

LOCAL TALK

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • ORANGE • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
 1576 Springfield Avenue • Maplewood, NJ 07040
 Phone: 973-622-1111 • www.localtalkweekly.com
 E-mail - Newspaper: localtalk@aol.com * Printing: localtalkprinting@gmail.com

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FRESH AND FAMILIAR FACES ON JUNE 7 MAJOR PARTY PRIMARY BALLOTS

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - Members of the major parties faithful will see more of a mix of familiar and fresh names on the June 7 ballot largely thanks to congressional redistricting.

Several "Local Talk" towns, whole or in part, have been moved to adjacent Congressional Districts based on the 2020 U.S. Census. The New Jersey committee in charge of redrawing CD lines did so to maintain a balance of population among the 12 districts.

The population rebalancing affects the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The U.S. Senate, where each state has a constant pair of statewide senators, is unaffected.

Voters getting used to their new CD neighbors are on top of the usual picks for the "best candidate" and/or which direction should the local Democratic and Republican parties should go.

There are party primary choices to be made on or by June 7 for Essex County Executive and Maplewood Township Committee.



The following is partly based and partly in advance of the posting of sample ballots on essex-clerk.com. Maplewood's sample ballot, for example, was not posted on that website as of May 24.

U.S. CONGRESS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: (Newark's North and East Wards, Union County's Elizabeth, 10 Hudson County Towns Whole or in Part) and eight Union County towns whole or in part.)

Democratic Party members have three candidates to succeed the retiring incumbent Albio Sires: Robert J. "Bob" Menendez, Jr. of Englewood, David Ocampo Grajales, of Jersey City, and Ane Roseborough-Eberhard, of Weehawken.

Menendez, Esq. who is on the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Board of Commissioners, is the son of U.S. Senator Robert Menendez, Sr. He has the back-

(Continued on page 11)

19 CHILDREN 2 ADULTS KILLED IN TEXAS MASS SHOOTING



Salvador Ramos, 18, was identified as the shooter

UVALDE, TX - Another mass shooting with dead children. Not another "mass shooting, with dead children," but a **mass shooting with dead children.**

The details: May 24, 2022, Robb Elementary School, Uvalde, Texas. The shooter: Salvador Ramos, 18. Before reaching the school, Ramos shot his grandmother in a domestic incident. The grandmother survived and is in critical condition, but after leaving the home, Ramos made his way to the school. Upon entry, he opened fire, and at one point barricaded himself in one of the occupied classrooms.

In all, 17 people were injured, three of them officers,


but there were 19 fatalities of children, and 2 adults. The other fatality was the gunman, who was killed in a fire fight with law enforcement by a border patrol agent who responded to the scene.

There was no known history of mental illness, or criminal record, but maybe a juvenile record, according to Texas authorities, who gave an update during a May 25 press conference. They shared three Facebook posts made by Ramos. One post was, "I'm going to shoot my grandmother. The second, "I shot my grandmother." The third post, "I'm going to shoot an elementary school."

(Continued on page 13)

MONTE IRVIN BASEBALL LEAGUE CELEBRATES OPENING DAY

PAGE 5



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Turn To PAGE 16



Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-in-Chief

Hello Readers,

An 18 year old took an AR-15 and killed 19 children and 2 teachers at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, west of San Antonio, Texas. This happened right after the Buffalo Shooting, which killed at least 10 African Americans out of 13 that were shot. It is happening too much. I believe in non-violence and do not believe in acting inhumane. However, it is going overboard. So, I praise the middle eastern countries, especially Saudi Arabia, which give harsh punishments for even things like stealing. The Saudi Arabian population is about 34.81 million people, the most migrants are from India (about 1.54 million). Even if they leave their doors open and leave the house, nothing will happen, as I've heard.

In my opinion at a mass shooting, if the police can safely apprehend the suspect(s), they

should be fast processed in the court system within three days. If they are clearly convicted by the court, they should be handcuffed for 30 days and videotaped 24/7 for the viewing of the general public. Their hard punishment may stop the violence. Also, those who sell the guns and semi-automatic weapons should be punished hard as well. This process is not to punish the culprit, but to stop future malice-minded persons, and helping all of us live a better life. Hard punishment is necessary when this kind of crazy violence on innocent people is going on. The Buffalo shooting about 10 days ago is another example of this craziness, as well as other in the nation.

There was a double homicide in Newark recently, and every week we hear about another homicide in the "Local Talk" area. The gun distribution must be brought under control. The gun lobby is still strong due to our representatives and senators. Most of them receive support for their campaigns. The majority of our elected representatives are thinking about themselves rather than thinking about the general public. They do make some laws after something happens, but majority of the laws have loopholes. The

stronger lobbyists know how to use those loopholes and also get the support from their network of local politicians and government officials. We need a strong leader, who can make real changes. It requires courage against the system the politicians are used to working with.

According to State Senator Nia Gill, "Since the beginning of the pandemic, more than 9,000 residents and staff in New Jersey's long-term care facilities have died from COVID. These deaths account for more than 25% of all COVID deaths. More people died in these facilities than died on the battlefield at Gettysburg.

"That is why I introduced SR-48, because a legislative oversight committee with subpoena power is how we provide the public with a transparent and accountable investigation as a part of our constitutional duty of oversight, information from this investigation will inform our public policy decisions to ensure that this never happens again."

Wade Mitchell of Brooklyn, New York was struck by three vehicles about 4:30 a.m. on Dec. 29, 2021. He was pushing a shopping cart on the New Jersey Turnpike on mile post 105.8 in New-

ark. NFL Player Dwayne Haskins, Jr. died under similar circumstances. I notices people walking on the side of the highway sometimes and I have even seen people cross the highway for a shortcut despite oncoming traffic. It is dangerous. Please do not walk on to the highway for any reason. The risk is higher than you might think. It is better to walk a little or lot more, but do not take that risk. Nowadays, the highway authority has emergency help vehicles to avoid such accidents.

Another important suggestion. When you want to change lanes, please use your turn signal, and watch for oncoming traffic before you change lanes or exit the highway. Signaling for a left or right turn do not give you priority to change lanes, but signaling makes other vehicles aware of your intention to change lanes and you must be cautious when doing so.

So, please drive safely on this Memorial Day weekend when spending time with your family and friends.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
PM Rain possible	PM T-Storms	Scattered T-Storms	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
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SIMILARITIES ACROSS TIME: THE BOLAND HALL FIRE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS AT SETON HALL

By Lev D. Zilbermints

As the controversy around Seton Hall University (SHU) doing nothing about sexual assault allegations swirls, out of the past comes another fateful example: the Boland Hall Fire of Jan. 19, 2000. Three students died in the fire, and 62 others were injured, four of them critically. Like today's controversy, the Boland Hall Fire happened because SHU did nothing to prevent it.

The question then, is history repeating itself?

"Local Talk" did research and compared the two tragedies. Though separated by the distance of more than 22 years, there are some similarities between the two. In this article, it will be demonstrated how the administration of Seton Hall University failed to protect its students from the Boland Hall Fire in 2000 and sexual assault in 2018 - 2022. Instead, warnings went unheeded

until the worst happened. No preventive action was taken to safeguard the SHU community until after the tragedies occurred.

The first similarity is that in 1996 and circa 2018 - and maybe earlier - the administration was informed by students about the need for preventive action. In December 1996, the Setonian wrote an opinion by newspaper staff about the need for sprinklers in the dorms, including Boland Hall. No action was taken, and in January 2000, the Boland Hall Fire was the result.

Fast forward to 2022. "Local Talk" has already written in its May 12 front-page article about how SHU administration failed to adequately address the sexual assault allegations. Protecting Pirates, a new organization formed by sexual assault survivors and their allies, told "Local Talk" how SHU is avoiding enforcing Title IX. The May 19 issue of "Local Talk" had an inter-

view with Emily Archibald, a former student who transferred to another school because SHU did not give her the help she needed. Instead, SHU did nothing.

The second similarity is the effect on students and the community at large. After the Boland Hall Fire, Seton Hall University reached a settlement in 2001 with the victims. The school paid out millions of dollars in compensation and damages to the victims' families. The legal fees incurred by SHU are unknown, but possibly in the thousands of dollars range, maybe even more. It was not until 2007 that all legal issues were dealt with. As stated earlier, 3 students died in the fire, and 62 were injured, 4 of them critically.

The aftermath resulted in the New Jersey Legislature passing the strictest law in the nation concerning anti-fire measures. From now on, all dormitories were required by law to have sprinklers.

Comparing the Boland Hall Fire to the sexual allegations case, the similarity is that both have lawsuits. As stated earlier, SHU reached a settlement with the victims' families in 2001. These were reportedly in the millions of dollars. Whether or not SHU will reach a settlement with the sexual assault survivors is something that only time will tell. If history is any guide, SHU will at some point reach a settlement with the sexual assault survivors. However, that will only happen after a lawsuit.

The two freshmen responsible for the Boland Hall Fire, Sean Ryan and Joseph LePore, were sentenced in January 2007 to five years in prison. One was released on parole in 2009, the other, in 2010. As reported by nj.com, some of the victims' families were upset that the investigation took 3.5 years to complete and that both Ryan and LePore received relatively light prison sentences.

Comparatively speaking, in the sexual assault allegations case, students and their allies are upset that rapists have not been published by the school. What could happen are charges against alleged rapists on the local, state, and federal level. Seton Hall University will face enormous public pressure to ensure that it conforms to both the letter and spirit of Title IX.


As was stated by Emily Archibald in her May 19 interview, "We feel that it is important to note that discouraging rape survivors from going forward with investigations leads to under-reporting crimes in the Annual Safety Report published on Seton Hall's website. This is a tool which is used to communicate the amount of on-campus crimes to people who seek out the report such as prospective students.

If you under-report sex crimes on campus, it makes the institution look very safe. Whether administrators are acting the way they are to affect the Annual Safety Report, wholly or partially, we can't say. However, we do know that their actions have implications on the security report, and reporting fewer instances of crime on campus makes the university look more appealing."

Emily Archibald and Protecting Pirates also stated in the interview, "...it appears that administration did not make an effort to investigate the rape independently when it was initially reported."

Another similarity, widely reported in 2000 and later, is that Boland Hall did not have sprinklers in dorms. There were fire hoses, but they were pulled a few days before the fire happened. In 2022, "...there is no security camera at the front desk of dormitories. The hallways (as far as we know) also do not have cameras, so footage may be scarce," said Ms. Archibald in her May 19 interview.

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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

The Monte Irvin Baseball League had its opening day on Saturday May 21st in Orange. To celebrate, the event started with a parade to Metcalf Park, featuring the teams in the league, parents of the players, the Orange High School Tornadoes Marching Band and even the Orange Fire Department, along with the councilwoman of the South Ward and the city's mayor.

Also attending the opening day ceremonies was Wally Boy-

ett who is the head coach of the Orange High School baseball team and the former commissioner of the Monte Irvin League, which started back in 2006. Current Commissioner Corey Cooper was a former player.

This marks the 70th year that baseball has been played in Orange. There are 75 kids that participate in the league, with ages ranging 5-7, 8-9, and 10-12. Overall, there are a total of six teams that take part in the Monte Irvin Baseball League.

Photos By William Hathaway, Jr.



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ACTIVISTS CONDEMN BUFFALO MASSACRE & CALL FOR STATE ACTION

Photos Courtesy Charles Hall



NEWARK - A press conference to denounce the white supremacist terrorist attack in Buffalo, New York and call for state and federal action to stop racist domestic terrorism was held on Thursday, May 19, 2022, 4:30pm, at the Lincoln Statue, 12 Springfield Ave in Newark, NJ.

The press conference was called for by the People's Organization For Progress (POP). The Lincoln Statue is located at the intersection of Springfield Avenue and West Market Street.

Participants in the press conference included grassroots leaders, activists and representatives of civil rights organizations. Lawrence Hamm, Chairman, People's Organization For Progress spoke at the press conference.

"We are calling this press conference to condemn the most recent racist, heinous, and murderous attack in Buffalo. All over this country black people are being targeted, hunted, and killed by white racist domestic terrorists." Hamm stated.



"We demand to know what the government is going to do about it. What plans have been made, what agencies have been mobilized, what funds and resources have been allocated, what personnel are being deployed, and what action is being taken to stop these white supremacist and racist attacks on black people and others in this state and the nation," he said.

"In addition, the governor is urged to immediately convene a State conference on racist domestic terrorism and hate crimes. It should include law enforcement representatives from all agencies and levels, experts, academics, civil and human rights groups, legislators, educators, clergy, grassroots groups fighting racism, and anti-racist activists," he said.

"We must take action now to prevent what happened in Buffalo from happening here in New Jersey," Hamm said.

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Municipality	5-18-2022	Deaths	5-25-2022	Deaths
Belleville	11,097	150	11,188	150
Bloomfield	12,271	159	12,402	159
Caldwell	1,589	17	1,623	17
Cedar Grove	3,863	136	3,940	136
City of Orange	8,342	169	8,396	169
East Orange	17,458	376	17,615	376
Essex Fells	506	2	516	2
Fairfield	1,999	37	2,026	37
Glen Ridge	1,235	18	1,267	18
Irvington	11,881	281	11,984	282
Livingston	6,434	101	6,605	103
Maplewood	5,229	47	5,329	47
Millburn	3,592	17	3,686	18
Montclair	6,836	84	6,976	84
Newark	79,748	1,245	80,432	1,246
North Caldwell	1,410	10	1,452	10
Nutley	6,693	83	6,780	83
Roseland	1,386	21	1,419	21
South Orange	3,457	22	3,545	22
Verona	3,338	22	3,398	22
West Caldwell	2,686	60	2,744	60
West Orange	13,355	263	13,581	263
Total	204,405	3,320	206,904	3,325

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of May 25, 2022)

NJ: 2,035,314 cases / 30,588 deaths (Plus 3,063 probable)
United States (approx.): 83.61 Million / 1.003 Million deaths
Worldwide (approx.): 527.072 Million / 6.29 Million deaths

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JUNE 14, 2022



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**Former South Ward Candidate
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**Former South Ward Candidate
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- **TERRANCE WILL HELP PROTECT THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY** with more COVID-19 resources for schools, students, and families; and help deliver funding into sustainable programs that improve student outcomes.
- **TERRANCE WILL IMPROVE CITIZEN SERVICES FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE** by placing citizens at the heart of a modern public administration. This can be achieved by addressing the immediate concerns of citizens: transparency, efficiency, stability and continuity in city government.

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 - What started out as a mother asking her back-from-school son how he got his wounds last month has led to criminal charges against a teacher's aide and a pending \$2.5 million lawsuit against the school district here.

Corey D. Foushee, 33, said Essex County Prosecutor's Office spokeswoman Katherine Carter, has been charged with two counts each of aggravated assault and endangering the welfare of a child. The Newark resident, who had been an aide at the Quitman Community Elementary School, was arrested and charged May 12.

The mother of an autistic seven-year-old boy has recently filed a notice of lawsuit claim in N.J. Superior Court against Newark Public Schools and its board of education.

The mother said she had asked her son how he got the bruises on his back, chin and arms and a bleeding tooth. She took him to a doctor for examination. The physician asked to her call the police. Arriving officers listed the boy's wounds on their report.

The son had said that Foushee had pushed him onto a school hallway floor, dragged him and then pushed him down a flight of stairs. The claim notice stated that a teacher had witnessed the alleged incident.

IRVINGTON / EAST ORANGE - ECPO Homicide/Major Crimes Task Force detectives are looking for the person who shot dead an East Orange man at Irvington's Prospect Street and Nesbitt Terrance early May 15.

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens

II and Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers said that responding police officers found singer-songwriter Curt "CeeJay" Johnson, 36, shot and lying in that intersection area at 3:22 a.m. that Sunday. Johnson was declared dead at 3:58 a.m.

A relative told a reporter May 16 that Johnson had just left his brother's birthday party. Fellow soca musician Andre Dutchin added that he then stopped by a club and was leaving that when he was accosted by three other men.

"Apparently the perpetrators saw him wearing a fat gold chain and attempted to rob him but CeeJay put up a fight," said Dutchin. "It was while he was putting up a resistance when he was shot several times."

Johnson's death is being felt throughout the Guyanese music community. He has produced, performed and released several singles on his own Roll Out Records since his 2002 arrival in the U.S. He was among several musicians named to participate in New York City's Guyana Day Celebration in August.

Members of TWU Local 100 said Johnson was an eight-year telephone maintainer for the MTA New York City Transit Authority. Line Equipment/Signals coworkers remember his easy-going, upbeat attitude and who "had the same passion for his music as for his job."

Wife Shenelle and their five-year-old daughter are among the Lodge, Georgetown, GY native's survivors. Johnson's 9 a.m. viewing and 11 a.m. funeral at East Orange's New Hope Baptist Church is set for May 26, followed by interment at Rosedale Cemetery.

ORANGE - ECPO homicide detectives are looking for drivers of a red pickup truck and a silver SUV they said struck and left a Scotland Road pedestrian dead here late May 14.

Arriving Orange police officers and local EMS, responding to a man struck by a car report, found an unconscious man lying on the ground by "109" Scotland Rd., or the Interstate 280 overpass, 10:55 p.m. The man - identified as city resident Felipe Chay, 46 - was later declared dead.

Police Officer, 24, Dead

Rodolfo Diaz's families have been making funeral arrangements for the Orange Police Department officer since his sudden May 19 death.

Diaz, who was born Oct. 1, 1987, served and protected Orange for barely 14 months as Badge No. 372. but still left an impression on his fellow officers.

"Off. R. Diaz started his journey with the OPD on March 29, 2021," said Police Chief Vincent Vitiello in Friday's announcement. "He worked with the Department up until the date of his death. He is remembered by friends, family and fellow officers for his commitment, attention to detail and dependability."

WEST ORANGE - What Eagle Rock Reservation suspect Posley Sulamin, 31, will likely face when he is extradited to Newark for a detention hearing may be similar to what fellow suspect Michael Verdel, 71, went through May 16.

Superior Court Judge Martin Cronin ruled that Monday that Verdel, of the Bronx, should remain detained in the Essex County Detention Center. Verdel has been there since his May 11 arrest at his Bronx, N.Y. address.

Cronin said that text messages, cell phone messages and surveillance video supplied by the Essex County Prosecutor's Office "provides the story which supports by way of probable cause accomplice liability of Mr. Verdel to the homicide."

Cronin was referring to the March 4 murder by gunfire of Kelsey Steels, 31, of the Bronx, along a reservation hiking trail. Hikers, said County Assistant Prosecutor Felicia Grimes May 16, found Smalls with his pants pockets turned inside-out and without identification. His body was identified by fingerprint records at the Regional Medical Examiner's office.

Grimes added that video recordings have Verdel, Sulamin, Steels and an unknown fourth person left the Bronx apartment building in a BMW with Texas license plates at 10:05 a.m. Sulamin drove the car to across the reservation at 11:20 a.m. - and

stayed aboard so that Verdel and Steele could walk in.

Defense attorney Deridre McMahon countered that no witnesses saw her client and Steele leave the BMW or on the hiking trail together. McMahon cited Verdel's heart condition in her bid to have him placed under house arrest.

Sulamin, who remains on New York's Rikers Island, and Verdel have been both charged with first-degree murder, felony murder, conspiracy and robbery. County prosecutors have not said whether they are investigating the fourth person who first entered the BMW.

SOUTH ORANGE - Seton Hall University and the Archdiocese of Newark went within their ranks to name the school's interim Rector and Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology Director.

SHU President Joseph Nyre and Cardinal Joseph Tobin said that Msgr. Gerard H. McCarren will take on his new duties for at least a year starting on July 1. McCarren is being promoted from being the university's Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and the seminary's spiritual director.

McCarren, who wrote 10 papers on St. John Henry Newman, was on the Newman Association of America's board of directors 2001-16. He was a teacher at and a spiritual director for Omaha, Neb.'s Creighton University Institute for Priestly Formation.

McCarren succeeds 10-year rector and director Msgr. Joseph Reilly, who starts his year-long sabbatical June 30. The Mountainside native and Seton Hall Preparatory School rector and spiritual director 1995-2001 first joined SHU as the rector of St. Andrew's Hall.

Reilly, said Nyre and Tobin, will be renewing his vocation with "Studel, travel, reflection and professional development. The only archdiocese priest named by Pope Francis as a missionary of mercy in 2016 is to return to SHU as its vice provost for academics and Catholic identity.

SHU will meanwhile start a search for Reilly's ultimate successor. Neither Nyre nor Tobin

(Continued on page 15)

PRIMARY (Continued from page 1)

ing of the Essex, Hudson and Union Democratic Committees.

Grajales is the director of a startup company that assists hospitals and universities with worker safety and environmental compliance. He has the favor of Essex, Hudson and Union Progressive Democrats.

Roseborough-Eberhard is a Weehawken High School history teacher and a state Amistad Commission member.

Newark Seton Hall Law School professor Eugene D. Manzo and North Bergen digital marketing business owner Brian Varela withdrew after their petitions fell under the 200 validated signature minimum.

Republican Party members are to choose between Marcos Arroyo, of West New York, and write-in candidate Ana Isabel Rivera, of Newark.

Arroyo, a professional housing inspector, has Essex County Republican Organization endorsement.

Rivera is a plumber's apprentice and a mother of two.

10TH CD: (Rest of Newark, Irvington, East Orange, Orange, West Orange, Montclair's Fourth Ward, three "West Essex" towns and "West/Central" Jersey City.)

Democratic party members are to choose among incumbent Donald M. Payne, Jr., of Newark, Essex County College Africana Institute Director Akil Khalfani, of West Orange and former New Jersey Working Families constituent advocate Imari Oakley, of Montclair.

Khalfani is running under the Essex, Hudson, Union Democrats for Change. Oakley carries the Essex, Hudson and Union "Pride, Progress New Jersey" flags.

Republican members are to choose between David H. Pinckney, of Irvington, and Garth Stewart, of Jersey City.

Pinckney, a substitute teacher and an independent contractor, has the endorsement of the Essex and Union Regular Organizations.

Stewart, a self-employed Purple Heart Iraqi War veteran is running courtesy of Essex-Hudson-Union "Friends of Garth."

11TH CD: (South Orange, Maplewood, Belleville, Bloomfield, Nutley, Glen Ridge, three of Montclair's wards, seven "West Essex," two "Southwestern" Passaic County and 25 Morris County towns)

Democratic voters have either incumbent Mikie Sherrill, of Montclair, on the ballot or can write in a candidate of their choice. Sherrill has the endorsement of the Essex, Morris and Passaic Democratic Committees.

Republican voters have Toby Anderson, of Morristown, Paul DeGroot, of Montville-Pine Brook, Alexander R. Halter, of Denville, Ruth McAndrew, of Randolph, and Tayfun Selen, of Chatham Township, to choose from.

Anderson, a U.S. Army Iraqi War Bronze Star veteran and small business owner, is under the tri-county "America First Veteran" pennant.



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DeGroot, a Montclair State College graduate and former Passaic County Assistant Prosecutor, has Passaic County Republican Organization endorsement.

Halter, a real estate consultant and former 13-year producer for SportsNet New York, is flying the Essex-Morris "America First" flag.

McAndrew is an RN and the third-generation owner-operator of the Miller Farm.

Selen, a former Chatham Township mayor, is a Morris County Commissioner. He also has the support of the Essex, Morris and Passaic Republican Party Organizations.

ESSEX COUNTY

County Executive

Countywide Democratic party members are to endorse incumbent Joseph N. DiVincenzo, of Roseland. DiVincenzo is seeking a nomination for another term.

Republican voters are to similarly endorse Adam Kraemer, of West Orange, to represent them on the Nov. 7 General Election ballot.

MUNICIPAL

The MAPLEWOOD Democratic Committee, in an unusual move, endorsed both incumbent Deborah Engel and challenger Kurt Kiley for the single open Township Committee seat. Outgoing former Mayor Frank McGehee has decided not to run for re-election.

Maplewood's Republican Committee did not file a candidate. Township GOP members may write in their own choice.

While the Essex County Clerk and Board of Elections leave ballot space open for GLEN RIDGE's two Borough Council seats, whatever counts will come from write-in votes.

Glen Ridge annually holds their non-partisan mayor, council and board of education elections on the General Election ballot. The competition among borough candidates is for Civic Conference Committee endorsement, where the local Democratic and Republican parties have memberships.

Participating registered party voters have the choice between Vote By Mail or in-person polling station voting machine balloting. Both modes allow for early voting provided that the balloting is done before 8 p.m. June 7.

Voters who have received their Vote By Mail Ballots may deposit them in the mail or in designated county drop boxes. Locations are to be found at Vote.nj.gov.

Voters may also personally deliver their ballots at the Essex County Clerk's Election Division office during regular business hours and until 8 p.m. June 7. The office is in the new Essex County Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Justice Building, 495 Martin Luther King Blvd., here in Newark.

Mailed-in ballots have six days' grace - or June 13 - to be received by the Essex County Clerk Elections Division office so long as they have a June 7 or earlier postmark.

Those who prefer to personally press buttons and pull levers have early and election day stations to choose from.

There are nine early voting stations - including seven among five "Local Talk" towns - being placed while you read this.

(Continued on page 12)



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

The Cursed American Idol

Please do not get confused by my title and allow your mind (s) to drift to the "American Idol" television program created by Simon Fuller and produced by Fremantle, North America, and 19 entertainment stars. They were using their program to challenge singers with dreams of superstardom to audition and compete in a series of challenging rounds in the hope of living their childhood and lifelong dreams. Instead, I wish to focus your attention on the tragedy of the issue of guns that is being worshipped as idols within the contemporary American culture.

After the shooting at Wal-Mart and a small church in rural Texas, some time ago, one person reflecting said, "Once again, our nation is reeling from senseless and tragic shootings." Unfortunately, that headline statement could be recited more than 200 times in the first five months of this year, 2022, since it is being reported that there are some 220 mass shootings (as of this writing) that have occurred in the U.S. so far just in these first 176 days of 2022.

Last week, a shooting occurred in which Buffalo wherein ten persons were killed in a racially-biased crime. Another shooting has just taken place in a school in Texas, where 19 children and two teachers have been

killed. The article where I noted the headline statement continued, "While the locations may shift, the basic details are familiar and rapidly becoming routine. A lone gunman - usually a white male with anger issues and easy access to high-powered weaponry indiscriminately shoots into a crowd of innocent bystanders. Whether it takes place in a school, movie theater, store, concert (hall), or place of worship, the bloodshed and carnage caused by military-grade rifles in the hands of alienated men has been swift, effective, and deadly. These attacks have become relentless and commonplace."

What irks me, as I hope must be irking the majority of Americans, whose hearts are filled with compassion, if the surveys are correct, is that while there are calls for gun regulation, guns have become such an idol of the culture that any call to get rid of guns means a call to violence.

Such violence occurred when the apostle Paul and his companion went to Ephesus and preached against idolatry. It was not about funs, it was about their city goddess. And since some people were convinced about what Paul was preaching and thus burned their magical books and small images of Diana, the many were led by some city leaders into an uproar; and the apostles were beaten up, thrown into jail, and finally driven out of town. If it were not for the intervention of the Centurion that oversaw the military guard of the city, the apostles would have been stoned to death (Acts 19).

Another example I think of is what has been called the "Iconoclastic Controversy," which occurred in the 8th and

9th centuries in Eastern Byzantium Empire. The debate raged for over a century on whether religious images should or should not be allowed. The religious images were bound up in religious belief and practice. And in a society with no concept of separation of church and state, religious orthodoxy (right belief) impacted not only the salvation of individual souls but also the fate of the entire Empire.

The debates over the images entangled both Church leaders and emperors and caused splits in the church until now. It was not just an intellectual debate; it had practical negative consequences. And the debate only came to a close, according to some historians, when a disingenuous agreement was reached between the leaders of the state and the church that restored images. The Orthodox and Roman churches today are celebrating the restoration of images, but it remains a fact of interest to me how the images have often replaced the worship of the true God.

What's the relationship between the burning of magical books and the Iconoclastic Controversy and the debate on the idolatry of guns? I say that we need to know that our idolatry will destroy our souls and our culture if we do not take the time to understand the nature of idolatry.

As is being said, after each mass shooting, angry voices from all sides of the political spectrum shout their talking points. From the anti-gun forces, the calls are made for sane gun laws. From the NRA and gun lobbyists, we hear about protecting the second amendment with calls for more "good guys" with

guns to prevent the "bad guys" from carrying out their plans. Instead of curbing gun sales, we should ensure that every American is armed and ready. Politicians call for thoughts and prayers. Police and first responders are praised. The dead are buried. The wounded are treated, and those who were not directly impacted by the tragedy go on with their daily lives.

However, those in the line of fire or whose loved ones are victims suffer irreparable physical and psychological damage. Nothing is changing. We go from one incident to another. We wait until another mass shooting, lower our flags to half-staff, if we care, wait to see what the president will say and to see if the Congress is taking some action, and soon we move on.

Many times, after the post-mortem, we return to the worship of our most cherished idols, namely the guns and the second amendment of the Constitution, and we insist that we are protecting our freedoms. But let me advise that we need to be clear that the idols we worship will one day lead to our personal destruction and the destruction of the culture.

In the Ten Commandments, we are told that we are not to worship images (Exodus 20:4). And it is spelled out in a Psalm "Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves. I am the LORD your God." (Psalm 16:4).

Do we need more clarity? My grandma used to recite the proverb, "If you play with fire, it will burn you." Such is my reflection on the second of the Ten Commandments.

PRIMARY (Cont. from page 11)

They will be open June 3-4, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. and June 5 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. They will all be closed on June 6.

Those who want to traditionally vote in person June 7 are to first check their sample ballot for any polling station location changes.

June 7 voters are to go to their designated polling stations as printed on their sample ballots. VBMBs cannot be used or delivered there. The polls are to be open 6 a.m. - 8 p.m. Provisional

ballots are to be provided in case of any on-site problems.

The county is using new scanner-based voting machines.

Voters are to receive paper ballots and are to fill the ovals of their choice like they would have done on school day standardized tests. The filled-in ballots are then inserted and run through an electronic scanner to record the vote.

Details are found and questions asked at essexclerk.com and/or essexboardofelections.com.



SHOOTING (Continued from page 1)

The gunman used an AR-15 style weapon (what a shock) with .223 rounds. So far, no motive has been established, but hopefully the grandmother may be able to provide some clues should she not perish.

During the press conference, Beto O'Rourke confronted Gov. Greg Abbott about the shooting. Abbott stressed that the focus should be on those who were hurt.

The school was two days away from summer break, with at least one of the victims set to receive an Honor Roll Award. This shooting is now the second deadliest school shooting in American history, behind the Sandy Hook massacre of 2014. This is the third mass shooting "Local Talk" has reported within the past two weeks.

Among those giving condolences was Uvalde native and Academy Award winner Matthew McConaughey, who also called for more responsibility with gun laws. Meanwhile, 19 chairs had been placed around the South Orange Middle School sign in tribute to the children lost. Additionally, Pope Francis condemned the shooting, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed his sympathy. NJ Governor Phil Murphy and U.S. Senator Cory Booker voiced their frustrations over the lack of action in Congress to stem gun violence.

Hours after the shooting, President Biden addressed the nation: "I had hoped, when I became President, I would not have to do this again.

Another massacre. Uvalde, Texas. An elementary school. Beautiful, innocent second, third, fourth graders. And how many scores of little children who witnessed what happened see their friends die as if they're on a battlefield, for God's sake. They'll live with it the rest of their lives.

There's a lot we don't know yet, but there's a lot we do know.

There are parents who will never see their child again, never have them jump in bed and cuddle with them. Parents who will never be the same.

To lose a child is like having a piece of your soul ripped away. There's a hollowness in your chest, and you feel like you're being sucked into it and never going to be able to get out. It's suffocating. And it's never quite the same.

And it's a feeling shared by the siblings, and the grandparents, and their family members, and the community that's left behind.

Scripture says - Jill and I have talked about this in different contexts, in other contexts: 'The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit.' So

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many crushed spirits.

So, tonight, I ask the nation to pray for them, to give the parents and siblings the strength in the darkness they feel right now.

As a nation, we have to ask: When in God's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby? When in God's name will we do what we all know in our gut needs to be done?

It's been 3,448 days - 10 years since I stood up at a high school in Connecticut - a grade school in Connecticut, where another gunman massacred 26 people, including 20 first graders, at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Since then, there have been over 900 incidents of gunfires reported on school grounds.

Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Santa Fe High School in Texas. Oxford High School in Michigan. The list goes on and on.

And the list grows when it includes mass shootings at places like movie theaters, houses of worship, and, as we saw just 10 days ago, at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York.

I am sick and tired of it. We have to act. And don't tell me we can't have an impact on this carnage.

I spent my career as a senator and as Vice President working to pass commonsense gun laws. We can't and won't prevent every tragedy. But we know they work and have a posi-

(Continued on page 14)

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

THIS IS OUR WORLD ...

Today, I pulled the car over exiting the traffic flow just to wrap my head around another gruesome reality. 19 children plus 2, who had been teachers dead, killed today only moments ago. Sadly, I find myself still mulling over the mass shooting that occurred in Buffalo, New York on the 14th of May. Ten Mocha people gone, and 3 others injured, now this.

I suppose that now, the two will take turns consuming my headspace as barging in at leisure. I needed that moment of silence then. Also, let us take one now. Such incidents once again remind me of how fragile life can be, it reminds me again of the value that we must place on one another. This week I choose to convey that belief by utilizing silence because in many instances ...

A PIC'S WORTH MORE ...
All the handsome and lovely faces you see here are the beautiful souls that I had the pleasure of making acquaintance with post-pandemic.

TRAVEL LOG



I really enjoyed Afro-Punk that year. Each photo had been captured during my Afro-Punk adventure in the Big Apple. Except for the image of the two bruthas, with one playing the horn. That one was taken right here in Jersey. But for the sake of cohesion, I thought that it was a good fit. Nothing brings me more joy than my camera and



being out on one of my missions to anywhere as I stumble upon folk.

I have to thank Mr. Shah, the publisher of "Local Talk" for my continued pursuits as a journalist when he took a chance giving me the opportunity to hone my skills as a writer. Way back when oftentimes the in-house photographer wasn't available at the time, I began capturing those images myself laying the groundwork for my becoming Andrea Dialect the Photojournalist and the rest is history...

Remember, due to space this article can be read in its entirety on our website: www.localtalkweekly.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.



SHOOTING (Cont. from page 13)

tive impact. When we passed the assault weapons ban, mass shootings went down. When the law expired, mass shootings tripled.

The idea that an 18-year-old kid can walk into a gun store and buy two assault weapons is just wrong.

What in God's name do you need an assault weapon for except to kill someone?

Deer aren't running through the forest with Kevlar vests on, for God's sake. It's just sick.

And the gun manufacturers have spent two decades aggres-

sively marketing assault weapons which make them the most and largest profit.

For God's sake, we have to have the courage to stand up to the industry.

Here's what else I know: Most Americans support commonsense laws.

I just got off my trip from Asia, meeting with Asian leaders, and I learned of this while I was on the aircraft. And what struck me on that 17-hour flight - what struck me was these kinds of mass shootings rarely happen anywhere else in the world.

Why? They have mental health problems. They have do-

mestic disputes in other countries. They have people who are lost. But these kinds of mass shootings never happen with the kind of frequency that they happen in America. Why?

Why are we willing to live with this carnage? Why do we keep letting this happen? Where in God's name is our backbone to have the courage to deal with it and stand up to the lobbies?

It's time to turn this pain into action. For every parent, for every citizen in this country, we have to make it clear to every elected official in this country: It's time to act.

It's time - for those who ob-

struct or delay or block the commonsense gun laws, we need to let you know that we will not forget.

We can do so much more. We have to do more.

Our prayer tonight is for those parents, lying in bed and trying to figure out, 'Will I be able to sleep again? What do I say to my other children? What happens tomorrow?'

May God bless the loss of innocent life on this sad day. And may the Lord be near the brokenhearted and save those crushed in spirit, because they're going to need a lot of help and a lot of our prayers."

TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 10)

have said whether McCarren is a candidate.

MAPLEWOOD - About the only things coming out of May 5's Township Council meeting with Maplewood Cinemas LLC is that the Maplewood Theatre will remain closed - and that would-be operator CinemaLabs has exited the stage.

The Township Committee, acting as the municipal Alcohol Beverage Control Board, after listening to Maplewood Cinemas' Lisa Dowd, did not move to approve awarding her a liquor license that Tuesday night.

Maplewood's elders decided not to move the license although Dowd had paid \$490,000 in a March 22 auction bidding. Maplewood Cinemas and another entity were vying for the license that was once held by Verjus Restaurant at 1790 Springfield Ave. The former Gary's Restaurant closed in March 2021 and is being replaced by another building.

The township is holding Dowd's full payment in an escrow account.

The committee/ABC Board had difficulties with Dowd's timetable in reopening the 93-year-old Jefferson Village movie theater, which had been closed since the March 15, 2020 COVID quarantine. Dowd said she wanted the license to attract real estate and restaurateur partners but provided no floor plans of where liquor would be served.

Dowd, in her presentation, said that the lack of a liquor license caused the dissolution of an earlier partnership. That was presumably with CinemaLabs, of Montclair, which wanted to reopen the Maplewood Theatre in 2022 or 23.

CinemaLabs has been operating The Cinemas at SOPAC with first-run movies and special screenings since July 22, 2021.

BLOOMFIELD - Motorists who have noticed the temporary traffic cones along the street's centerline before 425 Broad St. may soon find a permanent version in the near future.

The Township Council is poised to present an ordinance that would ban left turns into or out of the Bloomfield McDonald's there. The temporary flexible barriers would prevent motorists to make a left-hand turn from southbound Broad into the McDonald's lot and exiting lot drivers from taking a left onto southbound Broad.

The council approved the to-be-numbered resolution at their May 9 conference meeting for later regular meeting introduction. Business Administrator and Public Safety Director Samuel DeMaio cited the need for permanent cones.

What type of permanent cones have not been determined as of press time. Five-foot-tall anchored plastic poles, for example, had been installed along the centerline of King Boulevard/Main Street between Prospect and Halsted/Lincoln streets.

Newark had installed alternating plastic and concrete poles to separate Raymond Boulevard and Market Street between Jefferson and Madison streets around 1970. This was before Lincoln Technical Institute moved from 378 Market St. to Union in 1973.

Bloomfield's elders and experts may consider how the permanent cones or poles affect the traffic using the PNC Bank branch at 424 Broad St. and other adjacent businesses.

MONTCLAIR - A petition launched to have the Township Council carry both its conference and regular meetings on YouTube and Livestream, including public speaker call-in access, is halfway towards its signature goal.

The "Stream Montclair Township Meetings and Allow Remote Public Comment" petition has 284 signatures as of May 21. It was posted on Change.org May 17 with a 500 signature goal.

The petition was started by two Montclair residents in reaction to how Montclair's elders and administrators returned to in-person meetings on May 3.

May 3 was when the council resumed in-person conference and regular meetings since the COVID pandemic's advent. Regular meetings, where the public comments and the voting is actually done, had been televised pre-pandemic on Montclair's TV-34 public access channel and rebroadcasted on social media.

Both the meetings' conference sessions, where matters are discussed, and regular sessions were covered on live social media for social distancing.

Councilman-at-Large Peter Yacobellis, however, announced earlier that Tuesday that the conference meeting would not be carried live. Yacobellis said he was told by Town Manager Tim Stafford that the council would return to the tradition of not recording those sessions.

The Montclair Public Schools Board of Education, while resuming in-person meetings continues to air on Livestream and take viewers' calls. The Township Council, on May 13, apologized that its May 17 agenda inadvertently left the impression that the public could still call in their comments.

GLEN RIDGE - One of the borough's schools had a "Buddy Bench:" installed on its grounds and had it dedicated after one of "Glen Ridge's Finest."

Members of Det. Charles "Rob" Rob-

erts joined the Forest Avenue School community and the Glen Ridge Board of Education unveiled the bench named after him in a May 3 ceremony.

The bench is named after Roberts, 45, who wore Badge 69 his entire GRPD career. The married father of three died May 11, 2020 after a protracted battle against COVID.

A memorial bench was last installed and dedicated in the West Orange High School quadrangle, in honor of graduate Zach Massader, Sept. 24. It was placed with the support of the West Orange Stop Suicide Advocacy Coalition.

Buddy benches, which started appearing on school grounds in 2018, started out as a place for children to go when seeking a playmate. They have also become places where students to talk with others about their feelings.

NUTLEY - The Nutley Police Department, after its chasing out of motorbike and ATV drivers here May 15, reminds all that Public Service Electric and Gas property are private.

This is particularly so with the PSE&G right of way for its high tension transmission towers. They are closed to all except for the utility's line workers.

Responding NPD officers said they had found "unregistered motorbikes traveling on private property" off Centre and Van Winkle streets that Sunday. When the bikers notice arriving police, they fled instead of heeding calls to stop.

NPD also reminds the public that unregistered and unlicensed vehicles, when caught, are subject to impoundment. Its operators are also subject to MVC violations that may inhibit the obtaining of licenses.

Packs of youth, often riding without helmets, running unlicensed and unregistered bikes and ATVs on public roads and other property have been a nuisance in parts of "Local Talk" for the last decade.

"Local Talk" first noticed this trend while covering the 2011-13 Indycar street races at Baltimore's Inner Harbor. Baltimore was the setting for the 2013 documentary "12 O'Clock Boys."



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 Catalino Delacruz, MD
 Abbas Shehadeh, MD
 Isaac Tawfik, MD
 Guetty Gabaud-Dumesle, APN
 Marlyn Escalona, APN
 Nina Orleans, APN
- PULMONARY/SLEEP DISORDERS**
 Jeffrey Miller, DO
- PODIATRY**
 Kordai DeCoteau, DPM
- NEUROLOGY**
 Ruth Clark-Brown, MD
- GYNECOLOGY**
 Clifford Toliver, MD
- NUTRITION**
 David Sonenberg, MS, RD, CDE
- PRIMARY CARE/ INTERNAL MEDICINE**
 Eddy Simon, MD
 Nancy Cahiwat, MD
 Mamatha Mohan, MD
 Myriam Sterlin, MD
 Aleksander Lekan, MD
 Indu Vira, MD
 Hemlata Bhatia, MD
 Narinda Kaur, MD
 Normita Narvaez, MD
 Nivia Rowe, APN
 Roody Dalbe, APN
 Sanjaykumar Shah, APN
 Mary Elias, APN
 Janiece Howell, APN
 Jamila Jones, DNP
 Nmandu Utuk, APN
 Beena Mathew, DNP
 Roody Dalberis, APN