

LOCAL TALK

NEWARK • IRVINGTON • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE • WEST ORANGE • SOUTH ORANGE • MAPLEWOOD • BLOOMFIELD • MONTCLAIR & MORE

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25¢

"LET'S TALK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COMMUNITIES"

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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JUSTICE SOUGHT FOR HALEEM YOUNGBLOOD



On Thursday, March 30, a rally will be held outside of the Essex County Veterans Courthouse at 50 West Market Street in Newark at 3:30 p.m. The rally is by the family of Haleem Youngblood, who are still seeking answers after his death.

The death of Haleem Youngblood on Jan. 18 was not only the first homicide death of 2023 in Irvington, but there were some unusual circumstances.

According to the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, Irvington police officers responded to an alleged stabbing report from an address along the 100 block of Tichenor Terrace at 2:03 a.m. that morning. They found 35-year-old Youngblood, lying on the kitchen floor with "an apparent stab wound." Youngblood was "pronounced dead at the scene at 3:06 a.m.," 63 minutes later.

An hour and three minutes from being found and being declared dead is an unusually long period of time.

(Continued on page 5)

CITY OF NEWARK SUED \$10 MILLION BY DEVELOPER



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DeCAMP ENDING COMMUTER BUS SERVICE



Photo via DeCamp

By Walter Elliott

MONTCLAIR - DeCamp Bus Lines' riders had an especially blue Monday here March 20 when they learned that the private bus carrier has decided to get out of the commuter business.

Company vice president and CEO Jonathan DeCamp announced at 9 a.m. on its Twitter account that all services on the Nos.

33, 44, 66/66R and 99 routes will cease with their last scheduled bus runs on April 7.

Riders in Montclair, West Orange, Glen Ridge, Bloomfield, Belleville, Nutley and North Newark - along with those in 10 other West Essex, Bergen, Passaic and Hudson county towns - will have to find other ways to enter New York City's Port Authority Bus

(Continued on page 7)



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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

I like some quotes from WhatsApp. 1. How come we choose two people for president and fifty for Miss America? 2. A lawyer is someone who writes a 40-page document and calls it a brief! 3. A business executive is someone who talks golf in the office and business on the golf course! 4. Too often people who want to offer sound advice give more sound than advice!

These quotes made me want to write about judges' selections. I don't like the selection process for the judges in America. There should be a mayor, governor or president who selects two or three nominated judges for each

post and all the lawyers of the constituents involved can vote for the selection of a judge.

Will the Indian Rupee take the place of Dollar transactions in the world? Right now, the Dollar is the most accepted currency in the world. The world trusts the Dollar in transactions from one country to other. Now, 60 banks in 18 countries have agreed to transact in Indian Rupees. Those 18 countries are the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Botswana, Israel, Fiji, Oman, Germany, Kenya, Guyana, Mauritius, Seychelles, Tanzania. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved 60 requests to open Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) of correspondent banks from 18 countries.

We are receiving many robocalls from different local numbers. When you dial back the same number, you will find it is

disconnected. If the number belongs to Verizon or AT&T or another company, they must be held responsible for those cancelled, unused phone numbers. They must create a program so that no one can use unallocated phone numbers. If someone is smarter than them and uses those numbers, those companies must be held accountable with fines.

In 18 months (From Jan. 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) Congressional Candidates have collected \$2.4 billion, Political parties received \$1.4 billion and Political Action Committees (PAC) raised \$5.5 billion. The race for money should be stopped. As more of our representatives are sold out to the lobbyists, others do not have any choice but to accept money from those giant money dealers. The 331 candidates running for the Senate in 2021 and 2022 have reported raising \$943 million.

Party committees for the Democrats have raised about \$686 million and party committees for the Republicans have raised over \$702 million. With the other parties raising about \$5.3 million, the total money raised is about \$1.4 billion by the big parties. So, the total money raised in 18 months is about \$8.3 billion. Do you think that it will not end up back in their pockets? So, the cost for the taxpayers, directly or indirectly, might be five times more than what they have raised.

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell announced a .25% interest rate hike. It will help to control the inflation, but it will not stop a recession in the year 2023 year. Also, more banks may soon fail.

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>
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CITY OF NEWARK SUED \$10 MILLION BY DEVELOPER

By Lev D. Zilbermints

The City of Newark is in hot legal waters for allegedly violating agreements that date back to 2008.

The court papers are dated June 25, 2021. Eric T. Kanefsky, of Calcagni & Kanefsky LLP, Newark, NJ, is the attorney representing Fairmount Senior Genesis, Housing Urban Renewal Partnership, LLC, Genesis Fairmount Partners, LLC and Genesis Central Ave Partners, LLC in the lawsuit.

Assessed and appraised values for the properties

Court papers say, "According to the [Newark City Council] Resolution [dated February 18, 2021] the assessed and appraised values for the Central Properties were \$2,276,400 and \$1,180,000 respectively. Yet the Department of Economic and Housing Development recommended that the City Council sell the Central Properties to Kawaida Towers LP for just \$23,847.68, and the City Council approved that ab-

surdly low purchase price."

Court papers say that "By way of further perspective, the proposed purchase price of \$23,847.68 is: (i) approximately \$2,252,552 less than the assessed value of the Central Properties; (ii) approximately \$1,156,152 less than the appraised value; and (iii) approximately \$526, 152.32 less than the 2008 appraisal price used to set the acquisition price to be paid by the Plaintiffs more than 13 years ago."

Plaintiffs and Defendants

According to court papers, Fairmount Senior Genesis, Housing Urban Renewal Partnership, LLC, Genesis Fairmount Partners, LLC and Genesis Central Ave Partners have filed a lawsuit against City of Newark, a municipal corporation of the State of New Jersey, the City Council of the City of Newark, as redevelopment entity of the City of Newark, Alison Ladd, Community Foundation of New Jersey, Kawaida Towers LP, Omni America LLC, Mid-Atlantic Investment Alliance LLC, NAN

Newark Tech World, and ABC Corporate Entity 1-10 and John Doe 1-10.

Three "relevant non-parties" are also named in the lawsuit. These include Julio Colon, the former Director of the City's Department of Economic and Housing Development; Baye Adolfo-Wilson, a former Deputy Mayor and Director of the City's Department of Economic and Housing Development; and Carmelo Garcia, a former Director of the City's Department of Economic and Housing Development and the former Executive Vice President and Chief Real Estate Officer of the City's Community Economic Development Corporation.

The lawsuit cited a November 19, 2020 report by the United States Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey, as announcing that Garcia has been charged with conspiracy to commit bribery based on his having "sought and received significant monetary payments and other benefits" between 2017 and 2019 to assist property developers with securing redevelopment agreements with the City and purchasing City-owned properties."

How the Lawsuit Came About

According to court papers, "the action arises from a classic - and all-too-common - tale of political exploitation, malfeasance, and gamesmanship."

The whole mess, court papers state, started in 2009, "the City, under the direction of Mayor Cory Booker, engaged plaintiffs to redevelop properties in the West and Central Wards because plaintiffs had proven themselves to be experienced, award-winning redevelopers capable of delivering quality affordable housing that Newark so desperately needs. Specifically, the City awarded Plaintiffs the rights to develop two separate projects - a senior affordable housing project located at the Fairmount Properties in the West Ward, and a more profitable project consisting of market rate rentals and retail outlets located at the Central properties in the Central Ward."

According to Newark City Council Agenda from March 15, 2022, some of the properties in

question are located at 664, 662, 660, 658, 656, 654, 668, 670, all of South 11th Street. This is Block 2617. The respective lot numbers are 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 85, 86, 88. All of these are Class 15C, with the owner listed as the City of Newark. The properties are located in Newark's South Ward.

However, in the lawsuit mentioned, other properties are at stake. These are located in the West Ward and Central Ward.

Court papers state, "The first property is in the West Ward and is comprised of 2 sites. The first is located on Fairmount and Twelfth Avenue and identified on the City's tax maps as Block 259, Lots 21 and 22 and more commonly known as 130 Fairmount Avenue and 124-128 Fairmount Avenue. The second is Block 1826, Lots 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 62 and more commonly known as 111 11th Avenue, 113-115 11th Avenue, 117 11th Avenue, 200 South 11th Street, 198 South 11th Street, 196 South 11th Street and 107-109 11th Avenue (together the "Fairmount Properties")."

According to court papers, the second property is in the Central Ward and located on or about Central Avenue and Halsey Street and more specifically identified on the City's tax maps as Block 20, Lot 1 and more commonly known as 32 Central Avenue (a/k/a 17-21 Halsey Street) ("the Central Properties")

The Newark City Council is on record as having sold the properties, via private sale, for \$167,601.40 to Southside View LLC, based at 1212 Springfield Avenue, Irvington, New Jersey 07111. The purpose is "to develop property into a fifty-two (52) unit, multi-family affordable residential housing.

According to Newark Municipal Council Agenda, the assessed amount is \$359,000, with cost basis being \$10 per square foot. The sale is "at prices set forth by Ordinance 6S&Fh, adopted on April 7, 2004, establishing the minimum sale of City-owned properties." The price formula is listed as "Total Square Footage X PSF [per square foot]. This means that 16,760 square feet x \$10 = \$167,601.40.

(Continued on page 8)

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SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

The NCAA Tournament is in full swing this month, and two New Jersey teams made history with historic upsets. First, #15 Princeton took out #2 Arizona in the South Region 59-55. Then, the Tigers punched their ticket to the Sweet 16 after beating #7 Missouri 78-63. They will take on #6 Creighton out of the Big East.

Of course, the biggest win came from Fairleigh Dickinson, who became the second ever #16 team in the men's tournament to beat a #1 seed. The Knights stunned the top ranked Purdue Boilermakers in the East Region 63-58. Purdue featured National Player of the Year candidate Zach Edey, who is 7'4", and the Knights have no player taller than 6'6". Unfortunately, the journey for FDU ended after a 78-70 loss to #9 Florida Atlantic.

Bear in mind, FDU not only had to win a play-in game to outright get the #16 seed, but they did not even win their conference tournament, as Merrimack is not eligible due to the five year window on teams coming up from Division II.

In other action, Michigan State beat Big East champ Marquette 69-60. Tyson Walker led Michigan State with 23 points in the upset victory. Also in the East Region, Kansas State defeated Kentucky 78-69. Markquis Nowell scored 27 points while Keyontae Johnson had 12 points. In the South Region, #1 seed Alabama handled Maryland 73-51, while in the West Region, UCLA beat Northwestern 69-63 and Xavier dismissed Pittsburgh 84-73. Colby Jones led his team with 10 points and 14 rebounds. Finally, in the Midwest Regional,

(Continued on page 7)

YOUNGBLOOD

(Continued from page 1)

According to Local Talk's original article in the Jan. 26 edition, ECPO Public Information Office spokesman, Robert Florida, provided "Local Talk" with a partial answer on why the comparatively 63 minute long lead time, Jan. 25.

"Sometimes the Regional Medical Examiner pronounces a person as dead at the scene," said Florida. "More often, the examiner makes a death pronouncement electronically or remotely."

The N.J. Regional Medical Examiner, who also conducts autopsies around the "Local Talk" area, is based in Newark.

Municipal police and other law enforcers call the ECPO when an incident or accident causes serious injury or death as soon as they determine the need. The county's fire investigators are also called to a scene of a serious blaze as a standard operating procedure.

The 63-minute time leaves open whether there was a delay in an EMS technician or rescue squad or ambulance unit's arrival.

Some EMS listening to a 911 report or a dispatcher's call, promptly heads to the scene. Some squads are integral with the fire department or as a special police unit; others may be volunteer or contracted private vendors.

The particular incident that led to Youngblood's death may have been complicated in its being categorized as one of domestic violence.

One published report had "another woman at the scene told authorities that an argument broke out over a board game (and) escalated into a fight over a hole in the wall."

Here is where the situation gets even more complicated. Haleem's mother, Debra Youngblood said, "The person arrested for the crime is Essence Williams, who is about 22/23 years of age."

Also, according to Debra, in about a month, Williams was detained for six days, only to be released and the case closed after a quickly assembled grand jury was convened to oversee the case, and found no fault.

The case has gained traction in the community with so many questions unanswered.



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JUSTICE FOR HALEEM YOUNGBLOOD



We are back at it again! We are not giving up!!

Come join the Youngblood family as we rally for Haleem Youngblood's justice! Haleem's murderer was released after six days stay in jail and the case has been closed, all within a months' time.

Round 2

**Thursday, March 30th at 3:30pm
Essex County Veterans Courthouse
50 West Market St.**

Newark, NJ

JUSTICE FOR HALEEM YOUNGBLOOD



WORLD

ARREST WARRANT ISSUED FOR PUTIN

The Pre-Trial Chamber of the UN-backed International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin of Russia on March 17, in connection with alleged war crimes concerning the deportation and “illegal transfer” of children from occupied Ukraine, the head of the ICC said.

“The contents of the warrants are secret to protect the victims,” said ICC President Piotr Hofmański. “Nevertheless, the judges decided to make the existence of the warrants public, in the interest of justice and to prevent future crimes.”

The ICC Pre-Trial Chamber II also issued a warrant for the arrest of Russia’s Commissioner for Children’s Rights Maria Alekseyevna Lvova-Belova. The orders state that each are “allegedly responsible for the war crime of unlawful deportation” of children from occupied territories in Ukraine to Russia, the UN-backed court said in announcing the warrants.

“The crimes were allegedly committed in Ukrainian occupied territory at least from February 24, 2022,” the ICC detailed. “There are reasonable grounds to believe that Mr. Putin and Ms. Lvova-Belova bear individual criminal responsibility.”

The court found reasonable grounds that Mr. Putin bears responsibility for having committed the acts directly, jointly with others and, or through others, and “for his failure to exercise control properly over civilian and military subordinates who committed the acts, or allowed for their commission, and who were under his effective authority and control, pursuant to superior responsibility.”

All allegations are in line with the Rome Statute. Neither Russia nor Ukraine are parties to the statute, which created the

judicial body in 1998.

ICC Prosecutor Karim A. A. Khan said those responsible for alleged crimes must be held accountable and that children must be returned to their families and communities.

“We cannot allow children to be treated as if they are the spoils of war,” he said. “Incidents identified by my Office include the deportation of at least hundreds of children taken from orphanages and children’s care homes. Many of these children, we allege, have since been given for adoption in the Russian Federation.”

Through presidential decrees issued by President Putin, the law was changed in Russia to expedite the conferral of Russian citizenship, making it easier for them to be adopted by Russian families.

The Chamber had initially decided that the warrants should not be published in order to protect victims and witnesses and also to safeguard the investigation, Mr. Hofmański said.

However, mindful that the conduct addressed in the present situation is allegedly ongoing, and that the public awareness of the warrants may contribute to the prevention of the further commission of crimes, the Chamber considered that it is “in the interests of justice to authorize the Registry to publicly disclose the existence of the warrants, the name of the suspects, the crimes for which the warrants are issued, and the modes of liability as established by the Chamber,” the ICC said.

Asked by reporters to comment on the arrest warrants at the regular Noon Briefing in New York on March 17, UN Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric, stressed that the ICC and the UN were “separate institutions, with separate mandates.”

EUROPE

MET POLICE SLAMMED IN REPORT

A new report on those protecting and serving in the UK is not singing their praises, but rather shouting their iniquities.

The Baroness Casey Review reporting on the Metropolitan Police Department was just released, and it pulled no punches.

The police were chided for racism, bias against LGBTQ citizens, an indifference towards crimes against women, and poor management. There was also criticism of treatment of whistleblowers, bad cops staying on the job, harassment, and abusers in the department.

Amid the deep seated issues, Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley said: “This report sparks feelings of shame and anger but it also increases our resolve.

“I am proud of those people, our officers and staff, whose passion for policing and determination to reform moved them to share their experiences with such honesty.

“This is, in many ways, their report. It must be a catalyst for police reform.

“This report needs to lead to meaningful change. If it only leads to pillory and blame of the exceptional majority of officers then only criminals will benefit.

“We need it to galvanise Londoners, the dedicated police majority and politicians to coalesce around reform and the renewal of policing by consent for the 21st century.”

The review was commissioned by the Met in October 2021 following the appalling murder of Sarah Everard by a serving officer and its publication follows other catastrophic and criminal incidents involving other officers.

Baroness Casey was asked to examine the standards of behavior and internal culture of the Met and to make recommendations on the actions required.

Her final report, published March 21, explores a wide range of issues including the Met’s organization, its support for officers and staff, discrimination, standards, its approach to protecting women and children and its wider operational effectiveness.

Rowley added: “The appalling examples in this report of discrimination, the letting down of communities and victims, and the strain faced by the frontline, are unacceptable.

“We have let people down and I repeat the apology I gave in my first weeks to Londoners and our own people in the Met. I am sorry.

“I want us to be anti-racist, anti-misogynist and anti-

homophobic. In fact, I want us to be anti-discrimination of all kinds.

“There are external factors - funding, governance, growing demand and resource pressures that shouldn’t sit with policing - that the report has identified. Baroness Casey is right to identify the impact these have had on our ability to police London, but there can be no excuses for us.

“The core of the problems are for policing to determinedly confront.”

UNITED STATES

SIX MORE OATH KEEPERS FOUND GUILTY IN CAPITOL BREACH

Six additional members and affiliates of the Oath Keepers were found guilty in the District of Columbia March 21 for their actions during the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol breach. Their actions and the actions of others disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress convened to ascertain and count the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

Sandra Parker, 63, of Morrow, Ohio; Bennie Parker, 72, of Morrow, Ohio, Connie Meggs, 60, of Dunnellon, Florida; Laura Steele, 53, of Thomasville, North Carolina; and William Isaacs, 23, of Kissimmee, Florida, were found guilty of conspiring to obstruct an official proceeding, a felony. Sandra Parker, Meggs, Steele, and Isaacs were also convicted of obstruction of an official proceeding, conspiring to prevent an officer of the United States from discharging a duty and destruction of government property, all felonies. All five defendants, along with co-defendant Michael Greene, 39, of Indianapolis, Indiana, were found guilty of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds, a misdemeanor.

“With this verdict, the Justice Department has now secured convictions of 14 Oath Keepers members and affiliates for felonies surrounding the January 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. “I am grateful to the prosecutors, agents, and staff for their tireless work on these cases. The Justice Department is committed to holding accounta-

(Continued on page 12)

DeCAMP (Continued from page 1)

Terminal.

The above said four routes will join the 32 Nutley-New York, the 88 Orange / East Orange-NY and the 100 "North Jersey" routes that were never reactivated after March 24, 2020.

March 24, 2020 was when DeCamp, among most other private bus carriers, suspended service on all eight routes due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. DeCamp suspended its entire operation, including charter and casino services, Aug. 8, 2020.

DeCamp first resumed limited weekday rush hour service on June 1, 2020 but resuspended it due to low ridership on Aug. 7, 2020. It resumed in stages May 6, 2021 and Jan. 30, 2022 to its current average 80 daily trips.

Jonathan Decamp, however, indicated that the average ridership is now 20 percent of pre-pandemic levels. His buses went from carrying 6,500 daily riders in 2019 to around 1,775 lately.

"As we pass the three-year mark of the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic, DeCamp Bus Lines has struggled to recapture daily commuter passengers as work-from-home, telecommuting and flex schedules severely reduced daily commuting to New York City," said Jonathan DeCamp. "DeCamp has sustained commuter service up to this point, thanks to the various federal and state assistance programs. But, without further assistance on the horizon, the economic losses of the continued operation of the commuter services are too much to bear."

DeCamp was referring to the federal transit subsidy funds that Congress gave out during the pandemic's height. Other private carriers plus public carriers like NJTransit, PATH and New York's MTA have been beneficiaries, allowing them to preserve services and fare levels.

Waiting for their subsidy to come through in 2020, however, had led to DeCamp putting their commuter services on an Aug. 2020- May 2021 hiatus. Other federal and state subsidies and moratoria, from TANF Food Stamps to rent, have indeed been receding this past year.

PATH daily ridership, reports its Port Authority of NY and NJ parent, is up to 52 percent of its 2019 level of 270,000. (Newark, from 2020 Census data has a population of over 280,000.)

NJTransit has recently said that its commuter rail ridership is 75 percent of its 89,000 2019 non-Amtrak riders on its nine lines. Its bus and light rail ridership is said to be "holding steady."

Likening DeCamp to NJTransit and PATH, however, is more of a David-versus-Goliath contrast than an apples-to-apples comparison. PATH/PA is a public authority. NJTransit is the nation's third-largest public carrier - and the largest statewide carrier.

"NJTransit can go to the taxpayer," said DeCamp then-VP Gary Pard in 2000. "We have to watch every penny."

Pard was quoted while he watched NJTransit complete its

(Continued on page 11)

old Big East rival Syracuse 72-54. Park Lane had 21 points and Azana Baines chipped in 8 points and 8 rebounds in the loss. The Seton Hall ladies finished the 2022-23 season with an overall record of 19-15. Leading Syracuse was Georgia Wooley with 19 points and 4 rebounds.

In baseball, Japan won the World Baseball Classic, beating the U.S. in the title game. The last play saw Shohei Ohtani strike out Angels teammate and New Jersey native Mike Trout.

Finally, in sad news, Knicks legend Willis Reed has passed away at the age of 80. He was the captain of the franchise's only two NBA Championship teams.

SPORTS WRAP

(Continued from page 5)

Miami beat Indiana 86-69. This mirrored the women's bracket, as the Lady Hurricanes upset #1 Indiana. Another #1 that went down was Stanford, marking the Cardinal's earliest tourney exit in years.

In the women's National Invitational Tournament, the Seton Hall University Lady Pirates beat St. Joseph's 69-61. Lauren Park Lane led SHU with 30 points and 5 rebounds, and Sidney Cooks had 17 points and 10 rebounds. Unfortunately, the Pirates season came to an end in the second round, as they lost to

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Municipality	3-15-2023	Deaths	3-22-2023	Deaths
Belleville	14,147	164	14,163	164
Bloomfield	15,901	178	15,918	178
Caldwell	2,143	20	2,148	21
Cedar Grove	5,057	145	5,067	145
City of Orange	9,947	179	9,947	180
East Orange	21,725	409	21,743	409
Essex Fells	637	2	638	2
Fairfield	2,580	44	2,595	44
Glen Ridge	1,677	20	1,678	20
Irvington	14,809	288	14,830	288
Livingston	8,754	115	8,763	115
Maplewood	6,836	53	6,850	53
Millburn	4,779	18	4,784	18
Montclair	9,307	93	9,324	93
Newark	98,451	1,302	98,522	1,303
North Caldwell	1,883	10	1,886	10
Nutley	8,532	92	8,556	92
Roseland	1,824	27	1,827	27
South Orange	4,567	25	4,573	25
Verona	4,343	26	4,346	26
West Caldwell	3,339	70	3,339	70
West Orange	17,199	282	17,214	284
Total	259,185	3,562	259,474	3,567

NJ COVID-19 TALLIES (As of March 22, 2023)

Confirmed: 2,555,710 Cases / 32,936 Deaths

Probable: 501,086 Cases / 3,116 Deaths



ADVOCACY: The Barrier-Breaker for Ableism

OP-ED By Hazeline Pilgrim, MSW, LSW of Family Support Organization of Essex County

March is *Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month* and *Women's History Month*. As we celebrate the contributions of women and people with developmental disabilities, it is fitting that we honor the life of trailblazer and disability rights activist, Judy Heumann.

Heumann died on March 4, 2023, and she leaves behind a legacy of service that improved the quality of life for millions of Americans living with disabilities. Among her greatest contributions, Heumann lobbied for legislation that eventually led to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These Acts prohibit discrimination against disabled people for any entity receiving federal dollars, such as, schools, health care facilities, and other organizations.

The loss of independent mobility at the age of two did not deter Heumann from pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher. In the 1970s, she won a lawsuit against the New York Board of Education and became the first teacher in the state to use a wheelchair. Heumann once said: *"Disability only becomes a tragedy when society fails to provide the things, we need to lead our lives . . . Job opportunities or barrierfree buildings."*

Despite decades of progress, people with disabilities still face significant barriers to social inclusion and equal opportunity in education, employment, and housing. The root cause of these disparities is ableism.

Ableism is *"discrimination or prejudice against individuals with disabilities (www.mw.com)."* There are two types of ableism. One type is individuals' personal prejudices, misconceptions, and reactions about disabled people. The other type is more concrete barriers are

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built into our physical environments, policies, and everyday practices. These barriers persist despite the passage of laws.

People with disabilities have a right to full inclusion in all aspects of American life with dignity and respect. Until we dismantle ableism, our advocacy to

secure justice for all must continue on.

To learn about how you can advocate for children and families with developmental disabilities, email the Family Support Organization of Essex County at info@fsoec.org.

NEWARK SUED

(Continued from page 4)

Politics start. Favoritism alleged.

According to court papers, "since Mayor Ras Baraka took office in 2014, however, the City and the City Council have engaged in a deliberate scheme to deny Plaintiffs' their clear contractual rights - a scheme marked by lies, self-dealing, and egregious abuse of power and designed to steer the more lucrative Central Properties project to developers that have won favor from Mayor Baraka, certain members of the City Council, and other members of the Baraka administration."

In other words, the City and its Municipal Council and Mayor are allegedly engaging in favoritism.

Court papers describe how this alleged favoritism came to be.

According to court papers, "the City first

forced Plaintiffs to prioritize the completion of the Fairmount Properties project before Plaintiffs could proceed with the Central Properties project despite knowing that the economic viability of the project was dependent upon the development of both projects and the financial benefits that Plaintiffs would receive from redeveloping the Central Properties."

Simply put, one project was given priority over another. From the description in court papers, the City had a different plan than Fairmount Senior Genesis and their partners.

Next came what reads in court papers as allegation of trickery and unfair play.

"After inducing Plaintiffs to expend millions of dollars pursuing the development of the Fairmount Properties, the City stonewalled Plaintiffs' efforts to move forward with that project by failing to deliver the essential funding that it had agreed to provide while simultaneously securing and facilitating the same type of financing for numerous

other projects throughout Newark."

Allegations of threatening retaliation.

According to court documents, "The City then attempted to use the agreed-upon financing and unmistakably clear threats of retaliation as leverage to compel Plaintiffs to forfeit their contractual right to redevelop the Central Properties and surrender that lucrative opportunity back to the City. Even worse, the City purported to "terminate" the redevelopment agreement when Plaintiffs justifiably refused to accede to its unreasonable demands."

Stonewalling. Political Games.

According to court documents, "next, the City convinced Plaintiffs to dismiss the initial litigation filed in 2016 by agreeing to reinstate the redevelopment agreement and pave the way for the development of the

(Continued on page 14)



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TOWN WATCH

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

NEWARK - Five men and a woman, all city residents, were arrested and charged in two separate out-of-county murders respectively going back to Aug. 7, 2022 and Sept. 2, 2019.

The Warren County Prosecutor's Office and the State Police have arrested and charged on March 17 Mustafa Manns, 28, William Dixon, 24, and Nahir Rios-Figueroa, 30 with felony murder, murder, conspiracy and kidnapping. Manns and Dixon were also charged with aggravated assault and robbery; Manns and Rios-Figueroa with weapons offenses.

The trio is accused of kidnapping Quadree Bunch, 27, of Newark, beating and shooting him "execution style" and dumping his body along I-80 East on Aug. 7, 2022. An NJDOT maintenance worker found Bunch's body off the shoulder of Milepost 16.6 in Allamuchy Aug. 9 - the same day Bunch was reported as missing.

The State Police arrested Manns along Lyons Avenue Jan. 19 "without incident." Dixon has been held in the Essex County Jail since his Aug. 24 arrest for allegedly threatening Bunch's associates. Figueroa had surrendered to Westchester County authorities in White Plains, NY Jan. 6 on unrelated charges.

Hudson County Prosecutor Esther Suarez, on March 6, said that Austin Be-Kwao, 25, Malcolm Horton, 36 and Khadijah Neal, 36, with first-degree murder and conspiracy thereof and second-degree weapons charges in the Sept. 3, 2019 Jersey City shooting of Lawrence Terrell Reid, 31 that led to his Nov. 20, 2020 death.

Responding Jersey City officers found resident Reid shot in the chest on Wagman Parkway between Bergen Street and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard 12:48 a.m. Sept. 2, 2019. Reid was rushed to the Jersey City Medical Center, where he died of complications Nov. 20, 2020. A celebration of his life was held at Harvest Temple COGIC, Dec. 2.

Be-Kwao is serving an eight-year prison term for a 2019 carjacking and sexual assault. Horton is on a five-year state term for robbery. Neal is detained in the Essex County Jail awaiting trial for weapons possession.

IRVINGTON - A preliminary investigation by township first responders to a March 5 two-car and motorcycle accident near an intersection here was caused by something that most two-wheeled vehicle operators fear.

Irvington police, followed by a local ambulance service and township firefighters, responded to a motorcycle accident on Lyons Avenue by Lincoln Place at 9:15 p.m. that Sunday.

The responders found a damaged motorcycle - and its rider beneath a car on the road. They also found a second car with one of its doors damaged.

It became apparent that the rider got "doored," where the driver or a passenger of a parked car opens a door into the path of a rider. The impact in this incident forced the rider off the cycle and to slide beneath the second car.

IFD personnel extricated the rider and EMS took him to Newark's University Hospital. The rider was admitted for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

EAST ORANGE - Power and light, thanks to city officials' over-the-weekend intervention, is still going to Prospect Towers Condominiums here at 275 Prospect St.

The city's Department of Property Maintenance, including its Housing & Inspections and Code Enforcement divisions, negotiated with Public Service Electric & Gas to keep supplying the 210-unit building past the latter's March 20 cutoff deadline and to arrange a payment plan.

Prospect Towers' owners and

tenants said that a utility employee posted a notice, announcing that its "Winter Termination Period" ended on March 16.

Where their money goes is unknown - except they suspect that it does not go to maintenance.

The residents and owners of the 16-story luxury apartment building have said that they have gone months without a maintenance crew or contractor. They had been paying their rent or maintenance fees on time to Royal Property Management, of Newark, but have few results to show for it.

The owners and tenants have long complained of repairs taking months to complete if they are done at all. The towers' occupants are a mix of renters and condominium tenant-owners.

Royal has not responded to a reporter's March 17 call for comment.

Then-Mayor Robert T. Bowser and his challenger Kevin Taylor came to Prospect Towers' aid to keep its lights on and natural gas coming in 2009.

Prospect Towers have been an Upsala Heights neighborhood landmark since 1963.

ORANGE - Authorities have not disclosed further details of the man who was found dead March 13 in a car parked here on a South Ward street.

Orange police officers were sent to a car parked along Argyle Avenue, west of Scotland Road, at 5:30 that Monday. They summoned local EMS technicians when they found an "unidentified, unconscious and unresponsive man" within.

The man was declared dead at the scene. Results of his autopsy, including a toxicology report, remain pending from the Regional Medical Examiner's Office in Newark.

The Orange Police Department would only add that no foul play was suspected.

It is believed that any further investigation is being handled by the Essex County Prosecutor's Office. The ECPO has not confirmed or denied their figurative involvement.

WEST ORANGE - Reaction to the Supreme Court of New Jersey's March 13 decision that in-

validated the township's Area in Need of Redevelopment designation criteria for the 1959/79 Wrest Orange Public Library building came from two contrasting sources the next day.

Mayor Susan McCartney said that municipal officials disagreed with the court's interpretation over "immediate harm and detriment to the public." The court, in Kevin Malanga v. Township of West Orange, had ruled that the municipality had failed to prove that said harm.

McCartney referred to the 2015 incident when the eastern brick facade of the 1979 annex cascaded onto the parking lot.

"The collapse came within minutes of seriously injuring one of our neighbors," said McCartney. "The Court found that the fact that we took action to repair the brick facing meant that there was no immediate harm to the public. We respectfully disagree with that determination but hope that the Governor and New Jersey Legislature will carefully re-examine that law."

Replacing the old WOPL at 46 Mt. Pleasant Ave. with a five-story senior citizen building and renovating 10 Rooney Circle by the Essex Green Plaza as the new library, said McCartney, will proceed as planned. Redeveloper Joe Alpert is to start demolition on or by April 1 and "ground will be broken for senior housing in the next 30 days."

Our Green West Orange meanwhile has meanwhile argued that Township Attorney Richard Trenk's losing Malanga v. West Orange should be grounds for the Township Council to show the 25-year municipal lawyer the door.

"We oppose the four-year appointment of Richard Trenk as Township Attorney," said the environmental group on its website. "Trenk again lost big time when the NJ Supreme Court ruled that West Orange (led by Trenk who bills by the hour) violated public bidding laws by selling off our downtown library to his handpicked developer at a bargain rate. The Court declared that the library was NOT blighted."

The council, on a split vote at its March 21 meeting, approved Resolution 80-23 that
(Continued on page 14)

REGISTRATION UNDERWAY FOR SUMMER I & II CLASSES AT ECC

Registration for Summer I & II 2023 classes at Essex County College is underway. The College's Summer I term starts Monday, May 8.

Students may also register for the Summer II Term. Classes for Summer II begin on July 10. Information is available for the Fall 2023 Semester, which begins on August 30.

"Essex County College offers more than 50 Associate degree programs and Academic Certificates in a wide range of disciplines. Essex graduates transfer as juniors to many New Jersey colleges and universities, as well as top schools around the country. Register early to get the classes you want," said Dr. Alvin Williams, Executive Dean of Faculty and Academics.

For more information, please click on this link: <https://www.essex.edu/registration/>. Students may be eligible for scholarships and qualify for the Educational Opportunity Fund program. Additional registration information is available through the College's Welcome Center, located on the 2nd Floor at the Newark campus, or by calling the Center at 973-877-4477.

"Essex County College has always and continues to provide high quality and affordable educational opportunities. Our Summer terms allow students to complete a semester in a more compressed time. Our many support services help students stay on track to graduate and realize their dreams," said ECC President Dr. Augustine A. Boakye.

The College is an open access institution and fully accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

DeCAMP (Continued from page 7)

Montclair Connection practically down the street from DeCamp's garage and headquarters. The Montclair Connection, completed Sept. 20-22, 2002, consolidated the former Boonton Line and Montclair Branch for decades-desired one-seat service to New York Penn Station.

NJTransit's opening the Montclair Connection, the Kearny Connection in 1996 and the Secaucus Junction station in 2003 busted ridership and real estate values - at private carriers' expense.

DeCamp, Community Coach 77 and Lakeland Bus lines reported ridership declines. DeCamp cut a third of its drivers and bus runs.

It is not known whether DeCamp will have to return its leased commuter buses to

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NJDOT. NJDOT has been leasing each bus to private and public carriers for \$1 each since the 1980s.

It is unknown whether DeCamp will sell any of its commuter lines to another company or return their charters to NJDOT/NJTransit.

It had sold its Livingston-Newark and West Caldwell-Newark routes around 1980 to NJTransit, which renumbered them as 73 and 71. It sold its No. 22 Bloomfield-Jersey City Journal Square route in 1930 to another private company.

Boxcar president Joe Colangelo said on March 20 that he is reaching out to the towns along DeCamp's routes about alternative services. Boxcar runs premium buses to Midtown Manhattan from central Bergen and Morris and northern/central Union counties.

OurBus may also be approached by De-

Camp commuters. The New York outfit, featuring advanced electronic fare payment, currently runs express service from Newark's Peter Francisco Park east of Newark Penn Station to Clifton, New Brunswick, Hamilton, Baltimore and Washington, DC. It had tried out a parallel Morristown-NYC route for dissatisfied Community Coach 77 riders.

NJTransit spokesman Jim Smith, Monday night, said that the carrier is "assessing impacts on the existing bus, rail and light rail service." What alternative service it can make available "will be announced in advance of April 7."

There is no indication of whether NJTransit will buy or adopt DeCamp routes.

Sally Jane Gellert, Chairperson of the Millburn-based Lackawanna Coalition railroad advocacy group, however, favors

(Continued on page 14)



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

It's Paradise - The Place Of Rest

As my wife and I traveled across the little country where we grew up, we were always fascinated by the names of places we passed through. Two that fascinated us most were Rest and Restore. These were the names of places on the plain before the rise of the high mountain chain. As I reflect on the names, I offer that they were both named in days when the only means of transportation were on foot, donkey, horse, and buggy. After the long trek on the plain, people used these places to pause, rest their feet, and catch their breath before they attacked the mountain chain.

When we came to the United States, we were also fascinated by the names of places, but above all, the place called Paradise, which is the town at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain. Until the town burnt down, Paradise was noted as among the best places to live in the United States. But, of course, there are many other places and things across the United States

called Paradise. So, for example, there is Paradise Springs Winery in Santa Barbara, California; Paradise Indian Cuisine in Herndon, Virginia; Paradise Diner in Fredericksburg, Virginia; Paradise Rock Club in Boston; and multiple other places and things under the nomenclature Paradise. And, of course, Paradise Island in the Bahamas to avoid being accused of being biased.

All the paradise names are intended to remind us that there is a paradisaical place called Heaven. And I do not know what you think of it, but I like the lyrics of that old song by the Jim Brady Trio.

*I'm homesick for Heaven,
seems I cannot wait,
Yearning to enter Zion's
pearly gate
There never a heartache,
never a care,
I long for my home over
there.*

*The Greatest of all is the
thought that enthralls,
That I shall behold my King;
Rejoice in his presence, revel
in His grace,
And ever his praises sing.*

My reason for quoting the song is that I have seen enough of the consequences of the curses in this world. I accept the promise that God will not be ashamed to be called our God because he has prepared for us an eternal Paradise (Hebrews

11:10). I do not say the place "will be out of this world," but as a metaphorical expression, it is. It is more than any language can describe. The Bible clarifies that it is not "a fantasy." It is as real as the place we now live, except that it will be a new creation (Revelation 21:5).

What inspiration tells us in the Bible and poets have written through the ages, and what my imagination tells me is that this world will be a Paradise restored. John Milton's poem, **Paradise Lost**, is an interesting description of the battle Satan has been carrying on for the destruction of humanity since Eden. His later work **Paradise Regained** is connected by name to the epic poem **Paradise Lost**. In **Paradise Regained**, Milton still sees a struggle. But he concludes that what will be regained is anything but our present life. I agree that even as we imagine the restoration of life, we continue to face a long struggle.

As one inspired voice I read states:

As we approach the close of time, on the borders of the heavenly Canaan, Satan will intensify his efforts to prevent the people of God from entering the beautiful land. He will prepare his temptations for those in holy office; if he can lead them to pollute their souls, he can destroy many through them. By worldly friendships, the

charms of beauty, pleasure-seeking, partying, feasting, or liquor, he tempts people to violate the seventh commandment.

Those who will dishonor God's image and defile His temple in their own bodies will not step back from any dishonor to God that will gratify the desire of their depraved hearts. It is impossible for slaves of passion to realize the sacred obligation of the law of God, to appreciate the atonement, or to appreciate the value of the soul. Goodness, purity, truth, reverence for God, and love for sacred things - all are burned up in the fires of lust. The heart becomes a blackened and desolate waste. People formed in the image of God are dragged down to a level with the animals. (Ellen White, Beginning of the End, p. 226.)

But I say, thank God there is an end to the struggle. Sin and its curse will be forever ended. There will be no more need for places of temporary rest and restoration before we climb the mountains and cross the luscious plains. With the presence of God, all will be well. It will be perfect holiness and wholeness. God will be in the midst of his people, and where God dwells, it's Paradise.

WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 6)

ble those criminally responsible for the January 6th assault on our democracy."

Parker, Steele, and Isaacs were, additionally, found guilty of obstructing officers during a civil disorder, a felony, for joining the mob that tried to push against officers down the hallway from the Rotunda to the Senate Chamber; Isaacs was found guilty of one additional count of obstructing officers during a civil disorder for his conduct in entering the building; and Steele was found guilty of tampering with evidence.

The jury could not reach a verdict with respect to the charge of obstruction of an official proceeding against defendant Greene. Greene was found not guilty of the first and third counts of the indictment, and Bennie Parker was found not guilty of the second and third counts.

According to evidence presented at trial, the defendants and their alleged co-

conspirators coordinated in advance of Jan. 6 and traveled across the country to the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area in early January 2021. On the afternoon of Jan. 6, around 1:30 p.m., Oath Keepers leader Elmer Stewart Rhodes III, who was convicted in an earlier trial of seditious conspiracy and related charges, sent a message on an encrypted group chat announcing that Vice President Michael R. Pence would not intercede to stop Congress' certification of the electoral college vote, and so "patriots" were taking matters into their own hands.

Moments later, Sandra Parker, Bennie Parker, Steele, Meggs, and Isaacs joined with other Oath Keepers members and affiliates in marching towards the Capitol. They donned paramilitary gear such as helmets and vests. They passed barricades and Capitol Police officers and entered the restricted area of the Capitol grounds. Then Sandra Parker, Steele, Meggs, and Isaacs joined with 10 co-conspirators in placing hands on shoulders and marching up the steps and into the Capitol in a military "stack" formation.

Once inside, half of the group - including Sandra Parker, Steele, and Isaacs - tried to force their way past riot police officers towards the Senate Chamber. The other half of the group - including Meggs - moved towards the House Chamber, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's office. In the words of Kelly Meggs, a co-conspirator who was convicted in an earlier trial of seditious conspiracy and related charges, the group was looking for Speaker Pelosi.

In total, 29 Oath Keepers members and affiliates were charged as part of the Capitol Breach investigation. To date, eight have pleaded guilty, and all 15 who have proceeded to trial have been found guilty. Six are awaiting trial.

The charges of conspiracy to obstruct Congress, obstruction of Congress, and tampering with evidence carry a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison; the charge of destruction of government property carries a statutory maximum penalty of 10 years in prison; the charge of conspiracy to

(Continued on page 14)

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NEWARK SUED

(Continued from page 8)

Central Properties, only to, once again, stonewall Plaintiffs' efforts to get that project off the ground. In fact, the City went so far as to insist that Plaintiffs negotiate the transfer of their rights with respect to the Central Properties to another developer group hand-picked by the Baraka administration, and then refuse to authorize the transfer when Plaintiffs and that chosen third-party reached an agreement."

Funny business

According to court documents, "Finally, despite the pendency of this action and the Notices of Lis Pendens publicly announcing Plaintiffs' legal claim to the Central Properties, the City has announced that it has agreed to sell the Central Properties to yet another group of developers loyal to Mayor Baraka and certain members of the City Council - the Developer defendants - and award them a complete windfall. According to a resolu-

tion recently passed by the City Council, the City has committed to selling the Central Properties to the Developer Defendants for just \$23,847.68 or approximately one per cent of the Properties' assessed value (\$2,276,400) and an even smaller fraction of their fair market value, while also providing the Developer Defendants with millions of dollars in subsidies and tax breaks."

What injury has been caused?

According to court papers, Fairmount Senior Genesis and other plaintiffs have, "As a result of these and other malicious acts, Plaintiffs have suffered irreparable harm to their reputation and good will, and financial losses well in excess of \$10 million.

The purpose of this litigation is to hold the defendants accountable for the substantial damage they have caused, expose their dishonest and unlawful conduct, and prevent the residents of Newark from being further victimized by politicians that continue place their own interests over those of the City and their constituents."

WORLD NEWS FLASH *(Continued from page 12)*

prevent members of Congress from discharging their duties carries a maximum penalty of six years in prison; and the charge of interfering with law enforcement officers during a civil disorder carries a statutory maximum of five years in prison; the charge of entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds carries a statutory maximum of one year in prison. All charges carry potential financial penalties. The court will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia with valuable assistance provided by the Justice Department's National Security Division and U.S. Attorneys' Offices throughout the country.

The case was investigated by the FBI's Washington Field Office, Cincinnati Field Office, Charlotte Field Office, Jacksonville Field Office, and Tampa Field Office. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department.

In the 26 months since Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,000 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including more than 320 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or visit tips.fbi.gov.

DeCAMP *(Continued from page 11)*

NJTransit taking over the routes.

"When such a hole is created in transportation service, NJTransit, as the public agency, has a moral - if not legal - obligation to step in," Gellert told "Local Talk" March 21. "The agency has taken over abandoned routes before and should probably do so again - if not duplicating the service, then being sure existing routes cover the same areas or setting up short routes to connect major transit points."

South Orange rider advocate and Coali-

tion Chairman Emeritus David Peter Alan, suggests that NJTransit can start filling in DeCamp's gap by adding more Montclair-Boonton Line train runs.

"It's never good for riders when any carrier goes out of business like this," said Alan Tuesday. "It would also help if there could be more trains to Bloomfield, Glen Ridge and Montclair - particularly much-needed hourly service on weekends; every two hours is not enough."

Coalition members and representatives, said Gellert, are reaching out to the affected municipalities.

DeCamp has asked its riders to stay tuned for any alternative service announcements. It is presumed that DeCamp's PABT departure gates will go with its designated routes.

New Jersey's oldest bus company, founded in Livingston in 1870, will focus on its charter and casino bus business.

Unused and unexpired tickets and ticket books may be mailed back for a refund to DeCamp Bus Lines, Attn: Refunds, PO Box 581, Montclair, NJ 07042. Refund requestors are asked to enclose self-addressed stamped envelopes.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

granted Trenk a new contract.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - It appears that a recently filed underage student sexual abuse allegation made against a former South Orange-Maplewood School District administrator is the latest in a string of suits on incidents going back to the 1980s in Bergen County.

A former student has named former South Orange Middle School and Columbia High School assistant principal Michael Healy for multiple counts of sexual abuse from 1997 to 2003. The plaintiff, now a California resident, also named SOMSD for "failing to protect him from Healy" under the State Child Sex Abuse Act.

Although the Feb. 9 filing in State Superior Court-Newark Feb. 9 is independent of

four 2021 suits filed in Superior Court-Hackensack, the latest suit follows others' accusations.

A former Mahwah High School student an Small Town and Fancy Players production member, for example, has accused Healey of abusing him while the latter was an MHS teacher and production director.

That student said that the abuse began "around 1989" when Healey offered him a lift home from a production, asked the student to lift up his shirt and "performed oral sex" on him. Healy's abuse continued for four years.

The suit against Waldwick Public Schools comes from the 1980s when Healey was a substitute high school teacher and lunchroom monitor. The victim names the then-WHS choir teacher who informed him of Healy - but instead "openly flirted and sexually propositioned" that victim.

Neither SOMSD nor Healy's lawyer re-

sponded to calls for comment. Healy is reportedly working as a Boonton area freelance magician.

BLOOMFIELD - The late scholar-athlete Frank Tripuka, since March 19, has joined his son Kelly in the NJSIAA Hall of Fame.

Frank Tripuka, 85, who died in 2013, was hailed in Sunday's ceremony for his achievements in and beyond Bloomfield High School. The BHS Class of 1945 graduate was a star player on legendary championship Head Coach William Foley's Bengals football teams. He was also a lettered player on BHS's baseball and basketball teams.

Tripuka went on to play for the University of Notre Dame and as a 15-year professional on NFL, Canadian and American football leagues. He finished his career as the inaugural quarterback for the Denver Broncos of the new AFL in 1963.

(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

Father Tripuka has been inducted into the BHS, Colorado and Polish halls of fame plus the Saskatchewan Rough Riders and Denver Broncos rings of fame.

The Broncos had retired Tripuka's No. 18 jersey until they allowed Peyton Manning to wear it in 2012. Manning went on to help the Broncos win NFL Super Bowl 50 and set league passing records before retiring in 2016. No. 18 was then "re-retired."

The NJSIAA had enshrined son Kelly in 2006. K. Tripuka, BHS Class of 1977, was named "The Greatest High School Basketball Player of the 20th Century." The Notre Dame basketball "All American" went onto play for four NBA teams for 15 years.

Frank fathered Kelly, five other sons and a daughter in Bloomfield. All five sons played in D-1 level college sports.

MONTCLAIR - A recent Montclair High School graduate has been serving his 14-day federal prison sentence since March 15 for his part in the Jan. 6, 2021 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

Elias Irizarry, 20, was so sentenced in a Washington, D.C. federal court as part of an Oct. 25 pleas bargain. The MHS Class of 2020 graduate pleaded guilty to one count of picketing in the U.S. Capitol building and had to read a confession statement in exchange for the sentence.

Irizarry, on March 15, said that he made "the worst mistake of my life" and for allowing himself "to be on the wrong side." He had been facing up to a year in prison but U.S. Department of Justice attorneys were asking for no more than six months time.

Upon release, Irizarry is to pay \$500 restitution towards the \$2.7 million in damage that Chad chaired MHS' e may also reapply to The Citadel, a Charleston, SC military college where he had been suspended from since Dec. 23, 2022.

Irizarry, who had been studying political science at The Citadel, chaired MHS's Teenage Republican Club. He spoke at the Oct. 15, 2017 Township Council meeting against a proposal to designate Montclair a sanctuary city; the council narrowly approved the declaration.

FBI agents arrested Irizarry in Charleston and charged him on counts of trespassing and disorderly conduct March 13-14, 2021. He was released on \$25,000 bail.

Federal attorneys had identified Irizarry as among the crowd who overpowered U.S. Capitol Police officers and entered the building. A half-hour of footage had the metal pipe-carrying man walking corridors and taking pictures of President

Dwight D. Eisenhower's statue in Statuary Hall. His mother testified that Elias thanked Capitol police on his way out and, once home, broke down.

GLEN RIDGE - New York City-bound St. Patrick's Day revelers and regular riders got a passing trackside seat to NJTransit's repairs from blown-down tree damage here at Glen Ridge Station.

Workers from six NJTransit work vehicles - two on the eastbound track and four parked outside of the station - were reattaching pulled-down overhead catenary wires during Friday's off-peak hours.

All trains in both directions that day used the westbound track from Glen Ridge Station to Newark's Roseville Junction. Station TVM access was barred during the eastbound platform's closure.

That Friday's condition was an improvement from 48 hours earlier when a tree on the Bank of America property's northeastern corner was blown down just after 7 a.m. March 15. Four Montclair-Boonton line trains had to stop when its crews saw that the trunk, which had caught fire from power line contact, had fallen across the eastbound track and its branches across the westbound track.

NJTransit promptly called the Montclair Fire Department to put out the fire and dispatched its work crews to the station. All service between Montclair State University and Newark Broad Street was suspended and eight trains were canceled that day.

NJTransit brought in substitute buses between Glen Ridge and Newark Broad that Wednesday. Tickets and passes were also cross-honored by NJTransit and Decamp buses. Trains also ran on the westbound track March 16.

BELLEVILLE - It took The Smithsonian executive Lonnie G. Bunch III and 220 Belleville residents, officials and relatives to suspend author Thomas Wolfe's "You Can't Go Home Again," adage for an hour here at Beech Street and Greylock Parkway March 20.

Bunch, Belleville High School Class of 1970, flanked by mother Montrose and younger brother, Gregg, witnessed Mayor Michael Melham reveal the "Lonnie G. Bunch III Way" traffic sign on the Greylock and Beech traffic island just after Noon Monday.

The sign honorarily renames the block on Beech where the pioneering historian was raised. Bunch said that March 20 was 100 years to the day when his grandfather, sharecropper-turned-dentist Lonnie Bunch I, moved into 125 Beech.

Lonnie III would play sandlot football, walk to Schools No. 5 and 6, go to BHS and become a Buccaneers football player. He was aware, however, that he

and the Bunches were the only African American family on that block.

The honored Bunch became a noted historian, becoming the Smithsonian's first African American secretary in 2019. He was the founding director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in 2005.

"This is the first time I got a police escort into a park instead of out of a park," quipped Bunch. "I love how Belleville has changed because I'm honored in a way. When I was 17, all I wanted to do was to get out of Beech Street - and now all I want to do is come back."

NUTLEY - The absolute last chapter of the Nutley Volunteer Emergency and Rescue Squad may be written by the township's Board of Commissioners with their April 4 public hearing and final vote.

Nutley's elders approved the March 7 introduction of Public Safety Commissioner Alphonse Petracco's Ordinance 3511. The measure will formally dissolve NVERS as an entity.

The independent non-profit squad ceased operations Dec. 31, 2022. Its assets and operation have been absorbed by the Nutley Fire Department's pre-existing rescue unit.

Petracco, on March 7, explained that NVERS had dissolved on Dec. 31 as a business but not as an institution.

"It's with a heavy heart that I read this ordinance," said Petracco. "The volunteers of the Nutley Rescue Squad, through the years I've been here, were excellent. Moving forward, I think the fire department's doing an excellent job."

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