

LOCAL TALK

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25¢

“LET’S TALK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COMMUNITIES”

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

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NEW LEADERSHIP IN MAJOR POSTS IN NEWARK

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NEW JERSEY & OTHER STATES SUE META



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POSTERS OF KIDNAPPED ISRAELIS COVERED WITH PRO-PALESTINIAN GRAFFITI



Story / Photos By Lev D. Zilbermintz

WESTFIELD - Posters of Israelis kidnapped by Hamas have been defaced with pro-Palestinian slogans. “Local Talk” saw these posters on bulletin boards at the eastbound platform of the Westfield train station on October 22, 2023 between 5:00 - 5:45 p.m.

At the top, in huge white letters on a red background was written “KIDNAPPED”. Below this were photographs of the kidnapped Israelis. Next to the photo was the first name, last name and age of the kidnapped. Below this information was, “Kidnapped from his (or her) home by Hamas.”

A red line served as the divider before the main statement.

“On October 7th, nearly 200 innocent civilians were abducted from Israel into the Gaza Strip. Their whereabouts remain unknown.

“More than 3,000 women, men, and children, ranging in age from 3 months to 85 years old, were wounded, murdered, beaten, raped, and brutally separated from loved ones by Hamas.”

The text asked readers to “Please take a photo of this poster and share it.” At the bottom, in white letters on

a red background, was the plea, “Please help bring them home alive.” To the left was a digital square. Readers were urged to scan to join the global efforts.

The hashtag, at the very bottom, in black letters on a red background, was #BringThemHome.

According to the posters, the names of the kidnapped Israelis are Ohad Yahalomi, 49; Eitan Yahalomi, his son, 12; Carmella Dan, 80; Noya Dan, 12, her granddaughter; Aviv, 2 years old; Doron, 34, his mother; Raz, 4, his sister; Margalit Moses, 78; Evyatar David, 22; Shar Dan Kalderon, 16; David Shalev, 75.

The posters of Carmella Dan and her granddaughter, Noa Dan, were taped to the glass bulletin board by the elevator entrance on the eastbound side of the Westfield train station.

On five posters, in black magic marker ink, were written pro-Palestinian slogans, “Free Palestine”,

(Continued on page 7)



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 To
**PAGE
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Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

I mentioned before that I would write about local hospitals' ratings for this week. However, all the data is not gathered yet. So, we will skip the report this week. Also, next week is our 23rd anniversary week, a special edition with our year in review. Therefore, we will try to publish the hospitals ratings in the November 9th publication.

Another candidate was selected for Speaker of the House. Representative Tom Emmer of Minnesota was selected by the Republicans. After the departure of McCarthy, he is the second candidate who was approved by majority of the Republicans in a premeeting. There are 222 Re-

publicans and 212 Democrats in the House. So, if just six Republicans did not vote and three Republicans flipped and voted for another candidate, Emmer would not be elected as Speaker.

However, as of the latest news, Tom Emmer dropped out of the Speaker race as he did not receive enough support from the Republicans for a main floor vote.

After five rounds of the closed-door meeting, the Republicans chose Tom Emmer as their candidate for Speaker. Emmer is a new representative compared to many congresspersons. However, after getting elected in 2015, within a short period of time he became #3 in the Republican Party and the Majority Whip. He was instrumental in helping to raise funds for the candidates to win and got the majority in Congress.

Still, the majority is so thin that if three republicans flip to the other side, any resolution cannot pass. Every two years,

there is an election for Congress. In 2024, there will be an election, and if they do not get things right, the Democrats might gain back Congress. The same thing is with the Senate. The Democrats hold only a 1 seat majority, plus the tiebreaker. If two democrat flip, the resolution cannot pass, although they usually vote party line.

The Israel and Hamas war is still going on. However, the humanitarian society are not coming out and standing up to save lives of the people. The world is staying on one side, as they are politically powerful and standing behind the USA. I have seen many videos, and listening to those videos it is very hard to decide who is acting worse. However, war makes some politicians lots of money and some countries lots of money. So, they want war to advertise their war equipment and they can sell it at a very high margin of profit. For them it is business, but for peo-

ple living day to day life, they are losing their loved ones.

I think Hamas is at a fault for starting a surprise attack war. But not all the Palestinians are at fault. "Live and Let Live" is necessary for this world to make peace. Peace will bring happiness amongst all. The worst part is that in the name of religion, many wars are happening. Not a single real religion will teach you bad things, but some of the leaders in the religion change the meaning of the scripts for their benefit to rule the world.

On November 1, 2000, Local Talk was launched. Now, we finished 23 years. However, we have not fully achieved our goal to uplift the quality of life. We will continue to give people the news for the betterment of our community. I hope one day we will be fully successful.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next time.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Cloudy	Rain possible	Partly Cloudy	Sunny
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The Doctor Is In



OP-ED BY DR. ADIL MANZOOR

The Fall Flu, Coronavirus, and RSV Vaccines for Kids: What You Should Know

There was once a time when the only vaccine Americans really worried about was the flu shot. Oh, simpler times. Nowadays, the CDC and doctors seemingly advise getting a vaccine or a booster for a new variant or condition every other month. It can be frus-

trating to keep up with, really, and trust me, I understand. But it is absolutely for your - and your children's - good. This is the part many doctors don't make clear enough.

When health authorities beg to vaccinate yourself and your kids, some parents take the advice for just their kids. The rationale is that they would be able to better handle whatever infection that arises, but their kids cannot. That is true at face value, but the moment I add context to it, you see how wrong such a mindset is. What context, though? Well, here I go.

The flu, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), and coronavirus are all respiratory viruses. They actually have similar symptoms, and you may not be able to differentiate them if you are an untrained eye (that's the euphemism I'm going for when referring to non-medical professionals, haha). However, the similarity in symptoms does not correlate to a similarity in severity.

The coronavirus has proven



itself to be one of the worst health issues humanity has ever faced, so far claiming over 1.1 million American lives in three and a half years. On the other hand, the flu and RSV have not been as big a health worry, with the CDC estimating the flu claims 35,000 lives annually and RSV claims 14,000. While there is a gulf in mortality, human lives are still human lives, and any condition that can claim lives in their thousands is a major health concern.

I still haven't gotten to the context I wanted to introduce to you, as I need to build a sufficiently strong foundation for you to easily understand. Over the years, Americans, including kids above six months, take annual flu shots. This is necessary as the flu virus mutates and a new variant predominates yearly. Unfortunately, this is the pathway the coronavirus has decided to follow. Of course, you will have heard of the delta and omicron strains that necessitated booster shots. RSV, meanwhile, just got its vaccine for kids approved, and even that is only when the mother is still pregnant.

The United States health authorities have not had to deal with the three viruses simultaneously before, and it is a challenge that must be overcome. It has been difficult to get adults to take even one booster shot of the coronavirus vaccine, how much more taking two more of other conditions. Basically, some adults just believe they can handle the infection if or when it arises and just take their kids to get the vaccine. Some don't even get their kids vaccinated, which can be fatal, really. Most of the flu deaths annually among kids are among those not fully vaccinated. And when I say most, I'm talking to the tune of 80%! I can't overemphasize how important vaccination for kids is.

Now, to the much-needed context among adults who think they are fine if they don't get vaccinated as long as their kids are. Well, there is something called herd immunity, and it is basically when enough of the population is vaccinated or protected against an infection that there is immunity for the rest of the population. This is absolutely

(Continued on page 5)

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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

The New Jersey high school state football tournament opened this week. First, despite a regular season record of 5-4, the Irvington Blue Knights will be home against a tough Middletown North team in the North 2 Group 4 quarterfinal game this Friday at home. West Orange, who finished the season 4-4 a

Chiefs, who are on a 33 game winning streak, will be hosting Madison in the Group 3 playoffs, while Weequahic, who has been dominant all season at 8-0, will be hosting Woodridge.

Of course, the shocker of the season is that the Orange Tornadoes who finished the season at 6-2, was not selected for the playoffs. A shocking loss to Lincoln for the division champi-



Photos By Orange High Athletics

time after winning a football championship for the first time in years, will play Plainfield on the road.

Meanwhile, the 5-3 Shabazz Bulldogs will be going on the road to play fellow Essex team Cedar Grove in a North Group 1 playoff. Glen Ridge, another area team which made it to the playoffs in a long time, will play Waldwick in North 2 Group 1 action.

Finally, the mighty Caldwell

onship in the Super Football Conference did not help matters. Nonetheless, the Tornadoes will be playing a consolidation game against Bergenfield at 1 pm at Bell Stadium on Senior Day.

As for the pros, the Jets had a much deserved bye week, so the Giants were the only local to take the field. Despite still being without Daneil Jones, the G Men won an ugly game 14-7 over the Washington Commanders.



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THE DOCTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 4)

crucial for kids below six months who cannot get vaccinated. In fact, even among kids who are vaccinated, they can still get infections like the flu, although the severity is reduced.

Essentially, vaccination is crucial for kids because it protects their developing immune systems from dangerous infections. As adults, it is also important for the protection of one's self but also to ensure the vulnerable kids don't get it.

You can get your flu and coronavirus shots at your healthcare Providers office. The RSV vaccine is available for adults above 60 and also for pregnant women to protect their kids. While this vaccine may not be as readily available, you should find it still.

This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board-Certified Internist & Board Certified Pediatrician, who works as a

Hospitalist, and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless.

He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice Mobile Medicine NJ & House call Doctors. He is also currently pursuing an Executive MBA and a Master's of Science in Healthcare Leadership at Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management and the Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences.

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MIDDLE EAST

GAZA DEATH TOLL BREAKS 5,000

UN - The number of people killed in Gaza has exceeded 5,000 according to latest reports from de facto authorities there, amid intensifying Israeli airstrikes in response to Hamas attacks, while humanitarians repeated urgent calls for a cease-fire and more aid convoys.

Echoing that message, UN health agency (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus issued a new appeal on Oct. 23 for "sustained safe passage" for medical essentials and fuel to keep health facilities open.

"Lives depend on these decisions," he insisted on social platform X (fka Twitter).

Latest media reports citing the Gaza Ministry of Health indicate that the number of people killed in Gaza since Oct. 7 has risen to 5,087.

Women and children have made up more than 62 percent of the fatalities, while more than 15,273 people have been injured.

In addition to the overall death toll, the number of UN staff members working with the Palestine refugee agency UNRWA, has reached 35, according to the latest situation report released late on Monday. A further 18 staffers have been injured.

At least 40 UNRWA installations have been damaged since the violence began on Oct. 7.

UNRWA said nearly 600,000 internally displaced are sheltering in 150 UNRWA facilities overall with nearly 420,000 seeking refuge in 93 of the agency's shelters in Middle, Khan Younis and Rafah areas, further to the south - that's an increase of around 14,000 civilians in the past 24 hours.

In its latest humanitarian update on the crisis UN humanitarian aid coordination office, OCHA, said that more than

1,000 have been reported missing and "are presumed to be trapped or dead under the rubble."

The largest medical facility in Gaza, Shifa hospital, is now treating around 5,000 patients, many times beyond its normal figure of around 700.

The UN Spokesperson said on Oct. 23 that the average number of people staying in Gaza shelters is 4,400, around 2.5 times their designated capacity.

Around 70 civilians are sharing space in each UNRWA classroom.

According to Israeli official sources quoted by OCHA, some 1,400 people have been killed in Israel, the vast majority in the Hamas attacks on Oct. 7 which triggered the latest conflict.

OCHA said that the reported fatality toll is "over threefold the cumulative number of Israelis killed" since it began recording casualties in 2005.

At least 212 Israeli and foreign nationals are being held captive in Gaza, the Israeli authorities have said. Two hostages were released Oct. 20. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has repeatedly called upon Hamas to release hostages immediately and unconditionally.

A new aid convoy entered Gaza from Egypt on Oct. 23 through the Rafah border crossing comprises 20 trucks according to the Egyptian Red Crescent, said UN Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric, briefing reporters in New York.

He said that was equivalent to just four percent of the pre-crisis level of daily needs, for commodities for Gaza's population of more than two million.

This was the third such delivery after the crossing opened on Saturday for the first time since the start of the conflict, following intense diplomatic efforts.

A total of 34 trucks with aid provided by the UN and the Egyptian Red Crescent entered the enclave over the weekend. The UN has stressed that to respond to soaring humanitarian needs, at least 100 aid trucks per day are required.

The development comes as (UNRWA) warned that it was set to run out of fuel within days,

putting the humanitarian response in Gaza at risk.

UNRWA head Philippe Lazarini said that without fuel, "there will be no water, no functioning hospitals and bakeries" and that "no fuel will further strangle the children, women and people of Gaza."

UNITED STATES

REDLINING INITIATIVE PAYING OFF

The Justice Department announced Oct. 19 that its Combating Redlining Initiative has secured over \$107 million in relief for communities of color nationwide that have experienced lending discrimination by banks or other mortgage lending businesses. As a part of the \$107 million, the Department also announced a \$9 million agreement with Ameris Bank to resolve allegations that Ameris engaged in a pattern or practice of redlining predominately Black and Hispanic neighborhoods in Jacksonville, Florida.

Redlining is an illegal practice in which lenders avoid providing credit services to individuals living in or seeking to live in, communities of color because of the race, color, or national origin of the residents in those communities.

"As today's case makes clear, redlining is not just a relic of the past," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. "That is why, two years ago this month, the Justice Department launched our Combating Redlining Initiative, and once today's settlement is approved, that Initiative will have secured more than \$100 million for communities across the country that have been harmed by discriminatory lending practices. This work is just the beginning - the Justice Department currently has over two dozen active investigations into redlining, spanning neighborhoods across the country."

In October 2021, Attorney General Garland announced the Combating Redlining Initiative, the Department's most aggressive coordinated enforcement effort to address redlining. The Department has partnered with U.S. Attorneys' Offices, federal

financial regulatory agencies, including the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and state Attorneys General offices to enforce federal fair lending laws that prohibit redlining, including the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act.

Since 2021, the Department has secured 10 settlement agreements with banks and mortgage lending institutions to provide credit opportunities to communities of color in Houston, Memphis, Philadelphia, Camden, Wilmington, Newark, Los Angeles, Columbus, Tulsa, Rhode Island, and now Jacksonville. These agreements have provided millions of dollars to redlined communities and have helped to make homeownership a reality for families of color who have been unfairly denied access to credit.

The resolution with Ameris Bank was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida, along with the Department's complaint, and is subject to court approval. The Department's complaint alleges that, from 2016 through 2021, Ameris Bank avoided providing mortgage services to majority-Black and Hispanic neighborhoods in Jacksonville and discouraged people seeking credit in those communities from obtaining home loans.

Ameris' home mortgage lending was focused disproportionately on white areas of Jacksonville while other lenders generated applications in majority-Black and Hispanic neighborhoods at three times the rate of Ameris. Although Ameris operates 18 branches in Jacksonville, Ameris has never operated a branch in a majority-Black and Hispanic neighborhood in the city.

The neighborhoods that the Department alleges Ameris redlined in Jacksonville are some of the same neighborhoods that were first redlined by Home Ownership Loan Corporation maps in the 1930s.

"Combating modern day redlining is one of the most important strategies for ensuring equal economic opportunity today," said Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the

(Continued on page 9)

NEW LEADERSHIP IN MAJOR POSTS IN NEWARK

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - There are new people leading Newark's fire division and housing authority but not without some perceived or substantive controversy.

One may have seen the change with the Newark Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners' Oct. 24 meeting either in-person or via ZOOM. It would be the first full NHA meeting where Leonard Spicer is Executive Director.

The concurrent change may be found either at City Hall at one of the Municipal Council meetings or at the Newark Public Safety Donald M. Payne, Sr. Headquarters at Clinton Avenue and Bergen Street - where Del Ortiz is the newest Fire Chief and predecessor Rufus Jackson is Assistant Public Safety Director.

Spicer, who had been a federal housing official, was present at the NHA commissioners meeting, where his three-year contract was approved. He succeeds Victor Cirilo, whose contract was not renewed by the board April 27.

No reason was given why Cirilo, of West Orange, was not given a new contract. The former Passaic (City) Housing Authority president had been at the NHA helm since 2017.

Nor is it clear whether Spicer was approved with recommendation of the Gans, Gans & Associates consulting firm. The commissioners authorized the Plant City, Fla. company April 27 to conduct a candidate search and promote Chief Operating Officer Emanuel Foster to Interim Executive Director.

Apparently the NHA changeover memo had not reached the Municipal Council before their May 3 meeting. Council President/Central Ward Councilwoman LaMonica McIver and North Ward Councilman Anibal Ramos, Jr., complained that they were not advised of Cirilo's departure and that they were told of the change by NHA employees who an-

swered their calls April 28 - May 3.

Council Corporate Council Eric Pennington, Esq., explained May 3 that the NHA is an independent body and the South Ward Councilman Rev. Patrick Council is a commissioner there.

Spicer, explained NHA Commission President Norma Gonzalez, was of late US HUD's New York City Office of Public Housing Division Director. He had also been an HUD public housing recovery administrator in the Irvington Housing Authority - among other posts in his 15-year career.

Cirilo may still be seen in City Hall. Mayor Ras Baraka had appointed him as a commissioner on the city's Commission on the Homeless.

Baraka, on Sept. 28, announced that he had promoted Jackson to Assistant Public Safety Director and promoted Battalion Chief Ortiz to Fire Division Chief.

Jackson's new job is actually a new title. His promotion and post were occasioned when Deputy Public Safety Director Raul Malave retired in February. While Ortiz becomes the highest ranked uniformed NFD officer, Jackson's Office of Public Safety job is a civilian, or out-of-uniform, job.

The apparent controversy comes from those who view the promotions as an NFD leadership shakeup in the wake of the July 5-11 fatal Port Newark cargo ship fire. Crystal Rosa, the Mayor's Public Information Director, said that 28-year career man Jackson and 22-year firefighter Ortiz's promotions were the best individuals for the new tasks.

Fire Chief Ortiz was first hired and assigned as firefighter to Engine 11 and Ladder 11 at 345 S. 9th St., in 2002. Trained as a Hazardous Materials Technician and in Urban Search & Rescue, the former captain was of late Battalion Chief for 360 Clinton Ave's Engine 10, Ladder 5 Rescue 1 since 2012.



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POSTERS (Cont. from page 1)

"End the Occupation!". Those posters were on bulletin boards at the eastbound train station.

By the ticket vending machine were the remnants of two posters that were torn off.

Another six posters of kidnapped Israelis were located by the entrance to the eastbound platform of the Westfield train stations. Unlike the other posters on the raised train station platform, these six posters did not bear anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian slogans in black ink across them.

According to press reports, Israeli sources, and the U.S. Department of State, the Hamas attack on southern Israel killed 1,400 people. At least 212 were captured and taken into Gaza Strip. Two hostages, a mother and her daughter, were freed, leaving 210 missing. The missing hostages range in age from 3 months to 85 years.

Of those massacred by Hamas, 260 were young people attending a rave in the desert.

Israel has declared war on Hamas. For Israel, October 7 is the same as 9/11 for the United

States. The Israeli Defense Forces are bombing the Gaza Strip every day. A total blockade is in effect, with no food, power, electricity, and only limited water allowed. At least 700,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City to the south. According to the Internet, only 360,000 people remain in the north. Hamas may likely use the remaining people as human shields.

According to Yahoo News, the power of Hamas in the north and central Gaza is weakening.

In Israel, the ultra-Orthodox have decided to join the armed forces. For decades, the ultra-Orthodox Jews were exempt from military service. But now with the biggest attack on Jews since the Holocaust, the ultra-Orthodox Jews are joining the Israeli Defense Forces.

Over 360,000 reservists have been called up, the largest draft in Israeli history. The ground invasion of Gaza is being anticipated any day. Whether or not the conflict between Israel and Hamas will escalate into a regional war, or worse, World War III, is something only time will tell.

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WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 6)

Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "By taking on the discriminatory lending practices of banks and mortgage companies, we are helping to ensure that more Black, Hispanic, and other communities of color are able to buy a home, generate wealth, and fulfill the American Dream. This settlement marks a new pinnacle in our efforts to bring an end to redlining and provides tangible relief to communities that have been starved of access to credit for far too long."

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 10-24-2023 at 12 p.m.

2023 Mass Shooting Stats:

(Source: Mass Shooting Tracker, <https://www.massshootingtracker.site/data/?year=2023>)

- Total Mass Shootings: 639
- Total Dead: 752
- Total Wounded: 2534
- Shootings Per Day: 2.15
- Days Reached in Year 2023 as of Oct. 24: 297

EUROPE

BRINGING ATTENTION TO ACID ATTACKS

UK Government, law enforcement, academics, survivors, charities and industry, came together Oct. 23 to discuss the horrible nature of acid attacks and consider what more can be done to protect our society.

The meeting, jointly chaired by the Safeguarding Minister, Sarah Dines, and Katie Piper

OBE, was an opportunity for government, policing, trading standards, charities, retailers and the delivery sector to discuss the action to date in preventing and tackling corrosive attacks and what more can be done to clamp down on these horrendous acts of violence which devastate lives.

Government action to tackle the use of acid and other corrosives in violent attacks is based on four key strands: strong policing, effective legislation, providing support for victims and survivors, and working with retailers to restrict access to acids and other harmful corrosive products.

Minister for Safeguarding, Sarah Dines, said, "Acid attacks devastate lives and leave victims with both emotional and physical scars and our thoughts remain with all the survivors and

their families.

"The government is committed to doing all we can to prevent acid and other corrosive substances being used as weapons, and to ensure strong punishments for those who do so. We have already introduced the measures within the Offensive Weapons Act which makes it an offence to carry these substances in public, to ensure the cowards who use acids as weapons face the full force of the law, and also ban the sale of acid and other corrosives to under-18s and the delivery of such substances to residential premises and lockers to restrict the availability and prevent their misuse.

"We know that legislation alone will not prevent attacks, which is why conversations such as today's are so important. I thank those who participated,

(Continued on page 12)

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 - Parties involved with the Oct. 31 scheduled sentencing of real estate investor Victor Santos and lawyer Faustos Simones over a \$4 million mortgage fraud scheme here, may be crossing their fingers until U.S. Magistrate Michael A. Shipp actually hands down their debt to society.

Judge Shipp was to separately sentence Santos and Simones from his Trenton bench Oct. 17 until an adjournment was called. It was the fifth adjournment since April when the duo had pleaded guilty to one count each of conspiracy to commit bank fraud going back to September 2007.

Santos and Simones confessed to recruiting straw - or "fake" - buyers, at \$5,000 each, to purchase 12 properties in Newark between September 2007 and November 2008. The duo would use the straw buyers' names to acquire \$4 million worth of mortgage loans for those properties.

Santos, of Somerset's Watchung, was involved with the groundbreaking of what was to have been a new City of Newark DPW garage. Simones, of Millington, was his lawyer through 2008.

The U.S. Department of Justice prosecutors are anticipating Judge Shipp to hand down respective sentences of up to 24 months on Santos and up to 18 months on Simones. They also anticipate both of them to pay back at least \$3.5 million in restitution.

IRVINGTON - One can still get a prescription filled at the Rite-Aid Pharmacy here at 35 Mill Rd - but not for long. That prescription may be transferred soon to the Rite-Aid still standing at 104 12th Ave., Newark - or outside of the "Local Talk" area.

The Mill Run at Union Shopping Center anchor store is one among 12 in New Jersey and among 156 across 15 states that will be closed in the wake of Rite-Aid Corp.'s Oct. 15-16 filing for Chapter 11 reorganization in a New Jersey U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

The Philadelphia-based company is weeding out "underperforming" stores from the 2,000 that they still have across the U.S. It is the latest of several downsizing rounds the country's third-largest pharmacy chain has had in the last decade.

Rite-Aid Corp., this time around, says it has an almost \$6.8 billion deficit this fiscal year through Spring 2024. It has only \$7.6 billion in assets, amounting to an \$850 million loss. The company did get a \$3.45 billion financial boost from Gabelli Funds, of Rye, N.Y. - but the new partner wants low performing stores to close.

One can remember having at least a Rite-Aid in each "Local Talk" town except Montclair alone some 20 years ago. 104 12th Ave., Newark and 20 Main St., West Orange, ironically, are two of the Eckert drug stores that Rite-Aid absorbed in the 2000s.

Several Rite-Aids - including 80 Central Avenue, East Orange, 1200 Clinton Ave., Irvington and 77-105 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield - became Walgreens in a limited 2015 buyout by the latter. Walgreens has closed the East Orange and Irvington stores mentioned but still runs the Bloomfield one.

Rite-Aid, nationally, is a distant third to CVS and Walgreens.

EAST ORANGE - A city man is currently serving a 4.5 to nine-year prison sentence in Lancaster County Pa. state prison, over a 2021 road rage golf club attack.

Lancaster County Judge Jeffrey Conrad sentenced Aiven

Rosario, 26, Oct. 12, A jury, after a three-day trial and two hours' deliberation, had found Rosario guilty July 28 of simple assault and criminal mischief. He was meanwhile held on \$500,000 bail until his sentencing.

West Lampeter Township Police arrested Rosario March 6, 2021 in a parking lot along the 1400 block of Millport Road. He was accused of smashing the windshield of another driver's car with a golf club, striking her head and causing a concussion in the process.

The woman driver and her boyfriend said that they were followed by Rosario and his car there. Rosario got out and accused her of cutting his car and his mother's car. He then got a golf club from his own car and said he would break the windshield, "10,000 times."

The impact broke the golf club head from its shaft. The victim complained of a lump on her head and severe pain. She testified in Oct. 12's sentencing hearing that she has physical, mental and workplace difficulties.

Rosario was further sentenced to make \$34,992 restitution.

ORANGE - Maplewood police had arrested a city woman Oct. 3 who was identified as a person who impersonated a state worker and had pepper sprayed a township resident at the latter's Newark Heights section house on Sept. 30.

Maplewood Police Chief Albert Sally said that a Brown Street resident called in an aggravated assault charge earlier that Saturday morning. A South Essex Fire Department EMS/Rescue crew also arrived but the victim refused medical attention.

The resident said she got a telephone call from someone who said she was from the New Jersey Department of Child Protection and Permanency (formerly known as DYFS) - and a woman had appeared as the said representative at her door minutes later.

The woman at the front door wanted to come inside - but the

resident refused since the visitor had not presented any identification nor was accompanied by a police officer. The visitor turned suspect when she sprayed pepper spray through the front screen door and left in a white SUV.

MPD's Youth Aid Bureau detectives identified the suspect as Widda Deneus and arrested her at 10:28 a.m. Oct. 3. The circumstances of her arrest were not available. Deneus, 24, was charged with impersonating a government official, aggravated assault and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and was released.

WEST ORANGE - Township Council voted down its own seasonal gas leaf blower ban here at its Oct. 17 meeting.

The council introduced the measure at its Sept. 20 meeting - and would have taken effect in the middle of this year's falling leaf season. The ordinance would have allowed gasoline fueled, internal combustion engine leaf blowers used by residents and landscapers Oct. 1-Dec. 31 and March 1-April 30. Operating hours during those times would have been limited to between 7:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. weekdays and between 9 a.m.-5 p.m. weekends.

Township elders took the vote after listening to several speakers say their peace on the subject. They ranged from a member of Our Green West Orange and a local small engine builder.

Councilwoman Asmeret Ghebremicael announced that the measure did not have majority support as it was written. She added that there was concern that West Orange would find themselves being challenged in court as what happened to Montclair and Maplewood.

A State Superior Court Judge dismissed a challenge to Montclair's year-round ban from landscapers and residents Oct. 12; that ban, allowing only electric powered blowers, took effect Oct. 15. Maplewood has a comparable perpetual ban since

(Continued on page 14)

NEW JERSEY AND OTHER STATES SUE META (FACEBOOK)



the federal Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), as well as other state consumer protection laws, including the New Jersey Consumer Fraud Act (CFA). Eight other states filed similar actions in state courts.

These practices have harmed and continue to harm the physical and mental health of children and teens fueling what the U.S. Surgeon General has deemed a “youth mental health crisis” that has ended lives, devastated families, and damaged the potential of a generation of young people.

“As New Jersey’s chief law enforcement officer and as a parent, I feel strongly that there is nothing more important than ensuring the well-being of our children. And we know that in the era of social media, their mental health has never been more at risk,” said Attorney General Platkin. “That is why today, I join dozens of other Attorneys General to once and for all hold Meta and its CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, accountable for deceptive, manipulative practices on Instagram and Facebook that they

knew were harmful. Profits - not people, not its most vulnerable users, children and teens - drive the decision making at Meta. That stops today.”

“Meta knows its platforms are harming children and teens, but continues to make every effort to keep kids addicted without even attempting to abide by federal laws meant to protect the most vulnerable,” said Cari Fais, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs.

New Jersey began investigating Meta in 2020 and has co-lead the nationwide investigation since 2021, spending thousands of hours investigating Meta’s unlawful conduct. The federal complaint, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, alleges that Meta knew that its platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, were harming young people. Instead of taking steps to mitigate the psychological and health harms associated with use of its platforms, Meta not only concealed these harms but also amplified them by employing features that fueled young users’

addiction to its platforms.

The complaint further alleges that Meta knew that young users, including those under 13, were active on the platforms, and knowingly collected data from these users without the parental consent that is required by federal law. It targeted these young users because, as reported in a 2021 Wall Street Journal article, this user base was “valuable, but untapped.” At the same time, however, the company disavowed interest in this demographic, publicly stating that it did not allow kids under 13 on its platforms.

While much of the complaint relies on confidential material that is not yet available to the public, publicly available sources, including those previously released by former Meta employees, detail how Meta profited by purposely making its platforms addictive to children and teens. Its platform algorithms push users to descend into “rabbit holes” in an effort to maximize engagement.

Features like infinite scroll
(Continued on page 13)

ESSEX COUNTY ANNOUNCES IMPROVEMENTS TO BROOKDALE PARK SOCCER FIELD & TRACK

ESSEX - Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. announced that a project to update the soccer field and running track in the Essex County Brookdale Park Tom Fleming Athletic Complex in Bloomfield/Montclair with new playing surfaces has been completed. The upgrades will enhance usage of the complex and reduce maintenance, especially after rainy weather.

The improvements are part of the County Executive’s ongoing initiative to revitalize Essex County Parks System and ensure recreation facilities meet the changing demands of the community.

“The public relies on Essex County to provide facilities on which athletes of all ages can

practice and play. The soccer field and track are heavily used by a variety of community recreation and high school sports programs. Updating the facility with new playing surfaces is essential to providing safe places to play,” DiVincenzo said.

“This is a wonderful facility that lives up to the name of Tom Fleming. This is nothing new because it’s what we do on a daily basis with our County Executive,” Commissioner Vice President Carlos Pomares said.

“I am proud to partner with the County Executive to deliver projects such as this one that benefits our residents,” Commissioner Brendan Gill said.

“I am excited that this field and track are ready and are back in use. This is another great in-

vestment in our community,” Bloomfield Mayor Michael Venezia said.

“We appreciate all that is being invested in Brookdale Park and all the work that is being done,” said Montclair Councilor Bob Russo, who added he is a longtime member of the Essex Running Club, which uses the track as its base of operation.

“This is a great improvement to the park and demonstrates the County Executive’s commitment to providing up-to-date recreation facilities where our children can have positive experiences,” Essex County Administrator Robert Jackson said.

“This area of the park is heavily used and the renovations to the soccer field and track are greatly appreciated by the con-

servancy and community. Thank you to the County Executive for having the vision to continue to create such great facilities,” said Don McLoughlin, President of the Brookdale Park Conservancy.

The dirt infields on four Little League/softball fields were upgraded with synthetic playing surfaces. The outfields of the four fields were sodded with natural grass. A new drainage system was installed at each of the four fields. The improvements address flooding in the area and will enable the fields to be used quickly after rainy weather. In addition to the field improvements, new sports lighting was installed on the soccer field.

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*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**Show Hospitality
To One Another**

The bombing of the hospital in Gaza by whoever is to blame (at the moment, Hamas and the Palestinians at large are blaming Israel, and Israel is blaming a misfired bomb from Hamas), is a tragedy beyond repair. Estimates are that more than 300 are dead.

Whether the blast was intended or unintended, there should be a grim reminder that hospitals are no more hospitable places to be in times of war than in one's home or other places. Wars cause people to be unfriendly to one another. And the care and cause that should be taken are never taken. In the effort to win, all kinds of atrocities are practiced, emphasizing that one of history's greatest tragedies is the "inhospitality of humanity to humanity," as they used to say, "The inhospitality of man to man."

In the earliest history of humanity, we see the grievousness of the men of Sodom towards the angels who had come to visit Lot, and, except for the power of the angels, Lot and his household would have been mistreated. (see Genesis 19).

In the history of Israel, we also see how the men of Gibeah wanted to treat the man receiving hospitality at a home where he was being entertained over-

night. When the men of the city did not get what they wanted to do with the man, they were so furious that they were about to burn down the house. The saddest part of the story is that the man offered his betrothed (wife) to the men, and they ravaged her all night and left her for dead.

When the man was ready to leave at daybreak, he saw his half-dead betrothed lying on the doorstep. He took her on his donkey and went home. On arriving home, he cut her body in twelve pieces and sent the pieces throughout Israel as evidence of the atrocity. The consequence was the war that led to the near wiping out of the tribe of Benjamin (see Judges 19).

The point of this reflection is that the consequence of inhospitality means destruction for any home, community or nation. Hospitality means that we care for one another and are willing to help each other. It means that we seek to build friendships with each other and that we show courtesies to one another. But, in the dictionary definition, the word is derived from the Latin word "hospes," meaning visitor or stranger." The best historical understanding is that hospitality makes us welcoming and kind to strangers.

In the Bible, there is a great emphasis that hospitality should be rendered to strangers, the fatherless, widows and the poor. Take a moment to research the Bible on this. For this reason, the stories that are cited above reveal the tragedies they did. In a society where hospitality breaks down, there are bound to be catastrophes such as what happened in Gaza or across Ukraine

or multiple other parts of the world where wars are being fought with babies being killed, and women being raped, etc.

Even in America, where we portend so much hospitality, we see that there is much resentment towards strangers in too many cases. Suppose one analyzes the ongoing conversations about the invasion on the Southern border, the student loan forgiveness by President Biden, and the host of other issues in some of the political discussions; one will be made aware that much of it is a listing of resentments and anger against the strangers, the fatherless and the economically disenfranchised, etc.

A lot of effort is being made to hide the fact that we are becoming an inhospitable society, but if one takes a careful look, it will be made clear that the selfishness, resentment, pride and prejudice which drove the men of Sodom and Gibeah to behave as they did is the same that is driving the societies of our day, including what is happening in America.

To those questioning my assertion, I need to ask, how much are we opening our homes and churches to those in need as was done in the homes of yesteryears? There may be great explanations for the changes that have occurred, but it must be noticed that instead of our homes being hospitable places, they are secured by locked doors, iron bars, etc.

And at the risk of seeming uncharitable, we might also ask, "How hospitable are our churches today?" "Do people who come to them feel a sense of welcome?"

It is of interest that when Jesus was about to leave the earth, he gave his disciples the foot-washing ceremony as a reminder of the hospitality with which they were to live in a community. (See John 13). The foot-washing ceremony is only practiced in a few churches and denominations of the day, but it is clear that if it were practiced as in ancient societies, we could learn much. In fact, when Jesus instituted the ceremony, he enriched it so that the disciples could understand its richness in demonstrating their love, humility, service, patience, sympathy, empathy, and courtesies towards each other. Yes, Jesus was using this ceremony of hospitality to build the spirit of community among his disciples and with the church that would follow them through the ages.

A quote I read some time ago emphasizes the above: "Hospitality is a valuable spiritual asset for community building. It is a sacred ancient art that makes room at the table of consciousness for everyone, strangers and guests alike. In the genuine warmth and welcoming spirit that hospitality is most known for, it spans cultural divides as a nonviolent pathway, transcending background and nationality."

Another quote in my notepad states, "When the spirit of hospitality dies, the heart becomes palsied."

Do I need to say more? I think not. The message being made clear is that we find every little way we can to practice hospitality. As Peter says, "Show hospitality to one another." (1 Peter 4:9).

WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 9)

especially, Katie Piper, Andreas Christopheros and the other survivors who are so brave and courageous."

The round table brought together the many structures both inside and outside of government aimed at protecting the public from such attacks to discuss, retailers' statutory obligations, including around age verification, and to ensure they have all the necessary tools to effectively enforce these measures.

The meeting also explored ideas about what more can be done to reduce the risk of corrosive products being misused as weapons, whether retailers are taking this serious-

ly enough and if more can be done by staff to question the use at the time of purchase.

Katie Piper and Andreas Christopheros previously met with the Home Secretary on December 12, 2022 to discuss their concerns and ideas, which led to the event.

"Today was about progress, prevention and proactive conversation. Over the past couple of years I have worked tirelessly to keep this topic on the government agenda," Piper said. "This is a very serious issue and statistics show violent crime using acid is increasing at an alarming and disturbing rate.

"Reducing accessibility and the sale of corrosive substances is absolutely crucial to reducing acid attacks, and the resulting horrendous impact it has on victims. Retailers, associations and delivery gateways all have a

colossal duty and responsibility to help us in our aims.

"I remain absolutely determined in my mission for change - today for accessibility, but tomorrow also for sentencing, legislation, funding and increased regulation."

"Surviving and living through the wake of an acid attack is a challenge like no other. Survivors are left broken physically, emotionally, and financially and many will carry these struggles for the rest of their lives," said Christopheros.

"It's promising that the government has engaged in our campaign for change, however, more needs to happen. We must keep pushing for a better future for survivors of these horrific crimes."

BROOKDALE PARK

(Continued from page 11)

This is the third time since 2004 that a new synthetic grass surface was installed on the soccer field and a new rubber surface was installed on the running track.

The Essex County Department of Public Works designed the improvements in house and monitored the project to ensure delays were avoided. Applied Landscape Technologies from Montville was awarded a publicly-bid contract for 1,076,441 to perform the construction. Funding was provided through a grant from the Essex County Recreation and Open Space Trust Fund Advisory Board. Work started in May and was completed in six months.

Revitalizing Essex County Brookdale Park

Currently underway is a project to modernize the tennis and pickleball complex in Brookdale Park. DiVincenzo's administration has completed several improvement projects in Brookdale Park as part of a comprehensive initiative to revitalize the Essex County Park System.

The synthetic grass field and rubberized running track in the Oval were completed in May 2004 and was updated with new grass and rubberized surfaces in 2014. In 2006, the meadow underwent an extensive \$1.15 million renovation that included the installation of new drainage and irrigation systems, the planting of sod on the entire meadow surface and the modernization of the baseball/softball field in the northern section of the meadow. The development of the Brookdale Dog Park and the reconstruction of the 11-court tennis facility were completed in November 2007.

In 2009, the Circuit Drive, the parking lots and the walking paths throughout the park were repaved. In 2014, a three-phase project to install 148 light poles at the park entranceways and around the walking paths and an 18-station fitness course were completed. In 2015, the playground was updated with new climbing apparatus and a rubberized safety surface. In 2018, the welcome center received a comprehensive upgrade and in 2019 the tennis court complex was resurfaced and the county's first pickleball courts were created.

In 2022, a permanent band-



Photo By Essex County

stand/open air pavilion to be used as a stage for the Essex County Summer Concert Series was built. Three baseball and softball fields were modernized with synthetic playing surfaces on the infields and new drainage systems and the sports lighting system at the soccer field was upgraded in 2023. These projects were funded with grants from the NJ Green Acres program and the Essex County Recreation and Open Space Trust Fund. DiVincenzo has established partnerships with the Montclair United Soccer and the Brookdale Park Conservancy to obtain the grant funding.

The Essex County Park System was created in 1895 and is the first county park system established in the United States. The Park System consists of more than 6,000 acres and has 23 parks, five reservations, an environmental center, a zoo, Treetop Adventure Course, ice skating rink, roller skating rink, three public golf courses, golf driving range, two miniature golf courses, four off-leash dog facilities, a castle and the Presby Memorial Iris Gardens. At 121.41 acres, Brookdale Park is the third largest park in the Essex County System. Land for the park was purchased between 1928 and 1931.

META LAWSUIT

(Continued from page 11)

and near-constant alerts were created with the express goal of hooking young users. These manipulative tactics continually lure children and teens back onto the platform. As Aza Raskin, the original developer of the infinite scroll concept, noted to the BBC about the feature's addictive qualities: "If you don't give your brain time to catch up with your impulses ... you just keep scrolling."

Meta knew these addictive features harmed young people's physical and mental health, including undermining their ability to get adequate sleep, but did not disclose or meaningfully try to minimize the harm. Instead, it claimed the platforms were safe

for young users.

These choices, the complaint alleges, violate state consumer protection laws, including the CFA and COPPA. The federal complaint seeks injunctive and monetary relief to rectify the harms caused by these platforms.

The multistate coalition that brought today's complaint is also investigating TikTok for similar conduct. That investigation remains ongoing, and states have pushed for adequate disclosure of information and documents in litigation related to TikTok's failure to provide adequate discovery in response to the multistate's requests.

States joining the federal lawsuit are Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Ken-

tucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Florida is filing its own federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

Filing lawsuits in their own state courts are the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, and Vermont, alleging the company violated numerous state laws, including deceptive trade, consumer fraud, unlawful trade, unjust enrichment, negligence, product liability, and public nuisance claims.

Assistant Section Chief Thomas Huynh, Deputy Attorneys General Gina Pittore, Mandy Wang, and Cody Valdez, Legal Specialist Ethan Rubin, and Law Clerk Alan Leal, under the supervision of Data Privacy & Cybersecurity Section Chief Kashif T. Chand, Assistant Attorney General Jennifer S. Schiefelbein, and Deputy Director Jason W. Rockwell within the Division of Law's Affirmative Civil Enforcement Practice Group, and Senior Counsel Daniela L. Nogueira within the Office of the Attorney General, are representing the State in the matter. Investigator Aziza Salikhova of the Office of Consumer Protection within the Division of Consumer Affairs conducted the investigation.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

THE WOMB SERIES

Woman to woman... I am woman. I feel you! - Andrea Dialect

This series is near to my heart. There is a strong connection when developing Fine Artistry such as the ones printed here with my subjects (My professional or feature Muse). I appreciate being entrusted with their image, and I am always taken aback by how they lend themselves to enhance our story as human beings.

Check out these works of art in my traveling exhibit below. I decided against the guided tour because it would be more interesting to roam the page, make your assessments, and orches-

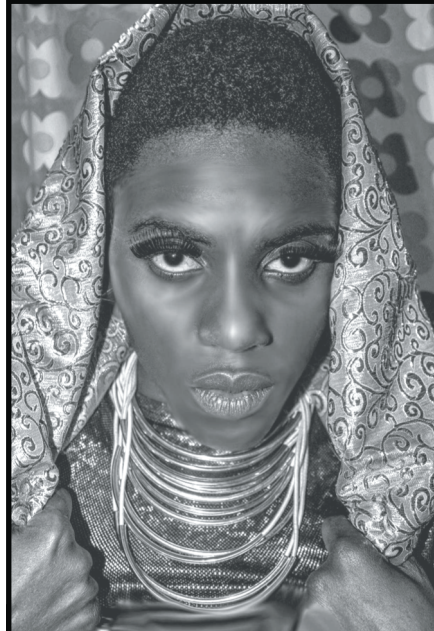
trate the payoff. I so appreciate my permanent Muse, who are displayed here. Two times thanks to Ebony. Thanks to Keyasia, Arin, and Latasia, and my Features Destiny and little Qhristopher for lending their images to change. Now, "Picture That."

What do you see, who do you see, why do you see, and how do you see? Also, which photos make for a great print? Feel free to contact me with feedback or anything that you find to be Observation Booth worthy at any time at localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

PICTURE THAT



Photo Credits Andrea Dialect



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.



TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

2018.

Ghebremicael said that the council may revisit the matter before 2026.

SOUTH ORANGE - Seton Hall University administrators worked with South Orange police, state and federal officials Oct. 9 to trace the source of threatening e-mail sent to parts of the campus community.

The SHU Office of Public Safety sent along to other authorities a message that someone had sent emails to various administrators and faculty that Monday morning that violence would happen on campus.

There was an increased presence of law enforcement and of safety protocols for later that day.

Classes and other scheduled activities continued.

MAPLEWOOD - Township police officers, with the assistance of their Irvington colleagues, have been investigating the shooting of a woman found here along Evelyn Court Oct. 9.

The first MIPD units, said Chief Sally, had responded to a call of a woman lying along the residential dead end street at 2:11 p.m. that Monday. They found the victim with a gunshot wound there, administered first aid and called for emergency service.

A unit each from the South Essex Fire Department and RWJ Barnabas Health paramedics arrived and took the victim to a local hospital. The Irvington Police detectives were called in when the victim said she was shot in that township.

Evelyn Court is a north-south street on the west side of Lightning Brook, just away from Boyden and Stuyvesant avenues. The brook forms the Maplewood-Irvington bor-

der.

The ECPO Major Crimes Unit has been advised in case the victim's condition worsens. Her present condition is not known as of press time.

BLOOMFIELD - ECPO and township police are still investigating - but have not disclosed more details as of press time - a fatal pedestrian accident of a township woman on Grove Street, just south of Bloomfield Avenue here, Oct. 20.

Township police officers swiftly arrived at the intersection at 6:40 p.m. Friday and found Nelly Fernandez, 60, in front of by 136 Grove St. in the southbound lane.

They promptly called for local EMS and closed Grove Street between the avenue and Elmwood Avenue/Royalton Place. Buses on NJTransit's No. 90 route were among the

(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

detoured traffic.

EMS technicians rushed her to Newark's University Hospital - where she was declared dead at 7:52 p.m. They also called in the ECPO Crash Scene Investigation team for a field inquest. Both Grove Street and Bloomfield Avenue are county roads.

The motorist who had allegedly struck Fernandez stayed at the scene. There are no other details except that the driver has not been charged as of press time.

MONTCLAIR - The Township Council, in a 4-2 split vote in a special 11 a.m. Sept. 18 meeting, appointed Roger Terry to succeed the resigned Peter Yacobellis as at-large councilman.

Terry, who was absent from the meeting, was present by his record and reputation. The former Montclair Deputy Chief of Police was on the council as an at-large member 2008-12, He is also the NAACP Montclair Branch's President.

Mayor Sean Spiller, Deputy Mayor/First Ward Councilman William "Bill" Hurlock, Second Ward Councilwoman Robim Schlager and Third Ward Councilwoman Lori Price Abrams approved Terry's appointment. Fourth Ward Councilman Davis Cummings and At-Large Councilman Robert "Bob" Russo dissented.

Public comment speakers Eileen Birmingham, Nicole Farjani, William Scott and Christine Thomas supported Dr. Renee Baskerville to succeed Yacobellis. The commentator cited the former Fourth Ward Councilwoman's May 2020 township wide vote total as grounds for her being considered.

Baskerville forfeited her ward reelection for an unsuccessful campaign for mayor. A majority of registered Montclair voters picked Spiller. The doctor, at the public comment segment, asked "What is it that keeps you from selecting me?"

Spiller and Hurlock moved and seconded the motion to appoint Terry. Russo wanted to move for Baskerville but sensed that the process "is one of those railroad jobs."

BELLEVILLE - Take a good look at 211 Washington Ave., for the two-story 77-year-old building will become a parking lot soon. How large the municipal parking lot will be is an open question.

"Local Talk" noticed that Belleville authorities had brought in poles in cement buckets linked by a chain about two weeks ago. "No Parking" signs were posted, deterring the up to six motorists who used to

park in the former Amity Animal Hospital front lot since the veterinarian office and second floor apartment were closed earlier this year.

The chains were disturbed Aug. 18-19 for a 30 cubic foot dumpster were placed, and adjusted by a Belleville DPW bulldozer. That JSI container was nearly filled by 5 p.m. Aug. 20.

The Township Council, at their June 27 meeting, authorized Belleville's administrators to negotiate a purchase price from Dr. Delfin O. Tumbay, DVS for 211 Washington "for the purposes of a parking lot." Tumbay, of Old Bridge, had ended his 49-year practice there in early 2023.

211 Washington, built in 1946 was among a series of houses along the western hillside of Washington whose houses were set back, creating front lawns to the sidewalk/apron or curb. Some of those lawns became private parking lots and some others space for commercial storefronts.

The macadam space out front appears to be good for up to 12 vehicles. That space may double should the township level the house and the hill it stands on.

NUTLEY - "Local Talk" has learned that Newark native, Nutley resident and Essex County's third County Executive, Thomas J. D'Alessio, had died in Jupiter, Fla., Aug. 14 - 10 days short of what would have been his 89th birthday.

Tom D'Alessio was born in Newark Aug. 24, 1934 to James and Antoniette (Martino) D'Alessio. Tom was raised for a time before he and his family moved here to Nutley. He found a liking to law enforcement, joining the Essex County Sheriff's Office in 1970 and rose from the Transportation to become Sheriff in 1982.

Along that rise, D'Alessio had several promotions up to lieutenant, and was elected Essex County Sheriff's Office Superior Officers Association President in 1978. He also attained an associate's degree in police administration from Essex County College in 1975.

Lt. D'Alessio ran as County Sheriff with Essex County Democratic Committee endorsement in 1979. He defeated Newark Chief of Police Zizza, in the June primary and, with a 28,000 vote plurality, defeated Charles Cummings in the General Election. He was in the midst of modernizing the office when he resigned to run as County Executive in 1990.

Sheriff D'Alessio resigned from his office in 1990 to run to succeed Nicholas Amato, who decided not to run again. D'Alessio ran unopposed in the primary

and defeated Millburn Committeeman Michael Vernotico in the General Election.

D'Alessio resigned Feb. 22 1994 in the wake of being convicted of federal extortion charges the year before. He was accused of asking for \$58,000 from a solid waste hauler in exchange for getting a state environmental permit. He retired to Manahawkin after serving a five-year sentence.

Former wife Suzanne, daughters Jennifer D'Alessio-Luongo and Deborah Perillo, sister Annette Festa, grandchildren Jude Luongo, Jr. Jianna Luongo and John Straccamore, are among his survivors.


A visitation was held at Megaro's Funeral Home in Belleville, Aug. 22, followed by a private inurnment.


Memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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