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RENEE BURGESS TAPPED TO SUCCEED SENATOR RON RICE

By *Walter Elliott*

IRVINGTON - The elevation of one longtime township official to the State House in Trenton Sept. 9 created an immediate effect here on the Township Council dais Monday night and a change on many "Local Talk" Nov. 8 General Election ballots.

The Essex County Democratic Committee municipal leaders selected the now-outgoing Council President Renee C. Burgess as State Senator Ronald C. Rice's immediate successor during their convention in Bloomfield College's Westminster Hall theater Friday.

Rice (D-Newark), after representing the 28th Legislative District for 34 years, retired to concentrate on health issues Aug. 31.

Burgess, once all the conventioners' votes had been voiced, walked off the theater stage to embrace Rice in the audience.

The Irvington Township Council, in a pair of walk-on, non-agenda moves Tuesday night, elevated South Ward Councilwoman Jamillah Z. Beasley as its latest Council President and appointed Darlene Brown to Burgess' at-large council seat.

Participating registered voters in the redrawn 28th Legislative District will also see Sen. Burgess' name on the Nov. 8 General Election ballot. Her election would help fill the remainder of Rice's

term.

Burgess, pending Nov. 8 voters' blessing, will show alongside General Assembly Members Cleopatra Tucker (D-Newark) and either Ralph Caputo (D-Nutley) or 34th LD Assemblywoman Mila Jasey (D-South Orange) on the Nov. 7, 2023 General Election ballot.

The 28th LD adds South Orange, Maplewood and Hillside onto Irvington and Newark's West Ward-Vailsburg and "Southwest Ward." The 2021-22 decennial redistricting have left Jasey with the decision on whether to run in the June 2023 primary. Caputo may meanwhile run in the redrawn 34th LD.

Newark's North Ward, the West Ward's West Side and "Southeast Ward" have gone to the 29th LD. Bloomfield, Glen Ridge and Nutley have gone to the 34th LD.

Burgess becomes the first state senator from Irvington. The 19-year former Irvington Board of Education and Township Council member had been part of Mayor Anthony "Tony" Vauss' Team Irvington Strong slate since 2018.

Vauss, indeed, was the first public official to endorse Burgess to succeed Rice.

Rice, however, was also present in the theater to have Tucker succeed him and former CWA

(Continued on page 15)

*Renee C. Burgess
Photo via Facebook*

PARAMOUNT THEATRE: TEAR IT DOWN OR FIX IT UP? PART II

PAGE 7

Photo By Lev D. Zilbermintz

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Turn To PAGE 16



Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The staff of Local Talk, its volunteers and supporters, send our condolences to our Content Editor Kristopher Seals, his family and friends, on the death of his mother, Annie Seals, who passed away Sept. 9 at the age of 76 in Cedar Grove, NJ. Born in 1945, Ms. Seals recently lived in Newark, NJ by way of her native Georgia. Along with her son, she leaves behind two sisters, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends. God Bless her soul. May she rest in peace.

Thanks to all of you for wishing me a speedy recovery on my knee surgery. I will be working from home, till I get back on my feet to drive the car. The surgery was successful, and I am now recovering.

The 10th Congressional District of NJ has about six candidates in the upcoming election. In the Democratic Party primary, Donald Payne Jr. won over 83% of the vote. This is a new district, but still a democratic stronghold. Payne is expected to win easily. However, the other candidates are: David Pinckney (R), Cynthia Johnson (Jobs and Justice Party), Clenard Childress Jr. (The Mahalli Party), Dorothy Jane Humphries (Together We Can Party) and Kendal Ludden (L).

For the first time, a top Obama Administration official

criticized President Biden for his policy on Cuba. After the troubles of 1959, Obama's administration was successful in signing an agreement with Cuba towards normalizing our relations. The Trump administration did not accept this, and reversed the policy. Biden's Administration doubled down on sanctions and changed the policy. This has threatened the future of a Cuban American relationship.

The November 8th election is crucial for both major parties. If the Democrats get one additional seat in the Senate, it will be a clear majority for them to make changes as they jointly decide. 35 senate seats are up for grabs. Right now, the Democrats are holding 48 seats plus 2 seats of independents who support them. With the deciding vote of Kama-

la Harris as President of the Senate, they can barely pass the resolutions, but only if people like Joe Manchin and Krysten Sinema agree. Some polls says that out of the 35 seats the Democrats will receive about 18 sets and the Republican will receive about 17 seats. If that happens, the Democrats will have a clear majority in the Senate.

In the house of representatives, the Democrats hold 221 seats out of 435 seats. The redistricting might hurt the Democrats, even though they have more control of redistricting. The Republicans have to win at least 6 more seats to have control there.

***Have a wonderful week.
 I'll talk to you next week.***

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
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LO 52	LO 60	LO 64	LO 68	LO 68	LO 65	LO 67

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The Doctor Is In



OP-ED BY DR. ADIL MANZOOR

Emerging Research: COVID Increases the Risk of Mental Illness and Brain Disease

The coronavirus broke out in 2019 and has proven to be a force to reckon with, infecting more than 606 million people worldwide and claiming about 6.5 million of those. For a virus that has persisted this long and has infect-

ed that many people, it is not out of place to imagine there would be complications and long-term health consequences. At least, that's what many experts believed, but there were few studies to support that belief. That has changed, though.

A study by University of Oxford researchers examining about 1.3 million people between January 2020 and April 2022 reveals some interesting information about COVID and mental health conditions. The study suggests an increased risk of dementia, seizures or epilepsy, brain fog, and psychotic disorders like schizophrenia compared to individuals with other respiratory infections.

Brain fog, which is characterized by confusion, forgetfulness, and a lack of focus and mental clarity, was identified as a persistent problem over the long term after a COVID bout. Another common mental condition that developed after the two-year study was dementia, a term describing the loss of cognitive



function. Symptoms include memory loss, difficulty with words, judgment errors, and limited social skills. This mental condition is also more frequent in older adults.

The study shows that in the 65+ population, 15.4% developed brain fog, and 4.5% developed dementia. Contrastingly, results from the control group showed 12.3% developing brain fog and 3.3% developing dementia after two years.

Over time, the virus mutated, causing several strains. Consistent with the laws of evolution and adaptation, the mutated strains were generally more difficult to manage than the parent strain. Still, the original vaccine was able to marshal most of the strains. However, Delta and Omicron were two strains that proved particularly difficult to manage, necessitating multiple booster doses.

Research shows that the risk of developing mental conditions increased after the emergence of the Delta variant. The risk of brain fog increased by as much as 38%. However, rather shockingly, the risk for dementia decreased by 40% after the Delta wave. These conflicting results have led many experts to downplay the impact of the Delta and Omicron waves on the risk of post-COVID medical conditions.

Another interesting bit of the study is that children were

more likely to be diagnosed with psychotic disorders, particularly seizures and epilepsy, after coronavirus infection. However, children were not as likely to be diagnosed with anxiety and depression even shortly after infection.

Depression and anxiety are certainly worrying mental health conditions, both being among the commonest mental disorders on the planet. So the fact that people with COVID are at a greater risk of developing depression or anxiety after the infection really comes as little surprise.

Seriously, the economic hardships alone were enough to mess with people's mental health. Then, many people also lost multiple family members to the virus, another major contributor to the higher depression and anxiety disorder rates since COVID debuted.

There's some good news on this front, though. Aside from depression and anxiety not particularly observed in children, the study regards them as short-lived in adults.

Further good news - the study leader states that the overall risk of these conditions is still quite low. Essentially, this implies that the risk of getting them in the first place is so low that the increased risk post-infection still doesn't amount to much regarding getting these

(Continued on page 5)

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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

Another week is in the books for the New Jersey high school football season. Irvington's Blue Knights are now 3-0 on the season, taking a thrilling battle of state champions over the East Orange Campus Jaguars 27-21. Famah Toure sealed the win for the Knights on a 5 yard touch-down run in double overtime. Irvington previously beat Millville and Woodbridge in the start of the season. The Blue Knights this week will play Columbia this weekend.

West Orange is 2-0 on the year so far. The Mountaineers beat the Bloomfield Bengals on the road 34-7 this past Friday night. Meanwhile, Seton Hall Prep was off this week after a victory against a tough Pope John team. Prep will battle legacy squad Bergen Catholic next weekend. Finally, the Orange Tornadoes got close, but fell at

Bell Stadium against Bayonne. The Tornadoes were behind 18-0 at the half before rallying at home to get the score close. However, they would go on to lose 18-12. Orange will be on the road against West Side this Saturday.

Week one of the NFL season kicked off, with the Jets losing at MetLife Stadium to the Ravens 24-9. Joe Flacco didn't do much for Gang Green after subbing for injury signal caller Zach Wilson. On the other hand, the Giants finally won the first game of the season for the first time in years, successfully converting a two-point conversion with 1:04 left in the game to stun the Titans in Tennessee 21-20.

Finally, by the next edition of "Local Talk," Yankees slugger Aaron Judge may have 60 home runs on the year, while Cardinals legend Albert Pujols might have 700 homers for his career.

THE DOCTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 4)

conditions. However, this study still should not be taken lightly. Because of the high population of Americans that have gotten the virus at some point in time, the latest data shows 94.7 million people, even seemingly tiny percentages can correspond to thousands of infected individuals.

Mental health is a critical part of health and should not be overlooked. If you have symptoms of a mental condition, ensure you speak to a health practitioner as soon as you can. 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 pre-

ventive 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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- <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20220820/study-covid-may-increase-risks-of-brain-disorders>
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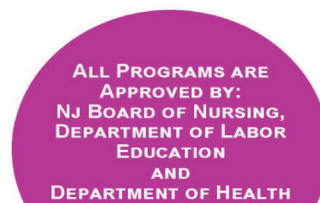
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SCARY NEWS ABOUT POLIO

UNITED STATES

On Sept. 13, CDC announced that polioviruses found in New York, both from the case of paralytic polio in an unvaccinated adult in Rockland County and in several wastewater samples from communities near the patient's residence, meet the World Health Organization (WHO)'s criteria for circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) - meaning that poliovirus continues to be transmitted in Rockland County, NY, and surrounding areas.

CDC is working closely with WHO, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and other international public health partner organizations. As previously reported, the virus' genetic sequences from the patient from Rockland County, NY, and wastewater specimens collected in New York have been linked to wastewater samples in Jerusalem, Israel, and London, UK, indicating community transmission.

The viral sequences from the patient and from three wastewater specimens had enough genetic changes to meet the definition of a vaccine-derived poliovirus (VDPV). These two things - one individual with VDPV and at least one detection of a related VDPV in an environmental sample - meet WHO's definition of cVDPV, and CDC submitted this data to WHO for inclusion on its list of countries with cVDPV. There are global recommendations for countries with cVDPV2 outbreaks to protect people from polio, and the United States is taking all appropriate actions to prevent new cases of paralysis.

The United States now joins a list of about 30 other countries

where cVDPVs have been identified. Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus occurs when local immunity to poliovirus is low enough to allow prolonged transmission of the original weakened virus in the oral polio vaccine. As the virus circulates and more genetic changes occur, the virus can regain its ability to infect the central nervous system and cause paralysis. It's important to note that cVDPVs are not caused by a child receiving the polio vaccine. Oral polio vaccine has not been used or licensed in the U.S. since 2000 but continues to be used in some countries.

"Polio vaccination is the safest and best way to fight this debilitating disease and it is imperative that people in these communities who are unvaccinated get up to date on polio vaccination right away," said Dr. José R. Romero, Director of CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. "We cannot emphasize enough that polio is a dangerous disease for which there is no cure."

It's important to note that no additional cases of polio have been reported in the United States at this time, and today's update does not impact the current CDC recommendations for polio vaccination for children or adults.

CDC continues to support New York State Department of Health's investigation through ongoing testing of wastewater to better understand the possible spread of the virus and through supporting vaccination efforts in the affected communities. Last week, the New York State Governor issued an Executive Order declaring a State Disaster Emergency. While no additional polio cases have been found, this action helps the state expand vaccination efforts and surveillance. Improving vaccination coverage is the key to preventing additional cases of paralytic polio in the United States.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II (1926-2022)

EUROPE

On Sept. 8, one of the world's most influential and well known people saw the end of her 70 years on the throne.

"We are all devastated by the news we have just heard from Balmoral. The death of Her Majesty The Queen is a huge shock to the nation and to the world. Queen Elizabeth II was the rock on which modern Britain was built," said recently appointed Prime Minister Liz Truss.

"Our country has grown and flourished under her reign. Britain is the great country it is today because of her. She ascended the throne just after the Second World War. She championed the development of the Commonwealth - from a small group of seven countries to a family of 56 nations spanning every continent of the world.

"We are now a modern, thriving, dynamic nation. Through thick and thin, Queen Elizabeth II provided us with the stability and the strength that we needed. She was the very spirit of Great Britain - and that spirit will endure.

"She has been our longest-ever reigning monarch. It is an extraordinary achievement to have presided with such dignity and grace for 70 years.

"Her life of service stretched beyond most of our living memories. In return, she was loved and admired by the people in the United Kingdom and all around the world.

"She has been a personal inspiration to me and to many Britons. Her devotion to duty is an example to us all. Earlier this week, at 96, she remained determined to carry out her duties as she appointed me as her 15th Prime Minister.

"Throughout her life she has visited more than 100 countries and she has touched the lives of millions around the world.

"In the difficult days ahead, we will come together with our friends...across the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the world...to celebrate her extraordinary lifetime of service.

"It is a day of great loss, but Queen Elizabeth II leaves a great

legacy. Today the Crown passes - as it has done for more than a thousand years - to our new monarch, our new head of state: His Majesty King Charles III.

"With the King's family, we mourn the loss of his mother. And as we mourn, we must come together as a people to support him. To help him bear the awesome responsibility that he now carries for us all. We offer him our loyalty and devotion just as his mother devoted so much to so many for so long.

"And with the passing of the second Elizabethan age, we usher in a new era in the magnificent history of our great country - exactly as Her Majesty would have wished - by saying the words...God save the King."

While Queen Elizabeth was loved by many, those of African, Irish, Indian, Pakistani, and other heritages affected by colonialism and other controversies may feel otherwise.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC APPROACHING AN END?

WORLD

As the number of weekly reported deaths from COVID-19 plunged to its lowest since March 2020, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Sept. 14 that the end of the pandemic is now in sight.

"We have never been in a better position to end the pandemic," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told journalists during his regular weekly press conference.

The UN health agency's Director-General explained however, that the world is "not there yet."

"A marathon runner does not stop when the finish line comes into view. She runs harder, with all the energy she has left. So must we. We can see the finish line. We're in a winning position. But now is the worst time to stop running," he underscored.

He also warned that if the world does not take the oppor-

(Continued on page 9)

PARAMOUNT THEATRE: TEAR IT DOWN OR FIX IT UP?

PART II

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

NEWARK - Paramount Theatre, located on 195 Market Street in Newark, will not be entirely torn down, "Local Talk" has learned. Rather, the façade and the marquee will be preserved and restored. In this, the second of two articles, "Local Talk" describes the fate of the old Paramount Theatre, which operated from 1886 to 1986.

On August 15, 2022 a Newark CBP hearing took place. Much of the information presented was similar to a previous presentation in September 2021. "Local Talk" located information about the September 2021 hearing on nj.com. What follows is a synthesis of notes from the August 2022 and September 2021 hearings.

According to data presented at the August 15 hearing, the proposal calls for a "Corners at Four Corners" project. This means that a skyscraper-style building will be built where the Paramount Theatre is now. The street façade will be preserved and restored. This is supposed to be 193 Market Street.

Inside the projected building there will be 16 floors. Of these, 80 will be studios, 120 will be one-bedroom, 41 will be two-bedrooms. There will a ground floor level, and 2nd-15th floors. The 16th floor is to be a recreation area, with tennis, and room for groups. There will be four varying shades of gray for the building. Acrylic limestone at set back; dark grey residential; dark bronze retail; and light grey elsewhere.

A vision glass, metal panels at spandrel and cast limestone at street level are projected to be made. Retail signage is projected to be put up, 32 square feet. Of these, 16 square feet will be on the surface. Existing Paramount signs will be retained. Gluck+, Peter Gluck Architecture of New York is in charge of the architecture.

According to Soufrienne El Noussi, "Paramount Theatre and

façade will remain during construction and be protected. Sidewalk to be removed and replaced by a 5'5 concrete sidewalk. A new curb and sidewalk to be made, as well as a new concrete walkway. A trench drain is proposed."

Other existing masonry building are to be demolished and replaced by new mixed-use buildings. Paramount Theatre overhang and façade to remain. There are 16 stories, 240 units. Block 146, lots 35, 37, 38, 55. All this totals 28,794 feet.

Plans are in place for parking. The proposal calls for 41 parking spaces. Of these, regular spaces make up 33 spots; emergency vehicles, 6 spots; and ADA or handicapped parking, 2 spots. Also, 120 bike storages are proposed for Beaver Street. The Harmon Group of New York is the Structural Engineer in charge. MEP / Civil Engineer is Inglese Architecture and Engineering, of Cedar Grove, New Jersey.

According to a September 8, 2021 article online nj.com, "although the interior of the theatre itself is not salvageable, the historic façade with its notable marquee will be stabilized and fully restored", reads a presentation by Gluck+. "The remaining frontage will include a newly built contextual façade in keeping with the materiality and dynamic rhythm of Market Street."

Initially, two applications were submitted. One called for the demolition of Paramount Theatre, while the other called for preservation and proposed construction.

According to the September 8, 2021 article, "The proposed building is a 14-story residential tower sitting on a two-story podium for commercial and retail use and is 189 feet in height," the second application stated. It noted that there were plans for 241 residential units and 57,000 square feet of space. Twenty percent of the units are to be "affordable" according to the Newark CBP August 15 hearing.

(Continued on page 13)

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

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Belleville	12,653	153	12,705	154
Bloomfield	14,039	163	14,109	163
Caldwell	1,938	17	1,945	17
Cedar Grove	4,506	137	4,523	137
City of Orange	9,262	174	9,303	174
East Orange	19,293	387	19,380	387
Essex Fells	584	2	585	2
Fairfield	2,334	39	2,341	39
Glen Ridge	1,489	18	1,492	18
Irvington	13,279	280	13,360	282
Livingston	7,713	107	7,761	108
Maplewood	6,182	49	6,214	49
Millburn	4,387	18	4,410	18
Montclair	8,237	89	8,274	89
Newark	89,117	1,260	89,520	1,261
North Caldwell	1,697	10	1,711	10
Nutley	7,601	86	7,631	86
Roseland	1,644	25	1,651	25
South Orange	4,124	22	4,135	22
Verona	3,882	23	3,898	24
West Caldwell	3,237	65	3,247	66
West Orange	15,351	268	15,419	268
Total	232,549	3,392	233,614	3,399

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of September 14, 2022)

NJ: 2,296,568 cases / 31,541 deaths (Plus 3,109 probable)
United States (approx.): 95.481 Million / 1.052 Million deaths
Worldwide (approx.): 610.217 Million / 6.52 Million deaths

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WORLD NEWS (Continued from page 6)

tunity now, there is still a risk of more variants, deaths, disruption, and uncertainty.

“So, let’s seize this opportunity”, he urged, announcing that WHO is releasing six short policy briefs that outline the key actions that all governments must take now to “finish the race.”

The policy briefs are a summary, based on the evidence and experience of the last 32 months, outlining what works best to save lives, protect health systems, and avoid social and economic disruption.

“(They) are an urgent call for governments to take a hard look at their policies and strengthen them for COVID-19 and future pathogens with pandemic potential,” Tedros explained.

The documents, which are available online, include recommendations regarding vaccination of most at-risk groups, continued testing and sequencing of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and integrating effective treatment for COVID-19 into primary healthcare systems.

They also urge authorities to have plans for future surges, including the securing of supplies, equipment, and extra health workers.

The briefs also contain communications advice, including training health workers to identify and address misinformation, as well as creating high-quality informative materials.

Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO’s technical lead on COVID-19, highlighted that the virus is still “intensely circulating” around the world and that the agency believes that case numbers being reported are an underestimate.

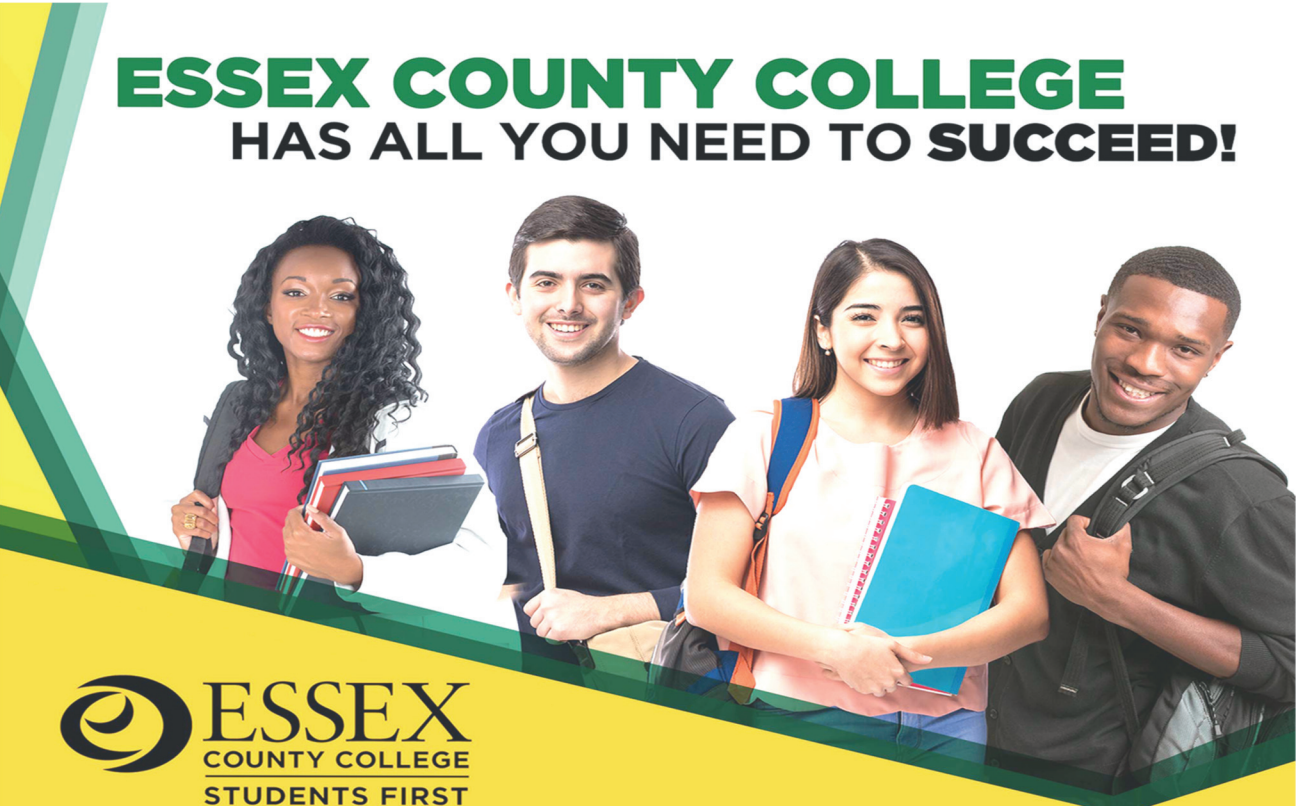
“We expect that there are going to be future waves of infection, potentially at different time points throughout the world caused by different subvariants of Omicron or even different variants of concern,” she said, reiterating her previous warning that the more the virus circulates, the more opportunities it has to mutate.

However, she said, these future waves do not need to translate into “waves or death” because there are now effective tools such as vaccines and antivirals specifically for COVID-19.

IRANIANS CHARGED IN HACKING SCHEME

MIDDLE EAST

An indictment was unsealed Sept.



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14 charging three Iranian nationals with allegedly orchestrating a scheme to hack into the computer networks of multiple U.S. victims, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger and National Security Division Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen announced.

As alleged in the indictment, from October 2020 through the present, Mansour Ahmadi, aka “Mansur Ahmadi,” Ahmad Khatibi Aghda, aka “Ahmad Khatibi,” and Amir Hossein Nickaein Ravari, aka “Amir Hossein Nickaein,” aka “Amir Nikayin,” engaged in a scheme to gain unauthorized access to the computer systems of hundreds of victims in the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Iran, and elsewhere, causing damage and losses to the victims.

The defendants’ hacking campaign exploit-

ed known vulnerabilities in commonly used network devices and software applications to gain access and exfiltrate data and information from victims’ computer systems. Ahmadi, Khatibi, Nickaein, and others, also conducted encryption attacks against victims’ computer systems, denying victims access to their systems and data unless a ransom payment was made.

The defendants victimized a broad range of organizations, including small businesses, government agencies, non-profit programs, and educational and religious institutions. Their victims also included multiple critical infrastructure sectors, including healthcare centers, transportation services, and utility providers.

“Ransom-related cyberattacks - like what
(Continued on page 11)

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 - New Jersey Department of Labor investigators' Sept. 8 issuing of stop work orders here at 135 Jefferson St. is the latest of a string of developments concerning the former St. James Hospital conversion.

NJDOL Wage and Hour and Contract Compliance investigators had posted red "Stop Work" signs on the Ironbound landmark early that Thursday. They also issued violations against developer Summit Assets, of New York, general contractor Townhouse Builders, Inc., and subcontractor Dimension Contractors LLC, of Newark.

Summit and Dimension are accused of having workers who are not registered to be working on a public project and for not paying the workers the prevailing wage. Summit is further accused of misclassifying workers there as independent contractors. Townhouse is accused of having unregistered workers on-site.

State officials' stop work order came from a complaint, filed by the Laborers International Union of North America Local 3's Eastern Region Labor Organizing Fund, of underpaid employees working in unsafe conditions. The complaints go back to May - days after a groundbreaking ceremony for the then-Newark Public Schools' High School of Architecture and Interior Design.

The order came a day after Summit CEO Albert Nigri told NPS Superintendent that their lease to convert St. James was voided and that he will now convert the hospital into an apartment building.

NPS had a 20-year, \$160

million lease with Summit's 155 Jefferson St. Urban Renewal LLC, in December 2021 to convert the hospital into a magnet high school. Summit would have an eight-percent return on the lease so long as NPS capped the conversion cost at \$87 million. The NPS Board of Education, on Aug. 26, voted to add \$48,000 to its contract with RSA Architects to add "Career Technical Education spaces not included in the original scope of the project."

The HS of Architecture and Interior Design was to open around Sept. 1, 2023 and become a full Grades Nine-12 high school in 2026.

IRVINGTON - Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II had announced the arrest of a man in relation to the late township resident Rasheed Mells' murder.

Chauncy Venable, 30, said Stephens, was arrested on Aug. 31 and has since been remanded to Newark's Essex County Correctional Center. Venable, whose residency or hometown is not available, has been charged on felony murder and weapons offenses.

Venable's arrest is the second of a suspect in nine shootings, two of them fatal, in Newark July 15-16.

Venable is accused of fatally shooting Mells, 24, along the 700 block of South 20th Street on July 16. Stephens had not said how Venable was connected with Mells' murder. Mells was pronounced dead at the scene at 6 p.m.

Mells, who was born in Livingston June 30, 1998, was a Newark University High School Class of 2016 graduate. "Trippo" had attended Jersey City Community College before turning his attention to becoming a rap artist and dancer.

Mother Dannielle Mells, girlfriend Alicia Jones, children Yaseen and Ahjanae Mells, brother Samaj Mells, sister Skylar Graham, grandmother Diana and Mells and great-grandparents Tinnie and Jerry Mells and Hurbert and Julia Graham are among Rasheed's survivors. Father Rasheed Fuquan Graham, brother Savion Mells

and sister Ahjanae Venable Graham predeceased him.

Mells' remains were interred at Hillside's Evergreen Cemetery, after a funeral at Newark's Perry Funeral Home, on July 29.

EAST ORANGE - A city man, accused of sexually assaulting a child in Englewood, remains held in Hackensack's Bergen County Jail since his Sept. 3 arrest.

Bergen County Prosecutor Mark Musella said, on Sept. 6, that a Central Judicial Processing Court session is pending for Joshua Odell Foster.

Foster, 25, is being held on charges of first-degree aggravated sexual assault and endangering the welfare of a child plus a second-degree count of sexual assault by contact.

The Englewood Police Department called BCPO's Special Victim Unit regarding the alleged sexual assault of a child. EPD and county SVU detectives "revealed that Foster had sexually assaulted a child, who was 2-years-old or younger at the time."

Englewood Police Chief Thomas Greeley said that Foster was arrested in his city later that Saturday.

It appears that Foster is no stranger to Englewood or jurisprudence. He had served a three-year prison term for two counts of armed robbery and weapons offenses in 2016. The then-Englewood resident and a juvenile were also accused of trying to hold up a 7-Eleven and a jewelry store on Nov. 24, 2014 - two weeks after his 18th birthday.

ORANGE - The Orange Public Schools Board of Education will start taking its meetings to a school building near you starting on Oct. 11 at 216 Lincoln Ave.

The school board, who had scheduled a Sept. 13 meeting at the Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation Auditorium, will return to 400 Central Ave. on June 13. Orange's educators will then make second-Tuesday-of-the-month meetings at eight schools in between.

Oct. 11's meeting is to be held at the Lincoln Avenue

School's cafeteria. Its Rosa Parks Community School Cafeteria date, at 369 Main St., is tentatively set for Nov. 8 - Election Day. A Dec. 6 date at the Park Avenue Community School Cafeteria, 231 Park Ave., is to round out Calendar Year 2022.

The Orange Board of Education's first public meeting for 2023 is to be on Jan. 10 at the Orange High School Auxiliary Gymnasium, also at 400 Lincoln Ave. Oakwood Avenue School's gymnasium, 135 Oakwood Ave., is next up on Feb. 14.

Forest Street Community School's gym, 651 Forest St., is to follow on March 14 and the Central Elementary School Auditorium, 33 Cleveland St., is next on April 11.

OBOE will be technically going out of town when it holds its May 9 meeting at its STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges Gymnasium. The STEM Academy, formerly the Marylawn School of the Oranges, is at 445 Scotland Rd. in South Orange.

WEST ORANGE - The once-newly hired Liberty Middle School principal's next public appearance now, indeed, appears to be her Sept. 15 preliminary court date here at the West Orange Municipal Court.

LMS students on their first day of school Sept. 6 were greeted by Xavier Fitzgerald and Stephen Olshasky instead of Aretha Dooley-Malloy. While Olshasky is the school's assistant principal, Fitzgerald is usually Edison Middle School's Sixth Grade Principal.

It remains unclear whether Dooley-Malloy has stepped aside on her own or has been suspended or dismissed by the West Orange Public Schools.

Either WOPS or Liberty posted the following note on Sept. 2: "As we welcome you back to the 2022-23 school year . . . I'm writing to inform you about the transition of leadership that's taking place at Liberty Middle School"

Dooley-Malloy's image, name and information has meanwhile disappeared from the public school district's website.

(Continued on page 12)

INTERVIEW WITH 10TH DISTRICT INDEPENDENT CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE CYNTHIA JOHNSON

By Lev D. Zilbermints

Lev D. Zilbermints: How many people are in danger of being evicted in the state? In East Orange?

Cynthia Johnson: The census predicts that 3.8 million will be evicted this September and October which is the equivalent of all evictions in 2018.

LZ: What is being done to stop evictions?

CJ: We are working hard to organize local and tenants to reinstate a national moratorium.

LZ: What about the landlords? Are they evicting tenants for valid reasons?

CJ: Most are presently evicting due to the covid crisis where DCA was providing funding to assist renters. Since the monies have been used, the landlords are evicting and suing tenants even after accepting the money. There is a clause in the letter that was attached to the funding provided to the landlords that stipulates that they agree to not evict based on the amount received. However, landlords and their attorneys are violating the terms and the courts are not enforcing. Most tenants are not even aware of the clause.

LZ: At the federal level, what is the situation with evictions?

CJ: Presently, evictions are taking place due the ceasing of

the moratorium.

LZ: What about your own case with eviction? How did that come about?

CJ: My personal situation with habitability issues caused my mother to be displaced and placed in a nursing home where she contracted covid and subsequently passed. I am presently in court fighting this situation.

LZ: Are the landlords trying to evict people who are standing up for tenants' rights? Or is there another reason?

CJ: Landlords want nothing more than to rid themselves of all who fight for tenants' rights. I myself am under attack.

LZ: Where do you see yourself as a candidate for Congress regarding housing? How does this make you different from other candidates?

CJ: I predicted that this affordable housing debacle would happen when the foreclosure crisis ruined many lives. We were all so taken off guard by the outright stealing of homes that we never fought the behind the scenes actions that were taking place. The billionaire companies were taking firm control of the communities by solidifying their purchasing of the area and the local politicians were so enveloped in what they called urban redevelopment that they allowed these purchases to take place. The median income predictions are completely off and are



wreaking havoc on the prices of housing. The communities are being priced out of the areas where most have lived all of their lives. I am presently working on legislation to correct the median income miscalculation and to halt the billionaires from purchasing any further in these areas. I have been working on housing issues for over ten years with boots on the ground. Win, lose, or draw, the fight continues.

LZ: What kind of solutions would you propose to solve the housing and eviction crisis?

CJ: Reinstate the anti-eviction moratorium until a sustainable solution can take effect.

LZ: Is there any city ordinance in East Orange that addresses evictions? Laws at the state level?

CJ: The city has been so non-compliant with code enforce-

ment that many of the urban renewal developments purchased by these large corporations have major habitability issues. They have not been responsibly issuing citations nor have they been following up with any that they do issue. Most tenants have to literally call nonstop to get code enforcement to come out. For them it appears to be easier for the tenants to exercise their rights under the truth in renting laws and to end up in court because it then no longer is their problem. I, personally, started contacting the mayor directly and nothing still was done.

LZ: Is there any other information you wish to convey to the public?

CJ: This fight will continue until there is justice!

WORLD NEWS (Continued from page 9)

happened here - are a particularly destructive form of cybercrime," U.S. Attorney Sellinger said. "No form of cyber-attack is acceptable, but ransomware attacks that target critical infrastructure services, such as health care facilities and government agencies, are a threat to our national security. Hackers like these defendants go to great lengths to keep their identities secret, but there is always a digital trail. And we will find it."

"These defendants may have been hacking and extorting victims - including critical infrastructure providers - for their personal gain, but the charges reflect how criminals can flourish in the safe haven that the Gov-

ernment of Iran has created and is responsible for," Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen said. "According to the Indictment, even other Iranians are less safe because their own government fails to follow international norms and stop Iranian cyber criminals."

"I want the people of New Jersey, and across the country, to know that the FBI is working tirelessly every day to protect you from people and things you may never see," Special Agent in Charge of the Newark Division James Dennehy said. "This coordinated, global effort amongst law enforcement and the intelligence community should send a clear message to those actors who think they can't be found in cyberspace: the days of

hiding behind a keyboard and perpetrating crimes against the American people without consequence are waning, and we will bring the full force of the American Justice system to disrupt your criminal behavior."

According to documents filed in this case: In February 2021, the defendants and their conspirators targeted a township in Union County, New Jersey. They exploited known vulnerabilities to gain control and access to the township's network and data and used a hacking tool to establish persistent remote access to a particular domain that was registered to Ahmadi.

In or before February 2022, the defendants and their conspirators targeted an ac-

(Continued on page 13)



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**Struggling In Prayer
To Break Curses**

Allow me to pick up on the theme I noted in a line of a song I quoted in my last reflection. The song focuses on how to use the word of God to break the curse(s). The essence of that line is that we need to pray every day to break those curses affecting us, our families, friends, communities, and nation(s). Yes, curses are everywhere, and they seem very persistent.

I have told it somewhere how in my boyhood days, on the way home from school, some children often ridiculed an older woman in our little country community who used to sing a song with words like the following, if I can remember them correctly:

*We want more prayers,
We want more prayers,
We want more prayers every day.
Satan gone a conference to meet us by the way,
We want more prayers every day."*

The woman did not use perfect grammar, as we would say, but her perception of the evil and curses in the world should be clear to anyone who is truly honest, if not even discerning. Do I need to speak of the banes of addictions, depressions, oppressions, aggressions, and deceptions, affecting the multitudes of persons in our families and communities, etc.?

Maybe you have felt like being under a curse. I am not just speaking of generational curses but of curses that come into our daily lives. Do I need to say that Satan is working overtime daily to corrupt us and our families - children, grandchildren - with power, pride, and jealousy, and if we cannot eliminate the curses, we will be crushed?

If you are tempted to say that you do not believe in curses and are too busy to pray them away, I need to say that you are most likely so duped that you do not admit to the possibilities and realities of life in this cursed world. Right now, your life might be going great, and you do not feel any need for a prayer battle, but I can guarantee you that if not you, someone around you needs you to help pray some curse(s) away.

I was reading a piece on the need for praying the curses away and noted the following thought, "Maybe in the olden days, when every task directly affected your family's survival - of course,

they prayed because if the crop died, they'd starve. If someone got sick, there was no medicine to help. Life was dangerous and fragile, and people weren't distracted by social media and cell phones. But today? Who could be expected to keep their mind on God at all times? Surely God wouldn't expect that of us because He knows more than anyone how flawed we are and how short our attention spans are." The one who said this was being sarcastic about the thinking of some who see themselves as so contemporary that they do not have time to pray.

But the understanding is that we need to pray if we sense the probability and possibility of curses in our lives and the land. As the apostle Paul reminds us, "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

We need to pray constantly. Pray persistently. Pray perseveringly. Intercede. Supplicate. Petition. Engage in prayer warfare. Ask for what we need in the name of Jesus Christ, believing we will receive it; it will be done for us. (cf. John 14:13, 14).

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." (Mathew 7:7-8, cf. Luke 11:9-10).

Here are seven suggestions

that I offer for praying prayers to remove curses.

1. Call upon the name of the Lord with seriousness and sincerity. This is the authority that Christ has given to us.
2. Pray in obedience to God. Your will be done on earth as in heaven.
3. Pray for protection. When you are under the divine hand, and the blood of Jesus - no weapon formed against you will be able to succeed.
4. Pray for greater faith to believe what the Lord has promised to remove the curse.
5. Pray for specific things to be removed.
6. Pray to God in secret; he has promised to reward you openly.
7. Pray with a group when you need to.

C.S. Lewis wrote, "It's no use to ask God with earnestness for A when our whole mind is in reality filled with the desire for B. We must lay before Him what is in us, not what ought to be in us." (Letters to Malcolm, pg. 35). That is what we need to make sure that we want to get rid of any curse, that is **"let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles"**, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1).

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

Dooley-Malloy, 51, was arrested after a suspected DWI accident on a Rock Spring Road front lawn on Sept. 1. The 19-year educator has been charged with DWI plus refusing to take a breathalyzer test and refusing to be fingerprinted plus driving an unregistered car and failing to provide proof of insurance.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - Those who believe that an apparent Sept 22 plea bargain hearing between ECPO attorneys and Columbia High School junior Moussa Fofana's accused killer is too lenient have scheduled a "Justice for Moussa" march and rally for late Sept. 15.

Maplewood Mayor Dean Dafis and South Orange Village President Sheen Colum are planning to attend the march, which is set to step off from CHS at 5:30 p.m. Marchers will head south on Valley Street to the Maplewood Municipal Building via Kensington Terrace and Oakland Road.

Marchers, before the township hall, will urge a letter-writing campaign to ECPO and acting county prosecutor Stephens II to dissuade them from granting the purported plea bargain. There may be a petition circulated there.

The Sept. 22 hearing before State Superior Court Judge Ronald Wigler in Newark, twice postponed since Aug. 26, would supposedly present ECPO's plea bargain against Yohan Hernandez. Hernandez, 21, of Newark, is to serve 15 years in state prison for shooting Fofana at Underhill Field June 6, 2021.

Mother Hawa Fofana and former Maplewood mayor Fred Profeta have decried the supposed deal, saying that Hernandez should serve at least 30 years' time.

Schnall New / Old Trustee

The South Orange Board of Village Trustees have brought back two-term former Trustee Steve Schnall to complete the outgoing Robert Zuckerman's term as of Sept.

12. Schnall, who declined re-election in 2019, will succeed Zuckerman, who has left the village for a new job in Red Bank and a new home in Asbury Park.

BLOOMFIELD - A township man had been arrested on, among several charges, for spitting on a Hoboken police officer Sept 11.

HPD officers were first called to the McDonald's in the city's Hoboken Terminal at 1:10 p.m. Sunday. They were met by a man who said that another diner had left with his cell phone.

The victim used a borrowed phone to call his own stolen phone and, before HPD officers, arranged to have the suspected caller meet him to return the phone. The suspect, however, told the victim, "don't call the police."

Two of the officers found the man - later identified as Matthew Soler, 28 - matching the victim's description, moments later at the train terminal. Their investigation found the phone and "several folds of heroin" in Soler's

(Continued on page 14)

POSTAL SERVICE EMPLOYEE ADMITS STEALING CELL PHONES FROM MAIL

NEW JERSEY - A Hudson County woman admitted stealing numerous cell phones from mail that passed through the United States post office where she was employed, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger, announced Sept. 12.

Nyasia Hutchinson, 26, of Jersey City, New Jersey, pleaded guilty by videoconference before U.S. District Judge John Michael Vazquez to an information charging her with one count of theft of mail by a postal employee.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court: Hutchinson was employed by the U.S. Postal Service as a postal service clerk at the Elizabeth Post Office (EPO). From May 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2018, another EPO employee provided Hutchinson with 15 to 20 stolen cellphones that the employee had taken out of packages at the EPO that had been mailed to a Hillside, New Jersey, business.

Hutchinson admitted that she taped up empty packages and placed them back in the mail stream after cellphones had been removed. Hutchinson later sold the stolen iPhones which had a total approximate value of \$12,000, keeping the sales proceeds for herself.

The theft of mail by a postal employee charge carries a maximum potential penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 31, 2023.

U.S. Attorney Sellinger credited special agents of the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General, Northeast Area Field Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Matthew Modafferi, with the investigation leading to the guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Leslie Faye Schwartz of the U.S. Attorney's Office's Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

WORLD NEWS (Cont. from pg 11)

counting firm based in Morris County, New Jersey. They again exploited a known vulnerability to gain unauthorized access and then used a particular hacking tool to establish a connection to a server that was registered to Nickaein and steal data. In March 2022, the defendants launched an encryption attack against the accounting firm; after denying the firm access to some of its systems, Khatibi demanded payment of \$50,000 in cryptocurrency and threatened to sell the data on the black market.

The defendants also compromised, and often encrypted and extorted, hundreds of other victims, including an accounting firm based in Illinois; a regional electric utility company based in Mississippi; a regional electric utility company based in Indiana; a public housing corporation in the State of Washington; a shelter for victims of domestic violence in Pennsylvania; a County government in Wyo-

ming; a construction company located in the State of Washington that was engaged in work on critical infrastructure projects; and a state bar association.

Ahmadi, 34, Khatibi, 45, and Nickaein, 30, all residents of Iran, are each charged by indictment with one count of conspiring to commit computer fraud and related activity in connection with computers; one count of intentionally damaging a protected computer; and one count of transmitting a demand in relation to damaging a protected computer. Ahmadi is charged with one additional count of intentionally damaging a protected computer.

The conspiracy charge carries a maximum prison sentence of five years in prison. The intentional damage to protected computers charge carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison. The transmission of a ransom demand charge carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. The offenses also carry a potential maximum fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY



PARAMOUNT THEATRE:

PART II (Continued from page 7)

According to the September 8, 2021 article, the first application proposes demolition at 193-195, 197, and 199-201 Market Street, along with 12 Beaver Street, stating in part that the interior of the old theater is "currently unstable and dangerous."

"Local Talk" reported in its September 2 issue that part of the roof had fallen in. The website cinematreasures.com has photographs of the Paramount Theatre's interior. It would be possible to salvage all of it, but the expenses incurred would be astronomical.

"The Paramount is being redeveloped by RBH. It is my un-

derstanding that they will be keeping the facade and demolishing everything else. It does reside in the 4 corners historic district and is protected by Landmark status," said Matt Gosser, a professor of architecture at NJIT.

"Local Talk" contacted all the architectural and engineering firms involved in construction. As of press time, none have responded to questions.

One commission member was not convinced that the proposal to build new buildings around the old Paramount Theatre was sound.

Dan Becht warned, "Risky. A lot of the stuff we do today will come back to haunt us."

Only time will tell if Mr. Becht's warning will come true or not.

amount of gain or loss resulting from the offense, whichever is greatest.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys David E. Malagold and Matthew Feldman Nikić of the Cybercrime Unit in Newark, and Trial Attorney Andrew D.

Beaty of the National Security Division in Washington, D.C.

The charges and allegations contained in the indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

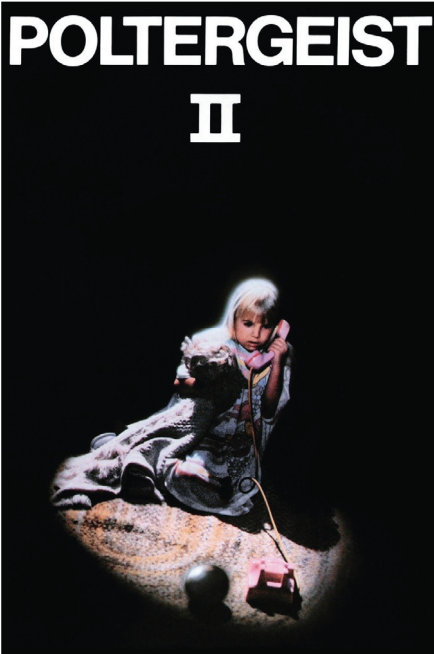
The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

PARANORMAL IS MY NORMAL

COME INTO THE LIGHT
CAROL ANNE...
COME INTO THE LIGHT!
COME INTO THE LIGHT
READER... COME INTO THE
LIGHT!!! COME INTO THE
LIGHT OBSERVER...COME!!!



TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 12)

possession. A records check also found arrest warrants on Soler from Jersey City and State Superior Court-Newark.

Soler, said Hoboken Police Det. Jonathan Mecka, was arrested and taken to police headquarters. It was there where Soler is accused of spitting in an officer's face.

Soler has been charged by HPD for throwing bodily fluids, theft of movable property and possession of drug paraphernalia. He was transferred to Jersey City to answer their warrant.

MONTCLAIR - The Montclair Public Schools' \$187.7 million construction bond

I had to do it. The statement up above is thrown around by yours truly like confetti every chance I get, and I throw it everywhere - whether I'm talking about physical light or beckoning someone into the light of that spiritual one. Of course, the lure to my attraction is the voice influxes of that elderly woman in that 1982 beloved horror fantasy movie "Poltergeist." Thus, logically as a Performance artist, I mimic the women verbatim as honing my voice. It's one of my favorite tools of practice. Now check this one out Mommmmy!

Sing it as a singsong, mimicking the melodic tones of a young child's voice. BAM! Welcome to voice-over 101 lol. Many years ago, when my children were children, I was lying in bed one night and I had been in a meditative state and it was pretty late around two or three in the morning. It showed up as a whisper and each time it was loudening, and it was heard it over and over and over again. The voice would go up a few octaves then drop low, then up again. "Mommmmy!" was his singsong.

Naturally, I got out of bed and followed its lead into my son's bedroom. The two were comfortably sleeping in their bunk beds, one at a snore when I tipped in. When entering the room there was a window and it was where those echoes rang from. This is when I was living on Springdale Ave. in East Orange. We lived on the first floor and the window that I was now directly facing ahead was cracked and the black shade was aligned with its opening. When looking outside of that window,

issue public question has made it onto the Nov. 8 General Election on the institutional 11th hour.

The Montclair Board of Education passed on their public question referendum to Essex County Clerk Chris Durkin's Elections Division office Sept. 8 after their Sept. 7 unanimous vote of approval. Durkin's elections staff had closed the Nov. 8 window to public question referenda at 4 p.m. Sept. 9.

The school board voted their approval after receiving "preliminary eligible cost letters" from the New Jersey Department of Education and the School Development Authority early Sept. 7. Those letters include a pledge by NJDOT and its SDA construction arm of \$58 million towards MPS' proposed construction projects.



Left; L.I.T KID MUSE MODEL: SPIRT BEING SINCERE
Right: PARANORMAL THE GHOSTLY ONE: NORMAL



I saw a child sitting Indian-style on the ground. It was a boy around six or seven years old. His back was facing the backyard and was looking over his shoulder directly at me. He continued his song. His expression was blank, his eyes haunting.

He sat there for a while as I peered out, while he continued his song. He was small-framed, wearing a plain t-shirt of sorts and a pair of blue jean shorts. He had ankle socks on his feet and a pair of brown sandals. His hair looked as if it was freshly cut. I notice it at the time because the ex was a barber, and this child was presently sedentary in between our home and Lee's Barbershop where the hubby was employed at the time.

He was brown-skinned in complexion, narrow-faced and dainty features, and the perfect little face that would surely morph into a fine Mocha Man one day. The emotions mixing were a cocktail of curiosity, shock, fear, and concern. The cherry on top was the unidentifiable but familiar ingredients of others that weren't apparent that I can no longer recall. But they

surely added to the taste that bitter made.

Amongst other things, I was startled by how abruptly his mini concert came to a screeching halt. His positioning then changed when using his right hand he began lifting his body off that stony ground to abandon the seemingly comfy space in-between home and Lee's shop. As never breaking gaze and never abandoning his "Mommy" song. I shut my eyes tightly just for a moment, but when I opened them he was gone. One last whisper had been heard of his mommy song, my mommy song. ...

Read this article in its entirety at www.localtalkweekly.com and type The Observation Booth, Andrea Dialect and/or Entertainment Section in the search bar. If you are interested in participating in a challenge, project sharing a topic, news or if you have any questions, comments or concerns, send them to localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

Officials in Trenton will therefore fund up to a third of Montclair's nearly \$188 million bond issue - should a majority of participating registered township voters approve the public question.

This bond issue is also making MPS history because the district is in the midst of a three-year transition from a mayor-appointed BOE to a voter-elected panel. The public question has been deemed necessary since the question will affect more than two percent of MPS' district budget and because their annual school board elections are being held in November.

The proposed bond issue would raise funds for renovations and additions at 14 of MPS' buildings and Woodman Field. They

(Continued on page 15)

BURGESS TO SUCCEED RICE

(Continued from page 1)

Local 1039 union president Lionel Leach, of Irvington, get Tucker's Assembly seat should the opportunity present itself. Newark Mayor Ras Baraka was said to have also quietly favored Tucker's nomination.

The 14-year Assemblywoman meanwhile wanted to see where the other county Democratic leaders stood.

"I'm willing to take it if offered," Tucker said on Aug. 23, "(but) first, I'm going to find out if I'm offered it."

The Burgess endorsement bandwagon gathered momentum going into Friday night.

All of the other Irvington Council colleagues, Irvington native and Essex County Commissioner Romaine Graham and Irvington Democratic Committee Chairwoman Baseemah Beasley backed Burgess.

Bloomfield Mayor and township Demo-

cratic committee chairman Michael Venezia and all six of his Township Council lent their support to Burgess.

Incumbent 29th LD members Sen. Teresa Ruiz and Assembly women Elana Pintor-Marin and Shanique Speight - all of Newark - endorsed their future colleague.

Gov. Phil Murphy (D-Rumson) and Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo (D-Roseland) put in their backing. Cong. Mikie Sherrill (D-Montclair) was seen sitting next to DiVincenzo in the theater audience.

East Orange, Essex County and State Democratic Chairman LeRoy Jones, Jr. granted his blessing to Burgess. Newark South Ward Councilman and party chairman Rev. Patrick Council, at the convention, said that he would not oppose Burgess becoming senator - and then nominated her.

It was Jones, at the convention, who first asked convention members to have Burgess succeed Rice. The chairman then asked the

voting audience to put Burgess' name on the Nov. 8 General Election ballot.

Convention members, both times, unanimously voiced their affirmation.

Vauss and B. Beasley, on their way home, began to consider who or whom would succeed Burgess in the Township Council.

J. Beasley had been a TIS member since her initial election to the council. The Irvington South Ward resident.

Darlene Brown comes to the council as outgoing Irvington Housing Authority president. The 39-year resident had been an IHA commissioner since 2014 and its president since 2017. The South Ward District Leader had also been a seven-year president of the Campfield Block Association.

The public will have their first look at the new Irvington Township Council lineup at their Sept. 28 meeting.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

include proposed additions for the Charles H. Bullock elementary and the Renaissance at Rand middle schools.

BELLEVILLE - Township elders, while refraining from public comment regarding the latest lawsuit between its mayor and its construction and zoning code officer, are to be briefed by Township Attorney Steve Martino during the scheduled Sept 13 council meeting's executive session.

Martino, of Bloomfield, had not commented on Sept. 12 when Frank DeLorenzo and his attorney filed a whistleblower lawsuit against mayor Michael Melham in State Superior Court-Newark. Melham, citing current and pending litigation, also declined comment Monday.

DeLorenzo, in the latest filing, asserts that Melham had created a committee in January 2019 to oversee him and the construction and zoning departments "without legal authority." Township officials, after receiving three letters from DeLorenzo complaining of Melham's behavior, investigated and found that the mayor had not followed best practices in dealing with the construction/zoning official.

DeLorenzo further claims that Melham had accused him during a September 2021 Township Council meeting of billing developers between \$200 and \$750 for meetings held outside of Town Hall premises and hours. DeLorenzo's 2021 salary included a \$17,292 stipend for attending Township Council, planning and zoning board and subcommittee meetings.

The Township Council then denied Melham's resolution to suspend DeLorenzo, 5-2. State investigators, days later, served a search warrant on Town Hall and subpoenas on individual officials.

The construction/zoning code official further accused Melham of creating a post-September 2021 work environment by having "turn other employees against him."

DeLorenzo believed that Melham's animus against him came from before when he was elected mayor in 2018. The official had denied approving a building permit of a Melham property that he said would have "violated township zoning laws."

NUTLEY - Township detectives are looking for the two men who held up a filling station near the Clifton border at knifepoint here Sept. 4.

The service station attendant at 84 Kingsland St. told responding NPD officers that two men approached him. that Friday. One of the men "brandished a knife" and "stole a large sum of money" from the attendant.

Although both suspects wore face coverings, the employee said that one of them wore a red shirt.

The Delta station at the northeastern corner of Kingsland and Passaic Avenue had been a longtime Gulf Oil station. A rival station was replaced by the 100 Kingsland St. apartment building in 2015.

It is not known whether local NJTransit or Decamp bus service was affected by the field investigation.

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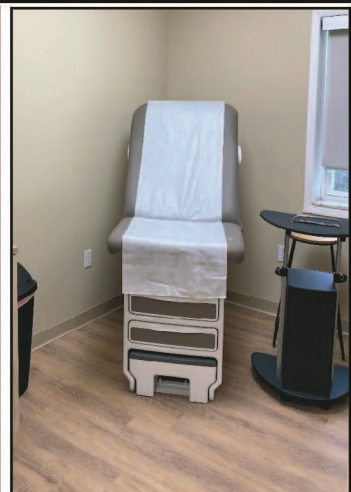
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