your family line is marked by divorce, incest, poverty, anger, or other ungodly patterns, you are likely under a generational curse.

My take on the generational curse is that all of us in the families of the earth are under a generational curse. The reason is that the Scripture makes clear that all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We were conceived in iniquity and brought forth in sin from our mother's womb (Psalm 51:5).

That says we inherit many traits and preferences from our parents that aren't always a positive influence on ourselves or others. When we acquire a sinful habit or belief that negatively affects our lives or those around us, this is known as a generational curse. It is the shadow side of behavior passed down through the generations. We read in the Proverbs that "The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the home of the just. (Proverbs 3:33 NKJV)

However, if you are feeling frightened and frustrated about the reality of the generational curse,

let me make you aware that the Scripture is clear that where there is **the generational curse**, there is also **the generational cure**.

Here is one note of it from the writings of the apostle Paul, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because all sinned... For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.¹⁶ And the gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification.¹⁷ For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:12-21 NKJV)

What sweet assurance. No family on the earth has to continue under any curse, for God has offered a cure. If you are ready for a deep dive in biblical studies, look at the story of families in the book of Genesis and notice how God sought to break the curse in the families of Adam by the birth of his third son, Seth. Then the effort was followed by the birth of Enoch, and the righteous Lamech the father of Noah, who built the Ark in which his family was saved. After the Flood, the effort continued with the calling of Abraham to whom God made the promise that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed.

Yes, the curse upon families can be cured, if someone in the family is willing to make the critical decision of bringing the family under the merciful hand of God. If you want your family curse to be cured, seek the Lord, call upon his name, obey his commands, and worship him and him only. (Deuteronomy 6:13; Luke 4:8)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

Hanshaft to the former "New York Observer" editor.

Kurson had been accused by state and federal attorneys of attaching spyware onto his then-wife's computer to monitor her Facebook and Gmail accounts

September 2015-March 2016. He allegedly sent transcripts of her online conversations with a friend, a summer camp employee, to the camp's director.

What started out as a criminal complaint by the wife to South Orange police led to Kurson's separate arrests and arraignment at federal and state courts. The friend of Donald J. Trump's son-in-

-law Jared Kushner received a Presidential pardon from Trump in his last days in office.

MAPLEWOOD - A former NJTransit driver, in New Jersey Superior Court-Newark's Chancery Part filings has accused a Maplewood-Hilton Bus Garage supervisor threatened to fire her if she did not have sexual favors

with him.

The driver said that the supervisor called her into his office in 2010 to discuss her latest accident when he allegedly offered, "You take care of me and I'll take care of you," in order to make the latest accident go unreported.

What the driver's attorney called "leveraged coercion" led to
(Continued on page 14)

STUDENTS ALLEGE DISCRIMINATION IN RUTGERS UNIVERSITY STUDENT ASSEMBLY

PART II

By Lev D. Zilbermints

Student Representative to Board of Governors describes discrimination in RUSA

According to the Daily Targum, the student newspaper of Rutgers - New Brunswick, Malachi Sutton, a School of Arts and Sciences junior, senator in the RUSA and student representative to the Rutgers Board of Governors, released a statement on January 23 alleging that the Assembly perpetuates discriminatory practices towards minority groups.

According to the Daily Targum, Sutton said that while the organization has allowed them to advocate for marginalized groups within the student body, the organization itself breeds elitism and discrimination against minorities implicitly and explicitly.

Sutton told the Daily Targum that they identify as a Black Queer Muslim. According to Sutton's remarks to the Targum, they spent three years in the Assembly. During this time, they participated in committees, wrote bills and serve in the University Senate and Board of Governors. Sutton stated that their expertise was overlooked by other members of the Assembly because of their racial identity.

According to the Daily Targum of January 24, 2022, during the Spring 2021 semester, Sutton applied for the Big Ten liaison position within the Assembly, and was offered an interview, according to their statement. Per Daily Targum, they said they were told by their interviewer that although they had the qualifications for the position, they did not have the right connections for it. Per the Daily Targum, they were offered the athletics coordinator position instead, despite them lacking knowledge of University sports and connections to the Rutgers Athletics administration, they said.

Sutton told the Daily Targum that there was a lack of African-American representation in the Assembly. This led to racism.

"At the time, I tried not to think much of it, but in hindsight, it merely came down to me being one of the only few African-Americans within (the Assembly). I was notified that my selection for athletics coordinator was still met with hesitancy from

some executive board members because I was deemed to be 'unqualified,'" Sutton told the Daily Targum.

According to the Daily Targum, Sutton said they made the decision to leave the RUSA executive board sometime around August 2021 as a result of the board's aggression toward people of color and queer identities, including Ribau and former Assembly Secretary Andrea Jimenez, a School of Arts and Sciences senior.

These allegations were but the tip of the iceberg. According to the Daily Targum, Malachi Sutton experienced gestures and remarks of discrimination during various Rutgers events.

According to the January 24, 2022 Daily Targum, Sutton described an instance where a student representative touched their hair without permission while asking about their "ethnic background." They said they have not received any apology from the representative since the experience.

The above description can be qualified as ethnocentrism, or discrimination towards a certain ethnic group.

According to the January 24, 2022 Daily Targum, Sutton said that they witnessed current and former Assembly representatives make condescending remarks about Black students and community advocates during events such as Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) town hall sessions.

Sutton told the Daily Targum, "All sorts of insults were targeted towards their grammar and use of language, following the questioning of how 'practical' their questions were towards RUPD. Keep in mind that these events occurred during 2020 at the height of the (Black Lives Matter) protests and George Floyd's death."

Finally, according to the Daily Targum, Sutton identified themselves as one of the individuals who had been continually misgendered by members of the Assembly despite Ribau's attempts to correct others. According to the Daily Targum, they said these incidents all contributed to their fear of publicly identifying with their sexuality and gender as well as their fear of speaking up about instances of discrimination.

RUSA President Nikhil Sadaran-gey's statement on the events of 1/17/2022

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"Local Talk" reached out to Jason Yu, the Internal Affairs committee chair of the Rutgers University Student Association. A response was received February 2 via email. Yu directed Local Talk to a January 22 statement issued by RUSA President Nikhil Sadaran-gey on Instagram. The statement, transcribed from Instagram is given below in its entirety.

"As many of you have read by now the Rutgers University Student Association is facing an unprecedented time. In the past week, our executive board has seen multiple resignations, accusations of mis-gendering and the use of racial epithets and multiple public statements. As president of the Assembly, I am writing to address these issues.

"For those unaware, the RUSA is the undergraduate student body of New Brunswick. Our goal is to represent students, create policy and work with the administrators to improve the student experience. The events of the past week have hindered that.

"First, I am disheartened to see members of our executive board resign. It is incumbent on any student leader to take care of their people, and the events of this week have caused me to consider ways in which I and my successors can ensure that resignation is the last option for students, not the first. My first step in doing so is the issuing of an executive order requiring the student body president to conduct periodic check-ins with members of the executive board for the purpose of addressing concerns they might have about the culture of the organization.

"Second, the use of racial epithets is unacceptable in any context. However, at this current time, the only account we have of said member using a racial epithet is a second-hand account from a student not enrolled at Rutgers. I am working with our Internal Affairs committees to appoint an investigator to collect more information regarding the incident in an organized and documented manner."

Yu also issued a statement of his own.

Statement by Jason Yu, Internal Affairs Committee Chair, RUSA

"As we stated before, RUSA and IA [Internal Affairs] do not tolerate any usage of the n-word, racism, or homophobia in the student government. A formal complaint has been raised through the ethics process of the Assembly and we've already opened up an inquiry with a special in-

(Continued on page 15)

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

EXPERTISE APPETIZER

Screams of Silence

What is black noise? Black noise is a type of noise where the dominant energy level is zero throughout all frequencies, with occasional sudden rises; it is also defined as silence. Silence has a sound, and with it, a measurable, transformable power...

It takes a very keen ear to hear noise beneath the silence, and it takes even more so developed ears to decipher that noise weather, baring tones of white or void of its color. I thought, what better way to enhance the experience of being entertained no matter which guise it's shadowing under than to aid in the art of listening.

Television or radio static, a whirring fan, the hum of an air conditioner, or the hiss of a radiator combined with the right maestro can be the perfect ingredients to conjure up tasteful melodies. Although when isolated, some might be clever enough to distinguish tonal frequencies on cue.

But, when combined, those

techy sounds become a recipe for disaster as they clash, becoming bare of identifying markings. But not for this guy.

**Daniel Laporte, DML Studios -
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Recording Studio
Designer/Construction**



An audio engineer helps to produce a recording or a live performance, balancing and adjusting sound sources using equalization, dynamics processing, and audio effects, mixing, reproduction, and reinforcement of sound. (Wikipedia)

"Thirty-five years and counting. As a Producer, I oversee everything in terms of the music and, in my case, the record. It is my job to guarantee that everything is perfect before going out. In this day and age, the producer is whoever is creating the music. So the person who is producing doesn't have to touch the music at all. They oversee the project. The Engineer component is the hands-on part of the art of recording itself, recording, sequencing on the computer, and so forth. Mixing is when I get files, and I balance them to radio standards.

"I have been a musician for most of my life. Both my parents were Musicians. When we moved to the Bahamas, we moved into a house, and there was a piano there, and I just started playing. I

had a sense of music notes naturally. I was around seven years old then.

"Now, I am a Pianist by trade. But, if I were really to consider myself one, I'd do it every day. I don't use the piano as much now. I have a few things that I have to sit and play and arrange but mainly, I engineer every day. I only play when I have to, so I'm not!

"I still master and mix for the industry. Most of the plaques I own, the platinum and the gold, are for engineering and production. The first high-profile type that I worked with on a project, I believe, was Raven-Symone. I worked on her rap album back when she was a little girl. She had just started The Cosby Show. I did Cuba Gooding; hopefully, I'm not skipping anyone. I believe both of them were brought in by Eddie Saunders. Around that time, I also did work with Kurtis Blow. Those were the earlier ones. When I work with celebrities, I never get hyped up.

"We just chill 'cause they are regular humans, and it's about the work, ya know. You learn from them because they all have something good to say. You learn so much. I learned a lot from George Benson. That's a real cool cat right there. I got credit from his album as well. As far as the big acts of today, you learn a lot from them too. Like the way they are as far as trends are concerned, how to prepare for something that may show up, so you'll know what to expect, especially if you're about to groom an artist. You get that insider information. They tell you a story about this or that executive.

"But, the thing that sticks with me the most is that the people you think are not going to make it, make it, and the ones you think are going to make it didn't make it. What that did was it made me

more chill. In other words, you don't know. When I first worked with Chris Brown, I thought it was going to be a waste of time. Shay was the one that brought him in. I didn't think he was going to make it. I didn't like his voice. I was like, 'Yeah that's wack.' I also felt the same way about Lauryn Hill. I was telling 'Clef, 'Yo, I don't know about this chick right here. Her voice is crazy.'

"That little part you learn a lot from is prejudging something because there's a template in your head on how things are supposed to sound, but you don't know how it will turn out, and that's when you learn more about an artist. It is not just about their talent, but they have magic. Once you see that magic, that's the main thing that will come up front. If they can convey that, they have a better chance at becoming a superstar.

"I think that's what you should look for before you look for talent or say this person can sing. Because if it were about great singers, the industry would be all Gospel. We all know it's not about that; it's about the magic, and that's what we have to pay attention to more. Look, but it is more like the way it feels. If you're a person that can actually sense something...

Remember, due to space this article can be read in its entirety on our website: www.localtalk-weekly.com. You can search Observation Booth Section on the search bar, or you can go directly to the Entertainment section which is found on the home page on the far right under Categories.

If you are interested in participating in one of the challenges or projects or if you have any questions or comments, send them to: localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 12)

the driver and her supervisor having sexual encounters in his personal car and in a parked bus. Those trysts ended when the driver told the supervisor's wife.

Word of the said favors got out to her colleagues, however, by then. Other garage employees began harassing her, including a forced touching incident by a regional supervisor. She called the Employee Assistance Program but "no reasonable action was taken." She eventually resigned under the hostile work environment in 2011.

The driver, who was hired by NJTransit in 2007, had been on notice by the bus operations and personnel departments in 2010 that she was liable to lose her job on the basis of her

previous accidents.

The driver and her lawyer filed the complaint for unspecified damages and "corrective action to stop and prevent sexual assault and missed conduct in the workplace." The suit was filed on November 2021 - within the two-year extension of limitations regarding sexual assault signed by Gov. Phil Murphy in 2019.

NJTransit, the nation's largest statewide public transit carrier, citing ongoing litigation and personnel issues, declined comment on the publicized filing.

BLOOMFIELD - The owners of the Lunch Box Deli, after 26 years, have locked up and turned 176 Broad St. over to the owners of Manouche & Co. next door Feb. 16.

Co-owners Anthony Lauro and John

Getchell, except for a six-month Bloomfield High School COVID lockdown. had been serving the likes of breakfast sandwiches and cheesecake continuously from 1996 until Feb. 15.

The owners' clients included the BHS community, Bloomfield Public Schools administrators and the Presbytery of Newark - all within a block of their address. Lauro said he sees children of BHS returning with their own children over the decades.

While most of the customers returned, Lauro said, none of their original staff did. Getchell, the Lunch Box half of the partnership, then decided to retire.

Manouche owner Elie Chalet, who has since added breakfast sandwiches to his menu, (Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 14)

intends to expand into the once karate school space by April 1. Lauro is still selling his cheesecake at 71 Washington St., just off Bloomfield Center's Five Points.

GLEN RIDGE - The borough's public library board of trustees will be welcoming their next library from the south on March 14 - the Ides of March.

Tina Marie Doody is coming from the Plainfield Public Library, most recently as assistant director. She had been with PPL since 2009.

Doody, however, is no stranger to here or the "Local Talk" area. She had been a Montclair Public Library reference librarian among her previous 18 years of experience.

The new director holds a Master of Library Science and communication and political science dual degrees from Rutgers Uni-

versity.

Doody succeeds Interim Director Cindy Czesak, who came aboard Jan. 2. Czesak filled in for 11-year GRPL Director Jennifer Breuer, who left to run the Johnson City, Tenn.-based Holston River Regional Library.

MONTCLAIR - Township detectives are looking for the man who stole the same car twice, minutes apart, from an Edgemont section parking lot here on Feb. 12.

The Lincoln's Birthday blotter started with the driver of a 2019 BMW X4 parking in the Quick Check lot and left it unlocked and with her 11-year-old son inside.

The wanted man entered the BMW, noticed the child inside and immediately got out.

Then the boy left the vehicle to tell his mom in an adjacent store on just what happened. The thief retakes the otherwise unoc-

ORANGE CORRUPTION, PT. II

(Continued from page 11)

Hospital. Edwards EOGH's external affairs director and Zahore was its information services chief.

Edwards, as "the mayor's designee," introduced an emergency noncompetitive contract as a "walk-on" \$350,000 resolution before the City Council Sept. 15, 2015. Legislation and appropriations that miss the council agenda's publication are walk-ons or late-starters. Mayor Warren, who rarely attends the council meetings, tends to have the business administrator as his representative.

The reason why the resolution missed the agenda was that the need did not exist until Sept. 10. Edwards appeared to "the acting police chief and a senior municipal court official" Sept. 14 that their computer system firewalls had not been updated since 2000 and that "JZNettech was selected as the vendor to fix the problem." Zahore owned JZNettech.

The council, after questioning Edwards, passed the \$350,000 emergency resolution, 4-3, and awarded JZNettech. Edwards, on Sept. 18, cut a \$115,000 "services" check for the company and Zahore, based on the latter's Sept. 16 invoice submission. The check was made so that Zahore could purchase materials to start work - something not normally done by the city.

Zahore testified that Edwards told him that October that he had helped him with the contract and that fact should be considered. The JZNettech president handed Edwards two \$10,000 envelopes of cash December 2015 and March 2016.

Zahore, 56, of Rahway, pleaded guilty Oct. 21, 2020 to a count of making corrupt payments "to an agent of a local government receiving federal funds." He was facing up to a 10-year sentence and a \$250,000 fine as of March 3, 2021.

Term paper writer Isaac Newton, 53, of Loganville, Ga., was introduced to Edwards by his brother. Brother Newton and Edwards were in the same Seton Hall University doctoral program in 2010. Edwards resumed his SHU doctoral pursuit in late 2015 into 2016.

Edwards asked Isaac Newton to ghost-write two academic papers which the still-"high Orange official" would pass off to his professors as his own. Edwards paid Newton through the city in December 2015 and June 2016.

Edwards brought a fraudulent graduate studies reimbursement approval letter to "Orange Employee No. 1" in City Hall's Finance Department on Feb. 10, 2016. He asked that employee to send an email to "Orange Employee No. 2 - a senior official in the Office of the Mayor" and have it approved and backdated to Aug. 17, 2015.

"Employee 2" returned to "Employee 1" with a copy of the said letter "on Orange letterhead" and " bore the stamp and initials of the Mayor." Edwards' tuition was reimbursed for \$25,142.

Newton had pleaded not guilty to nine counts on conspiracy plus wire and mail fraud counts. He remains free on \$100,000 bail while facing up to 20 years' imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

It is not known whether Maplewood Businesses Services owner Zenobia E. Williams, 52, of Maplewood knew of Edwards beyond tax preparer-client in 2015-16.

Williams had pleaded guilty Dec. 20, 2019 to conspiring to defraud the IRS by filing Edwards' false 2015 tax return. She allowed Edwards to claim \$27,055 in labor expenses for his Natural Care Municipal Cleaning company.

Natural Care, in 2015, had cleaning contracts with a lawyer's firm, a local board of education - and OPL.

Williams is facing up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

cupied car and drives off west on Van Vleck Street.

Newark police, based on MPD's description later found what BMW calls a "sports activity vehicle" abandoned in their city.

Wanted is a man described as 5-ft., 8-to-10 in. tall, wearing a grey sweatshirt with its hood pulled over his head. He was also wearing a light blue face mask "over the lower portion of his face."

NUTLEY - Township detectives are asking the public's help in finding the man who had shoplifted from the Nutley Park Shop-Rite and drove away from one of its parking lots on Feb. 5.

This was no ordinary shoplifting in that the suspect left with what supermarket managers said was a shopping cart with \$1,843.03 in merchandise.

Store surveillance cameras observed the man park his gray or silver Nissan Altima in the southside lot across Franklin Avenue and entered the Shop-Rite. He picked up a cart before or while in the store.

The suspect had somehow evaded the checkout front end, loaded the goods into the Altima and drove away.

The suspect is described as "a dark-complexioned male wearing a black vest, black hat (with a white triangular logo), gray sweatpants, gray hooded sweatshirt. and a mask." He appears to be holding a cell phone while inside the store.

STUDENTS ALLEGE DISCRIMINATION

(Continued from page 13)

vestigation. We look forward to the due process of the student government to provide us with the necessary resolution in addressing this issue.

"... Regarding RUSA's actions to address the issues of diversity and inclusion, the Executive Board is looking into legislation to better diversify the student government, to increase training opportunities for assembly leaders, and to increase communication with cultural student organizations on campus. RUSA is always committed to improving our representation of and advocacy for our diverse student body."

"Local Talk" will keep its readers informed as to the developments in this case.



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- Marlyn Escalona, APN
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PODIATRY

- Kordai DeCoteau, DPM

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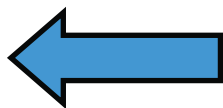
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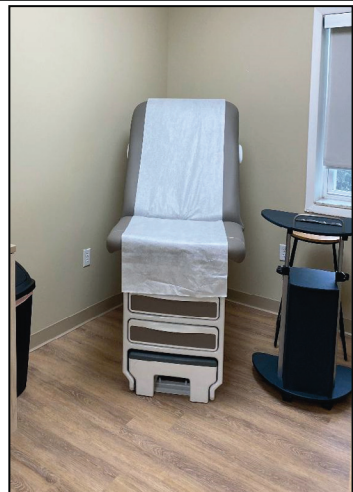
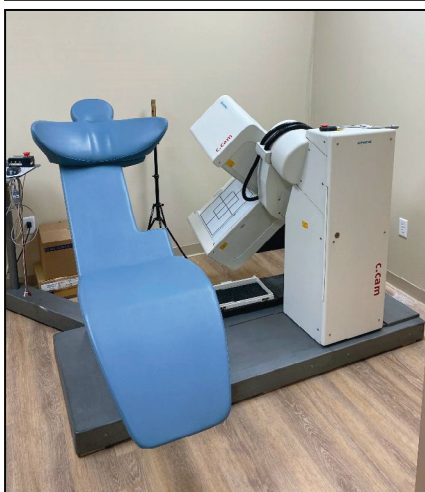
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