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SUPREME COURT KEEPS DONALD TRUMP ON BALLOT

PAGE 6



NHA INSPECTIONS RESUME FOR CITYWIDE PROPERTIES

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - There is a reason why residents and neighbors of the Newark Housing Authority's 45 citywide here have been seeing inspectors making their house calls since March 1. (Please note that we are discussing city properties here, and not those privately owned.)

The inspectors are also examining the buildings' infrastructure. Conditions, including security measures and elevator operations, will be more than noted.

Whatever the inspectors find will be brought to the building's manager, who - said NHA Executive Director Leonard J. Spicer Feb. 27 - will relay the reports to the agency's headquarters at 500 Broad St.

The building manager,

furthermore, can make repair recommendations - but the appropriate person at 500 Broad will issue the work order onwards from March 1.

"There's an objective individual who doesn't know you," said Spicer of the new centralized repair process to the Municipal Council Feb. 27, "that's going to take your work order, that's now going to ensure that the work is completed."

Spicer, a former US Housing and Urban Development Department official, was briefing Newark's elders on what he and the agency are doing to meet his former employer's corrective goals in a two-year period. The agency head who came aboard Oct. 30 said that he and federal inspectors met the week before to map out a corrective action plan.

This CAP is the result of an

A MESSAGE FROM ORANGE MAYORAL CANDIDATE QUANTAVIA HILBERT

Many sources have reported that our municipality pays the highest taxes in Essex County. Every year, we send our tax dollars to the State, through levies and tax collection. I believe in saving money for Orange residents. It is time we send a strong and honest leader, to bring our money back home.

As Mayor, I will donate 50% of my salary as my commitment to help lower our budget. I will lead an attack on high taxes, by exploring options to develop the Orange Memorial Hospital site, in which we will create a new income for the City and jobs for our community.

I will negotiate with our County partners over our land in the Orange reservoir.

As we lower our tax burden, my administration will propose a new rent control policy that will decrease the limit from 5% to 3% for all tenants.



This is my promise to keep Orange families together. I'm Quantavia Hilbert, and I approve this message.

If you would like to learn more about the candidate, please visit www.QuantaviaHilbert.com. You can also meet her in person, at her Campaign Kick-Off on Saturday, March 16, 2024. The event will run from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. All are welcome.

HUD report, issued Nov. 8, that called NHA "a troubled agency." with an overall score of 39 out of 100 indicators. The scoring, completed at the end of Fiscal Year 2022, rated the agency 22 out of 40 for physical condition.

The report's scores got lower in other categories. NHA scored 12 out of 25 in management, five out of 10 in capital funds and zero out of 25 in finances.

"The Fed," in summary, gave NHA 24 months to take

corrective action - or go into receivership. A receiver would then be appointed to make the needed changes to get the institution upright.

"We've 12 months to complete 50 percent of those milestones," said Spicer, "and another 12 months to complete the other 50 percent to bring our (overall) score to 60. If we fail to do so, the federal government can come in and take possession of the agency."

One capital needs objective, (Continued on page 5)



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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The Supreme Court of the United States unanimously (all 9 judges) gave a judgment that no state or state's judiciary has any authority to block any legal citizen from appearing on a ballot for Federal office - including the Presidency. All 9 judges agreed that it is up to Congress to determine if the 14th Amendment applies in removing someone from the ballot. It's the biggest win for President Trump after getting sued in many cases, including some recent verdicts for him to pay over \$500 million or half a billion dollars. Trump is appealing judgments in the Appellate Court and Supreme Court of the US.

Also, South Carolina's former governor and former US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley previously

announced that she would support whoever was the nominee of the Republican Party. However, she flipfopped and changed her stance. She is the only candidate against Trump in the GOP presidential primary, and she is far behind in the polls. She lost by over 31 points in her own state of South Carolina's Primary.

President Joseph Biden is facing some tough times for his policies on border security, supporting Israel in the Israel-Hamas war, and has started facing criticism for Ukraine's war against Russia as well. Also, the way he pulled out of Afghanistan without any prior thought and leaving billions of dollars in equipment will be a problem. His age and his memory will be an issue for him in the upcoming election. I wish a strong candidate from the Democratic Party could have stood up against him, but now it's too late. As for Vice President Kamala Harris, is she ashamed of calling herself Jamaican or Indian? Because the Black community has not really accepted her despite her claims of being Black.

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris finally

decided to call for a ceasefire in Gaza on the threat of losing their voting bloc. However, Israel's president did not agree and continued attacking Palestinians. Now the death toll is 30,000 plus and the whole world, who usually supports America (due to their money) called for a ceasefire for six weeks. Israel wants all the captives to be released but did not agree to release Palestinian prisoners. If there's a ceasefire, six weeks will pass by quickly, and except for temporary humanitarian aid, nothing will change.

Last week, President Biden and former President Trump visit the border in Texas. Immigrants will be a big problem for candidates of both parties. However, I think President Biden and the Democrats wants immigrants to enter freely in this country, because the tradition is that when all of the new immigrants who enter and their children or themselves become able to vote, they usually vote for Democrats.

Haiti has had a lot of problems with gangs lately. Haiti's government declared a state of emergency on March 3rd for 72 hours right after gangs with arms stormed major prisons, killed 12

and helped over 3,700 inmates escape from prison. Gangs are demanding the resignation of Ariel Henry, the Prime Minister. Henry's whereabouts are unknown since going to Kenya last week. Gangs have controlled the capital of Port-au-Prince. Haiti is our neighbor. We should take care of those people. Many Haitian lives in the Local Talk area.

Locally, there will be four elections this year. School Board Elections, Municipal Elections, Primary Elections and the General Election. It will be an interesting year for all of us. Nature is giving us hard times, and politicians are giving us harder times as well. Nature, we understand and accept it, but politicians are harder to understand and most of the time we vote for a popular name, without thinking about a candidate's true agenda.

For two weeks, I will be on vacation and Kristopher Seals, our content editor, will write in this space.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you in two weeks.

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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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FORMER PRESIDENT SUES SETON HALL UNIVERSITY - PART 3

By Lev D. Zilbermints

In the previous parts of this article, "Local Talk" showed how Seton Hall University appeared not to follow its own rules, procedures, regulations and even state law, all in order to hide corruption. The reader has read about how one man, Joseph Nyre, President of SHU, tried to stand up for himself, his wife, his employees and the truth. Also, how the governing body of Seton Hall University, the Board of Governors, allegedly refused to investigate Nyre's complaints. Finally, how Joseph Nyre eventually resigned as President.

This article will focus on important aspects of the lawsuit against Seton Hall University. Later on, this part will focus on the different counts that Joseph Nyre is alleging Seton Hall University has violated. Court papers are the source for this article.

Eight various counts

The lawsuit filed by ex-President Joseph Nyre and his wife contains eight different

counts, each covering a separate legal violation. Count One covers "Retaliation In Violation of New Jersey's Conscientious Employee Protection Act (CEPA) as it pertains to Plaintiff J. Nyre.

Count Two covers "Retaliation In Violation of Public Policy" as to Plaintiff J. Nyre.

Count Three covers NJLAD - Sexual Harassment, Hostile Work Environment and Disparate Treatment Due to Gender And/Or Sex" as to Plaintiff K. Nyre against Defendant SHU.

Count Four covers "NJLAD Disparate Treatment and Hostile Environment Due to Gender And/Or Sex" as to Plaintiff K. Nyre.

Count Five covers "Violations of the NJLAD - Associational Discrimination" as to Plaintiff J. Nyre.

Count Six covers "NJLAD (New Jersey Law Against Discrimination) - Retaliation Improper Reprisal" as to Plaintiffs J. Nyre and K. Nyre.

Count Seven covers "Breach of Contract" as to Plaintiff J. Nyre.

Count Eight covers "Constructive Termination" as to

Plaintiff J. Nyre.

Plaintiffs demand for discovery of insurance coverage. They also demand a trial by jury.

R. Armen McOmber is designated as trial counsel.

Having explained what the different counts in the lawsuit deal with, "Local Talk" will look at the various charges contained within the counts.

It is no exaggeration to say that Counts 1,3 and 5 use up the entire English alphabet to designate the various charges against the defendants. Counts 1, 3 and 5 have 26 charges each, while Count 4 has 22 charges. Count 2 has three charges. Count 7 states facts and demands judgment in the Plaintiff's favor. All told, the number of alleged violations in the eight-count lawsuit exceeds one hundred.

Description of various charges

According to court papers, "Dr. Joseph Nyre is seeking reinstatement of employment and all benefits; back pay and benefits; front pay and benefits; compensatory damages; consequential damages; reinstatement; punitive damages; prejudgment interest and enhancements to offset negative tax consequences; any and all attorneys' fees, expenses, and/or costs, including but not limited to court costs, expert fees and all attorneys' fees incurred by Plaintiff in the prosecution of this suit (including enhancements thereof required to off-set negative tax consequences and/or enhancements under the law; such other relief as may be available pursuant to CEPA and which the Court deems just and equitable."

Next, Plaintiff J. Nyre demands that the Court order Seton Hall University to completely revise its policies, rules and regulations so as to ensure that SHU is fully compliant with the laws and regulations.

According to court papers, "Plaintiff J. Nyre demands judgment against Defendants for harm suffered in violation of CEPA. These include ordering defendants to take appropriate corrective action to stop and prevent retaliation at the workplace; ordering defendants to take appropriate corrective action to stop and prevent harassment at the workplace; ordering defendants to undergo anti-discrimination

training; ordering defendants to undergo workplace civility training; ordering defendants to undergo bystander intervention training; ordering defendants to engage a research organization to assess the effectiveness of their anti-retaliation training; ...

"...ordering defendants to engage a research organization to assess the effectiveness of their anti-harassment training; ordering Defendants to engage a research organization to assess the effectiveness of their workplace civility training; ordering Defendants to engage a research organization to assess the effectiveness of their bystander intervention training; ordering defendants to identify an appropriate professional to investigate any further complaints of harassment; ordering Defendants to identify an appropriate professional to investigate any future complaints of retaliation; and such other relief as may be available and to which the Court deems just and equitable."

Count Two alleges "retaliation in violation of public policy."

According to court papers, "...Plaintiff J. Nyre reported and complained about Defendants' unethical, unlawful, and otherwise improper behavior. Defendants had knowledge of Plaintiff J. Nyre's protests and subjected him to retaliation as a result thereof. As a result of Plaintiff J. Nyre's reports and complaints about the unlawful activities of Defendants, Plaintiff J. Nyre was constructively discharged in violation of the law and public policy.

Whereas, Plaintiff J. Nyre demands judgment in his favor and against Defendants on this Count, together with compensatory and equitable relief, all remedies available under the law, punitive damages, pre- and post-judgment interest, attorneys' fees and cost of suit and for such other relief that the Court deems equitable and just."

Count Three focuses on violations of the NJLAD, or New Jersey Law Against Discrimination. Specifically, sexual harassment, hostile work environment, and disparaging treatment discrimination due to gender and/or sex. Here, the wife of J. Nyre, Kelli L. Nyre, demands relief
(Continued on page 7)

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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway, Jr.

A round of New Jersey high school basketball playoffs took place this past weekend. Among the local teams that took part was the East Orange boys basketball team, who took on Ridgewood in the North 1 Group 4 final. The game went down to the wire before a sold out crowd at Ridgewood High, but the Jaguars fell just short on the road 57-54. East Orange was led in their effort by Kaiyri Barkley's 17 points and 5 rebounds

dynamic Bragg twins, who combined for 40 points in a 65-59 victory over Hoboken. Finally, Montclair Immaculate edged out Morris Catholic 72-70 to take the Non-Public Group B crown.

In women's college basketball, this past Sunday the Seton Hall Lady Pirates suffered a tough loss on Senior Day at home against Creighton 72-62. All the SHU seniors and graduate players were honored before the game. Leading the Pirates was Azana Baines with 23 points and 9 rebounds, Kae Sat-



Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens

and James Roberts with 14 points and 8 rebounds. East Orange started the game with a 20-10 lead, with Ridgewood coming back to tie it at the half 29-29. East Orange finished this season with an overall record of 23-6.

In another big game, Arts High School defeated Newark Collegiate 59-56 to win the North 2 Group 2 final. Leading Arts was Kevin Freeman with 14 points and 11 rebounds and Najee Graham's 23 points proved huge. Both teams had winning seasons in their conferences.

Meanwhile, North 2 Group 1 was claimed by an impressive 18-9 Newark Tech team and the

terfield had 12 points and 9 rebounds, and Sha'Lynn Hagans added 16 points and 5 rebounds. and for Creighton who led her team with 16 points and 4 rebounds. Seton Hall is now 16-14 on the season.

In other sports, the New York Red Bulls defeated the Houston Dynamo 2-1. Elias Manoel got the scoring starting for the Red Bulls in the 43rd minute in the first half of the game. Lewis Morgan added the difference maker in the 59th minute, while the Dynamo were only able to cut it in half with Aliyu Ibrahim goal at 77 minutes in. New York is now 1-0-1 on the year.



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NHA INSPECTIONS RESUME FOR CITYWIDE PROPERTIES

(Continued from page 1)

said Spicer, is to get nearly 600 units repaired and ready for occupation. NHA currently has an 87 percent occupation rate.

"At least 600 families that could be received into our system," said Spicer, "that could have housing that do not have housing."

More housing units online and ready for leasing means that NHA's waitlist backlog would be cut. Its 2024 annual plan has that backlog standing at 10,448 people.

HUD gave the agency zero in finances in part because it had not received NHA audits in a timely fashion. Spicer said he was told that NHA asked its federal overseers for "a number of extensions" in the past.

Getting NHA's finances in line means that rent collection must be done. Employees and contractors, in turn, must be qualified for their jobs.

"We're custodians of federal tax dollars," said Spicer. "There

cannot be patronage positions, no-show jobs. It's an honest day's wage for an honest day's work."

Irvingtonians may have recognized Spicer's name for he was once HUD's Public Housing Recovery Administrator for the Irvington Housing Authority. When the IHA entered receivership in April 2022, he was appointed its executive director and co-chairman of its Board of Commissioners.

The former member of the Army's 101st Airborne Division had worked for Miami-Dade Public Housing and Community Development. The DePaul University public policy undergraduate and Fordham construction management master succeeded former Passaic public housing commissioner and former West Orange councilman Victor Cirillo.

NHA, which goes back to the U.S. Works Project Administration of the 1930s, includes 10 elderly/disabled developments and scattered site housing.



UNITED STATES



SUPREME COURT KEEPS DONALD TRUMP ON BALLOT

In a rare show of unity, the highest court in the land made a ruling that settled a big matter in an ununited nation.

On March 4, all nine Supreme Court Justices ruled that Colorado’s decision to keep former President Donald J. Trump off the primary ballot was not valid under the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution. The gist of Amendment says that someone who engaged in an insurrection cannot run for office, and was put into effect after the Civil War to keep loyalists to the Confederacy from sabotaging laws during Reconstruction.

Specifically, the Court said that only an act of Congress could keep someone from running for Federal office, and not necessarily anything regarding Trump’s own due process. Translation: it prevents states from unilaterally keeping any candidate they do not like off of a ballot. For example, GOP states could retaliate by kicking incumbent President Joseph R. Biden off of ballots.

Because of this ruling, similar moves to kick Trump off of ballots in Illinois and Maine will also be null and void.

Upon the ruling, Trump was quite celebratory.

“While most states were thrilled to have me, there were some that didn’t, and they didn’t want that for political reasons,” Trump said from his Mar-a-Lago residence. “I want to start by

thanking the Supreme Court for its unanimous decision today. It was a very important decision, very well crafted. I think it will go a long way toward bringing our country together, which our country needs.”

So for now, the only way to keep Trump out of the White House is for voters to decide. From previous elections, Trump has won - and lost. (Fair enough.)

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 3-5-2024 at 12 p.m.

2024 Mass Shooting Stats: (Source: Mass Shooting Tracker, <https://www.massshootingtracker.site/data/?year=2024>)

- Total Mass Shootings: 86
- Total Dead: 146
- Total Wounded: 290
- Shootings Per Day: 1.32
- Days Reached in Year 2024 as of March. 5: 65

MIDDLE EAST



HAMAS ACCUSED OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST HOSTAGES

TW... Following a 17-day visit to Israel, the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict reported on March 4 that she and a team of experts had found “clear and convincing information” of rape, and sexualized torture being committed against hostages seized during the October 7 terror attacks.

Pramila Patten added in a press release issued along with the report, that there are also reasonable grounds to believe that such violence, which includes other “cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment,” may be continuing against those still being held by Hamas and other extremists in the Gaza Strip.

The report from her Office, arose from an official visit to Israel at the invitation of the Government, which included a visit to the occupied West Bank, between January 29 and 14 February 14.

In the context of the coordi-

nated attack by Hamas and others of October 7, the UN mission team found that there are reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual violence occurred in multiple locations, including rape and gang rape in at least three locations in southern Israel.

The team also found a pattern of victims, mostly women, found fully or partially naked, bound and shot across multiple locations which “may be indicative of some forms of sexual violence.”

In some locations, the mission said it could not verify reported incidents of rape.

The mission made up of Ms. Patten and nine experts - which was not investigative in nature - conducted 33 meetings with Israeli representatives, examining more than 5,000 photographic images and 50 hours of video footage. It conducted 34 confidential interviews including with survivors and witnesses of the October 7 attacks, released hostages, first responders and others.

The report says that Israeli authorities have faced numerous challenges in collecting evidence.

The team also visited Ramallah in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, to hear the views and concerns of officials and civil society representatives since October 7, which allegedly implicate Israeli security forces and settlers.

Ms. Patten heard concerns raised over cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of Palestinians in detention, including sexual violence in the form of invasive searches, threats of rape and prolonged forced nudity.

The information gathered will complement that already gathered by other UN officials on allegations of conflict-related sexual violence inside Gaza, for potential inclusion in the Secretary-General’s annual report on the issue.

Ms. Patten’s recommendations include a call for the Israeli Government to grant full access to the UN human rights office (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Council-mandated independent Commission of Inquiry on the occupied territory, “to conduct fully-fledged independent investigations into all alleged violations,” according to the

press release.

She called on Hamas to immediately and unconditionally release all those being held as hostages and to ensure their protection, including from sexual violence.

Ms. Patten also called on all relevant and competent bodies to bring all perpetrators of sexual violence to justice, offering the full support of her office to bolster national efforts.

HAITI



GANG VIOLENCE GRIPPING NATION

The already dire human rights situation in Haiti has deteriorated even further amid unrelenting and expanding gang violence, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk warned on Feb. 9.

The UN Secretary-General reiterated his deep concern on Tuesday over the “rapidly deteriorating” security situation in Haiti as violent gangs tighten their grip on the country in the wake of a jailbreak at the weekend which saw nearly 4,000 criminals return to the streets.

UN Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric told reporters in New York that António Guterres wanted to see “urgent action, particularly in providing financial support for the multinational security support mission,” which has been authorized by the Security Council in a bid to restore law and order to the crisis-wracked nation, the poorest in the western hemisphere.

Kenya and Haiti signed a deal a few days ago which expects to see a contingent of 1,000 Kenyan officers lead the support mission, although it is unclear whether Kenya’s high court will allow it to go ahead amidst constitutional challenges.

Benin confirmed last week it would supply personnel to the mission, which Mr. Dujarric reminded is not a UN peacekeeping force. “This force will need to address the pressing security

(Continued on page 12)

FORMER PRESIDENT

SUES SHU - PART III

(Continued from page 4)

and remedy from the Court against Seton Hall University (SHU).

According to court papers, “Plaintiff K. Nyre was subjected to repeated, pervasive, severe and continuing instances of disparate treatment and harassment based on gender/sex. The above described conduct would not have occurred but for Plaintiff K. Nyre’s gender/sex. The harassing and discriminatory conduct was severe or pervasive enough to make a reasonable person and employee believe that the conditions of employment were altered and the working environment was hostile and discriminatory.

As the employer and/or supervisor of Plaintiff K. Nyre, Defendants are vicariously, strictly and/or directly liable to Plaintiff K. Nyre pursuant to the NJLAD, in that the affirmative acts of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation committed by individual Defendants occurred within the scope of their employment; the creation of the hostile work environment was aided by Corporate Defendants in delegating power to Individual Defendants to control the day-to-day working environment; and/or Corporate Defendants were deliberately indifferent, reckless, negligent and/or tacitly approved the discrimination, hostile work environment, and/or retaliation; ...

“...and/or Corporate Defendants and Individual Defendants failed to create and/or have in place well-publicized and enforced anti-harassment policies, effective formal and informal complaint structures, training, and/or mechanisms for the same, despite the foreseeability of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation of Plaintiff K. Nyre and by failing to promptly and effectively to stop it.

Defendants aided, abetted, incited, compelled and/or coerced, and/or attempted to aid, abet, incite, compel and/or coerce Individual Defendants to commit acts and omissions that were in violation of the NJLAD by committing affirmatively harassing, discriminatory, and retaliatory acts towards Plaintiff K. Nyre in violation of the supervi-

sory duty to halt or prevent harassment, retaliation and discrimination rendering Defendant SHU and individual Defendants individually and collectively liable to Plaintiff pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5 - 12(e).

The Individual Defendants and the managers and/or supervisors of Plaintiff K. Nyre aided, abetted, incited, compelled and/or coerced, and/or attempted to aid, abet, incite, compel and/or coerce Defendants to commit acts and omissions that were in violation of the NJLAD by committing affirmatively harassing, discriminatory and retaliatory acts toward Plaintiff K. Nyre in violation of their supervisory duty to prevent harassment, retaliation and/or discrimination rendering Defendants individually and collectively liable to Plaintiff K. Nyre pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5 - 12(e).

As a proximate result of the aforementioned acts and omissions set forth herein, Plaintiff K. Nyre has sustained damages.

Wherefore, Plaintiff K. Nyre demands judgment in her favor and against Defendants on this Count, together with compensatory and equitable relief, all remedies available under the law, punitive damages, emotional distress damages, pre- and post-judgment interest, and attorneys’ fees and cost of suit.”

There follows a list of 26 charges of Count Three that are identical to those in Count One.

“Local Talk” found a 2019 article on Seton Hall University’s website, <https://www.shu.edu/president/new-president.html>. This article spoke in glowing terms about Joseph Nyre, then - President of Iona College. At the time SHU leaders were enthusiastic about having Joseph Nyre become the 21st president of Seton Hall University.

“The Board is overwhelmingly enthusiastic in its selection of Dr. Nyre as Seton Hall’s next president. He is an experienced leader, a bold visionary and possesses an unwavering commitment to our Catholic mission,” said Patrick Murray, Chair of the University’s Board of Regents. “As a highly regarded educator, psychologist and healthcare innovator, Dr. Nyre is the perfect choice to lead Seton Hall into the highest echelon of American Catholic universities.”

The same article stated that



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MARCH 7: Better Together Dads meets 6:30 p.m. every 2 weeks on Thursdays to give fathers a safe place for connection with other passionate dads. We invite fathers and surrogate fathers to join our *8 Dimensions of Wellness Workshop* series with Dr. Henry Clay. This week’s topic is Spiritual Wellness.

MARCH 12: Let’s Talk — Parent Support Group meets 6:30 p.m. monthly on 2nd Tuesdays to help parents and caregivers learn new strategies that effect positive change.

MARCH 20: New Family Welcome Group meets 6:30 p.m. monthly on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays is for caregivers to learn their guided journey. We introduce our organization, team, and services.

If you have questions, contact us at **(973) 395-1441** or visit our website for the details: <https://bit.ly/fsocevents>

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Kelli Nyre was married to Joseph Nyre, and had four children. At the time, the Nyres lived in New Rochelle, New York.

Here is what Seton Hall University leaders said about Joseph Nyre when they picked him to be president in mid-2019.

According to SHU website, Dr. Nyre was selected as Seton Hall’s next leader following a national search led by University Regents Kevin Marino, who served as the Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, and Mark Ganton, who served as Vice Chair. The committee included representatives from the University’s Board of Trustees, Board of Regents, priest community, administration and faculty. The committee was assisted by Storbeck/Pimentel Associates, a national search firm that specializes in executive searches in the higher education and nonprofit sectors.

“Dr. Nyre’s distinguished service in academia and health care and his experience in transformational higher education leadership along with his deep Catholic faith will help guide and propel Seton Hall to even

greater national prominence,” said Marino.

So, everything was just fine until President Nyre decided to address complaints coming from his wife and additional employees. Apparently, at that point SHU decided Joseph Nyre did not suit them because he did not ignore what powerful people were doing. In other words, Nyre stood up against harassment of female employees by Mr. Marino.

Back to analyzing what the various Counts say about SHU violations of the law, rules, regulations and procedures.

Count 4 has 22 charges, which are mostly identical to those found in Counts 1 and 3. The title of Count 4 is “NJLAD (New Jersey Law Against Discrimination) Disparate And Hostile Environment Discrimination Due to Gender And/Or Sex (as to Plaintiff K. Nyre).

According to court papers, “The NJLAD protects against unlawful discrimination based on gender/sex. Defendants’ actions were in violation of the NJLAD. Plaintiff K. Nyre was subjected to harassment and dis-

(Continued on page 11)

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CDC UPDATES AND SIMPLIFIES RESPIRATORY VIRUS RECOMMENDATIONS

CDC - On March 1, the CDC released updated recommendations for how people can protect themselves and their communities from respiratory viruses, including COVID-19. The new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, flu, and RSV, which can cause significant health impacts and strain on hospitals and health care workers.

CDC is making updates to the recommendations now because the U.S. is seeing far fewer hospitalizations and deaths associated with COVID-19 and because we have more tools than ever to combat flu, COVID, and RSV.

“Today’s announcement reflects the progress we have made

in protecting against severe illness from COVID-19,” said CDC Director Dr. Mandy Cohen. “However, we still must use the commonsense solutions we know work to protect ourselves and others from serious illness from respiratory viruses - this includes vaccination, treatment, and staying home when we get sick.”

As part of the guidance, CDC provides active recommendations on core prevention steps and strategies:

- Staying up to date with vaccination to protect people against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. This includes flu, COVID-19, and RSV if eligible.
- Practicing good hygiene by covering coughs and sneez-

- es, washing or sanitizing hands often, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- Taking steps for cleaner air, such as bringing in more fresh outside air, purifying indoor air, or gathering outdoors.

When people get sick with a respiratory virus, the updated guidance recommends that they stay home and away from others. For people with COVID-19 and influenza, treatment is available and can lessen symptoms and lower the risk of severe illness. The recommendations suggest returning to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and if a fever was present, it has been gone without use of a fever-reducing medication.

Once people resume normal activities, they are encouraged to take additional prevention strategies for the next 5 days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses. Enhanced precautions are especially important to protect those most at risk for severe illness, including those over 65 and people with weakened immune systems.

CDC’s updated guidance reflects how the circumstances around COVID-19 in particular have changed. While it remains a threat, today it is far less likely to cause severe illness because

(Continued on page 13)



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

NEWARK - The life of Edwin Ivan Martinez, 13, was remembered with a March 7 visitation here at the Alvarez Funeral Home, a March 8 Funeral Mass at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church and later burial at North Arlington's Holy Cross cemetery.

Martinez - who was to graduate from Park Avenue Elementary School's Eighth Grade in June - was also remembered with a Feb. 26 vigil at the southwest corner of Clifton and Montclair avenues, where a shrine marks the spot where he and his older cousin's car ended after a two car collision there Feb. 25.

The Essex County Prosecutor's Office said that the collision between 9:30 and 10:30 p.m. Feb. 25 had killed one person at the scene and sent a driver to a local hospital with serious injuries.

Martinez's family said that Edwin was in the passenger seat where the other car impacted. He told his mother that he was going to ride with his older cousin from their uncle's house instead of walking. They had stopped to take home food along the way.

Edwin Martinez, who was born March 28, 2010 at Belleville's RWJBarnabas Health Clara Maass Medical Center, was remembered as a cheerful but serious student who would play soccer at the drop of a ball. His teammates added a soccer ball to the shrine. He flew solo to meet his grandparents in El Salvador over the

Christmas holidays and recently had his first communion at St. Michael's.

Mother Xenia, younger sister Daylin Yaeli and grandparents Maria Magdalena and Jose Francisco are among his survivors. A GoFundMe.com page for his funeral expenses, set up Feb. 26, may reach its \$30,000 goal by March 8. ECPO Accident Scene Unit detectives are still investigating as of press time.

IRVINGTON - Last rites for the recently retired Municipal Clerk Harold Wiener were held at Union's Galante Funeral Home March 1, at Hillside's Christ the King Church March 2 and a later burial at East Hanover's Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Wiener, 67, considered The Wizard of Municipal Clerks, died at Summit's Overlook Hospital Feb. 26. He had ended his 36-year clerkship here, citing health reasons, July 31. He had served seven mayors, 60 council members, township officials, residents and the public.

Harold Edward Wiener was a lifelong Irvingtonian from his birth here at Irvington general Hospital. The Union Avenue Elementary School and Irvington High School Class of 1975 graduate went on to now-Montclair State University to attain his psychology/sociology bachelor's degree in 1979.

Wiener first went to the Municipal Building for a job while he pursued a master's degree in teaching social science. First hired as a consumer affairs officer in 1980, he passed a typing test and was appointed assistant clerk in 1982. He went on to attain his degree - and a state Registered Municipal Clerk Certificate - in 1986.

Wiener's scholarly pursuit continued before and well after being appointed as Irvington's Municipal Clerk Nov. 24, 1987. He became a Certified Municipal Clerk in 1991, and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' Master Municipal Clerk designation in 2005. The Municipal Clerks Association of Essex County and New Jersey member was named 2010 Municipal Clerk of the Year.

The Wizard - known for his expertise, impartiality, supervisory ability and judgement - lived his last days in Union. His 35-year attendance streak, bro-

ken by a 2007 pout with pneumonia, was blotted by health issuers his last year. Then-Assistant Clerk Shawana Supel filled in for him.

Mother Josephine, wife Joanne, brothers Richard and Tom and sister Eleanor are among his survivors.

EAST ORANGE - A quick thinking carjacking victim and alert Newark Police patrols helped apprehend a city man who was accused of taking the Range Rover in Totowa and crashing it by a South Ward intersection Feb. 25.

The driver/mother told Totowa police that she was about to pull out of her parking space from the Abill Plaza lot on Route 46 West when a black car pulled up and blocked her in at about 11:30 a.m. that Sunday.

A man in a camouflage ski mask, black clothing and a watch on his left wrist, got out of the blocking car, pulled her out of her SUV by her arm, saw her one-year-old son in the back seat and told her, "Just take your son and leave." The thief - and a second driver in the black sedan - then sped away onto 46 West.

The victim, however, took a front windshield photo of the carjacker aboard the car and posted it on Twitter. She gave a copy and her description to Totowa police - who then put out an all points bulletin on the vehicle and suspect.

NPD patrol officers, said Newark Public Safety Director Fritz Frage, noticed a Range Rover matching the APB's description that afternoon and began a pursuit. The SUV's driver had collided with a parked car before crashing into a pole at Maple and Vasser streets that afternoon. Its driver was still inside, complaining of pain.

Police computer record checks, conducted while local EMS technicians treated the driver, uncovered what the late commentator Paul Harvey would have called "the rest of the story."

Desi S. Lee, 43, was arrested and charged on counts of unlawful taking of a means of conveyance, assault by auto and resisting arrest after being told to stop. He is also being held by Superior Court-Newark and Totowa Municipal Court on two counts of possessing a dangerous con-

trolled substance and a parole violation. It is not known whether Lee, who is being held in Newark's Essex County Correctional Facility, will be extradited to Totowa.

ORANGE - The redeveloper of 275 Main St. and 27 Ridge St. is hoping that incoming apartment dwellers and retailers will proclaim, "The Elks Are Dead - Long Live The Elks" in Spring 2025.

That is when Vanta Development, of Brooklyn, hopes to have a seven-story apartment building with ground floor retail space open at where the 1864 BPOE Elks Lodge No. 135 and a 1920's 2.56-story house around the corner stood.

The 126 unit "multi-family residential building" is being named "The Elks." Www.thelksnj.org are on the banners lining the perimeter fence since Feb. 28 while two contracted excavators are digging out foundation space.

Elks Lodge 135 had closed by 2020, its members and front lawn Elk statue moved to the then-Newark-Bloomfield Lodge at 292 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield. Their new home has since been renamed The Greater Essex Lodge.

Vanta bought the properties as VA 475 Urban Renewal LLC June 3, 2021 and received "a community events agreement" with the City of Orange Oct. 3, 2023. That agreement includes a "voluntary community service contribution to the City" long term tax exemption payment of \$441,000.

Vanta had meanwhile used 275 Main/27 Ridge and four other properties here, in East Orange and Vernon as collateral for a one-year, \$6 million refinancing loan from JG Funding Corp. of Staten Island, NY. The other properties, holding an overall 1.507 million square feet, are: 91 Main St and 748 Berkeley Ave., here, 636 Central Ave., East Orange and Vernon's 114 Rt 94. McAfee.

91 Main St. is a former car repair garage that had most recently been the Omega Kingdom daycare center and 748 Berkeley is an Edwardian-era South Ward house. 636 Central, East Orange was the home of the Doops store/discotheque and 114 Rt.

(Continued on page 12)



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FORMER PRESIDENT SUES SHU - PART III

(Continued from page 7)

crimination by Defendants because of her gender/sex. The harassing and discriminatory conduct by Defendant was severe and Defendants took zero action to address and/or remediate same.

“The Individual Defendants were acting within the scope of their employment with Defendant SHU when they took their aforementioned harassing and discriminatory actions against Plaintiff K. Nyre. Defendants had knowledge or should have had knowledge about the discriminatory treatment and failed to take action reasonably calculated to end such discrimination, creating a hostile environment for Plaintiff Nyre, which had the effect of denying Plaintiff K. Nyre’s accommodations, advantages, facilities and privileges.

“Defendants failed to implement effective preventative and remedial measures with respect to the severe harassment and discrimination of Plaintiff K. Nyre.

“Defendants failed to implement effective preventative and remedial measures with respect to the severe harassment and discrimination of Plaintiff K. Nyre.

“Defendants systematically failed to train its employees to such a degree that it amounts to a policy or custom of deliberate indifference.

“The discriminatory conduct would not have occurred but for Plaintiff K. Nyre’s gender/sex, which is a protected characteristic, and was sufficiently severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment, which defendants failed to reasonably address.

“As a result of Defendants’ actions and/or inaction, Plaintiff K. Nyre continues to suffer from severe emotional distress.”

Marino’s response as published in February 16 issue of the Setonian online newsletter

“Dr. Nyre’s lawsuit, in which I am not a defendant, is rife with false and defamatory statements. I recruited Dr. Nyre to serve as Seton Hall’s President in 2018 and he recruited me

to serve as Chairman of the Board of Regents. He and I then worked effectively together for several years before I objected to his gross mishandling of the investigation of an embezzlement scandal at Seton Hall Law School.

“He hired a friend of his to conduct that investigation - a lawyer fired by the Iona University Board of Trustees - and together they made former Law School Dean Boozang a scapegoat of that scandal although she had nothing whatsoever to do with it. When I lodged my objection, Dr. Nyre vowed to have me removed as Chair and proceeded to make a host of false allegations about me to a group of six Regents, centered around the entirely bogus claim that I had a conflict of interest based on my professional relationship with the Dean.”

“In making that claim, Dr. Nyre concealed from those Regents an opinion letter written by the Connell Foley law firm stating, in no uncertain terms, that I had no such conflict. I completed my term as Chair on June 30, 2023, and resigned from the

Board in December.

“Dr. Nyre’s wife’s disgraceful claim that I harassed her on two occasions is false in every respect. That never happened, and she knows it. I have provided ample evidence to the EEO Office refuting her baseless accusations, and expect to be fully exonerated when the pending investigation of that claim is resolved.

“Dr. Nyre’s lawsuit is a direct violation of his separation agreement with the University, to which I was not a party, and flatly undermines the statements he made when he left his position. Stated simply, he is attempting to rehabilitate his tarnished reputation and secure another undeserved payout from the University. I am confident that desperate and pathetic attempt will fail.

“I have loved and served Seton Hall for more than forty years, and will love and serve Seton Hall long after Dr. Nyre’s tenure is just a bad memory.”

What happens next is a long lawsuit that might last years. The Boland Hall Fire lawsuits lasted from 2002 to 2007.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 6)

requirements of the Haitian people and prevent the country from plunging into further chaos," he said.

Adding to the insecurity is the whereabouts of Prime Minister Ariel Henry, who was in the Kenyan capital to sign the deal, but has not yet returned to Haiti, which has been living under a 72-hour state of emergency and curfew.

Around 80 percent of the capital is now controlled by the armed gangs who tried to take control of Haiti's main airport on March 4 in a bid to oust the current government and prevent the controversial premier's return.

The UN humanitarian affairs office, OCHA, reported that fresh violence and upheaval in the capital has led around 15,000 people to flee their homes, many of whom were previously displaced.

"Despite the security constraints, our humanitarian partners on the ground have begun to respond to these new displacements by providing food, hygiene and health kits, mattresses, blankets and sheets as well as lamps", said the UN Spokesper-

son.

The World Food Program (WFP) and partners have delivered over 5,500 hot meals to some 3,000 people living in three new displacement sites while the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has started distributing emergency shelter material to more than 300 families.

The humanitarian community in Haiti is calling on all sides to put an immediate stop to the violence, Mr. Dujarric emphasized, to allow safe access to those civilians in need.

Around 5.5 million people - nearly half of the country's population - need humanitarian assistance.



A Royal Navy warship seized drugs with a street value of £290.66m in two separate blows to drug runners in the Caribbean.

British sailors, Royal Marines and a US Coast Guard team on HMS Trent intercepted a suspected smuggling speedboat south of the US Virgin Islands.

The smugglers began offloading their illegal cargo as they fled towards land, but Trent, her fast sea boats and an American patrol aircraft gave chase - eventually recovering over 2,700kg of cocaine and other drugs, with an estimated street value of £220.56m.

Secretary of State for Defence, Grant Shapps said: "This operation sends a clear message: The Royal Navy remains resolute in its efforts to disrupt and dismantle the operations of drug traffickers across the world.

"We will continue to ensure that those who seek to profit from illegal drugs face the full force of justice.

"I'd like to congratulate the ship's company for their invaluable work keeping illegal drugs off our streets."

This was HMS Trent's second drugs bust in the space of only three weeks, having seized £70.1m of cocaine in a separate operation in January.

During a high-speed chase, the smugglers tried to offload their illegal cargo, but Royal Marines coxswains and the

USCG boarding team closed in, took control of the vessel, and detained four crew members.

During a ten-hour search, Trent's 60-strong crew scoured 24 square miles of ocean for the abandoned cargo, eventually retrieving almost 900kg of cocaine.

A Royal Marine who took part in the operation and cannot be named for operational reasons said: "This was a challenging operation and required us to push the boats to their limit.

"Despite their best efforts to evade us, they finally gave up the chase and we were able to get alongside and enable members of the US Coast Guard to seize the vessel."

Commanding Officer, Commander Tim Langford, said: "The achievements of this ship and her crew in the last nine months have been spectacular, and it is brilliant to see the hard work and dedication of this amazing team paying off.

"The team is rightly proud of their efforts, and those of our USCG colleagues.

Trent's second bust more than tripled her total amount of drugs seized - again in a coordinated operation with the USCG and a US Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

TOWN WATCH *(Continued from page 10)*

94, Vernon, is vacant land. Vanta has not said what they will otherwise do with these properties.

WEST ORANGE - The township's two-year contract to do Dover's bookkeeping, which came to light in the Morris County town's Feb. 20 council meeting, could become an episode of a hypothetical "When Shared Service Agreements Go Bad" television series.

Dover Mayor James P. Dodd, the Council and meeting witnesses became upset at how West Orange had conducted itself 2021-22 when John Mooney, of Mt. Arlington-based Nisivoccia auditing, presented his 2022 financial report. Dodd was a four-term mayor but was replaced by Carolyn Blackman in 2019 - who replaced Nisivoccia with the West Orange Department of Finance in 2021.

Dover had paid \$65,000 in quarterly installments to West Orange in 2021 plus an annual two percent increase thereafter. Dodd, who was returned to office Nov. 8, canceled the interlocal services agreement and brought back Nisivoccia. Dover's new Chief Financial Officer Tom Ferry, who was hired in September, is to file a 2023 financial

report to the old-new auditor in March.

Mooney, in his 2022 financial audit, called West Orange's 2022 reports, "by far the worst condition of any records I've ever seen in 27 years. There was a lack of records that were provided to us. We couldn't do anything - there was no one to ask questions to. It was really, really bad."

The recordkeeping conditions were such that Mooney believed it helped leave Dover with a \$1.8 million budget deficit. Dover officials had improperly applied \$1.8 million from federal COVID relief funds to fill a 2022 budget gap - but the township had to take \$2.1 million more from its fund balance to reconcile its books.

After Mooney said that he found no fraud rising "to the level where it's in somebody's pocket and they walked out the door with it," Dodd said that West Orange's CFO, John Gross "clearly stated, 'I'm responsible for 2022.'"

Gross, who has been added Mayor's Chief of Staff and Comptroller's jobs here, has not responded to a Morris County reporter's request for comment.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - One of the legacies of retired Maplewood Fire Lt. Bernard Maran - who died in Stuart, Fla, 15 - may be found in South Orange's fire

stations.

B. Maran, 89, who was among "Maplewood's Bravest" 1959-89, has sons Spencer and Steven follow in his firefighters boots up to becoming the village's deputy fire chiefs by 2020. Spencer Maran retired from the South Essex Fire Department Aug. 1; Steven still serves the two-town squad.

B. Maran, who was born July 25, 1934 in Summit, had lived in several places, including Irvington, before the family arrived in Maplewood. "Ben" first worked with the Maplewood Department of Public Works before taking the firefighters exam and academy training.

Lt. Maran was last placed in Station 2, 105 Durand Rd., - by the then-police headquarters and the train station. He liked to talk with children about fire safety as much as he liked saving people.

Ben and wife Irene Maran raised Spencer, Steven, Scott, and Victoria Maran-Reiss here before moving onto Bricktown, West Palm Beach and Stuart, Fla. Ben continued in Florida as a school crossing guard and as an active member of the Army National Guard plus the local Knights of Columbus, the Firemen's Mutual Benevolent Association and the Elks Club.

Three grandsons, two granddaughters, *(Continued on page 14)*

EAST ORANGE COP CONVICTED OF AGGRAVATED ASSAULT FOR PHYSICALLY ABUSING SON

ESSEX - Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II announced that an Essex County jury convicted former East Orange Police Officer Devin L. Higgs of aggravated assault and endangering the welfare of a child for physically abusing his then nine-year-old son.

On February 15, 2018, Higgs, 53, of West Orange, brought his son to the hospital for injuries that stemmed from a fall, said Higgs, who was employed at the time as an East Orange Police Officer.

Doctors found that the child had 22 fractures on his ribs and a fractured scapula bone, among other injuries, according to Assistant Prosecutor Meredith Mona, who tried the case with Assistant Prosecutor Victoria Saraiva. The child also had bruises, scars, and marks on his body,

indicative of child abuse. Neither Higgs nor his son had explanations for his injuries, other than vague responses that he had fallen.

The child remained hospitalized for six weeks as he battled a severe infection and recovered from his broken bones. During that time, the boy eventually disclosed to medical staff that his injuries were caused by his father, who would hit him at home. He didn't tell anyone sooner, the boy said, because his dad told him not to discuss "family business."

On March 1, 2024, following a four-day trial before Superior Court Judge Patrick Arre, the jury found Higgs guilty of two counts of second degree aggravated assault for causing serious bodily, one disorderly persons offense of simple assault for

causing a head injury, four counts of second degree endangering the welfare of a child, one count of second degree hindering apprehension, and one count of second degree official misconduct.

When he is sentenced on April 12, 2024, Higgs faces up to 80 years in New Jersey State Prison.

"We would like to thank the victim for his tremendous bravery in coming forward and testifying in this case," said Mona. "We are also grateful to the medical providers at Cooperman Barnabas Hospital who discovered the abuse, as well as the team at Robert Wood Johnson Children's Hospital who provided the boy with life-saving care and treatment."

Saraiva said the jury returned a just verdict that will provide



closure for the victim, "and which we hope sends a message that encourages victims of abuse to come forward and alerts perpetrators to that fact that they will be held responsible for their criminal conduct."

DEATH OF TWO-YEAR OLD UNDER INVESTIGATION

NEWARK - Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II and Newark Public Safety Director Fritz Fragé announced that the Essex County Prosecutor's Office Homicide/Major Crimes Task Force is investigating the death of a two-year old baby.

On March 2, at 2:18 p.m., Newark police responded to a report of a baby in distress on the 100 block of South Orange Avenue in Newark. Arriving officers located the baby inside a residence at that location. The baby was pronounced dead at

the scene at 2:32 p.m. The cause and manner of death are pending an autopsy.

The investigation is active and ongoing. No arrests have been made. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Essex County Prosecutor's Office tips line at 1-877-TIPS-4EC or 1-877-847-7432. Calls will be kept confidential.



FATAL SHOOTING IN NEWARK UNDER INVESTIGATION

NEWARK - Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II and Newark Public Safety Director Fritz Fragé announced that the Essex County Prosecutor's Office Homicide/Major Crimes Task Force is investigating the fatal shooting of Jaheem Futrell, 22, of Newark.

On March 2, at 10:47 a.m., Newark police responded to a report of an injured male on the 300 block of South 8th Street in Newark. Arriving officers located Futrell at that location suffering from a gunshot wound. He was pronounced dead at the sce-



ne at 11:14 a.m.

The investigation is active and ongoing. No arrests have been made. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Essex County Prosecutor's Office tips line at 1-877-TIPS-4EC or 1-877-847-7432. Calls will be kept confidential.

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS

(Continued from page 9)

of widespread immunity and improved tools to prevent and treat the disease. Importantly, states and countries that have already adjusted recommended isolation times have not seen increased hospitalizations or deaths related to COVID-19.

While every respiratory virus does not act the same, adopting a unified approach to limiting disease spread makes recommenda-

tions easier to follow and thus more likely to be adopted and does not rely on individuals to test for illness, a practice that data indicates is uneven.

"The bottom line is that when people follow these actionable recommendations to avoid getting sick, and to protect themselves and others if they do get sick, it will help limit the spread of respiratory viruses, and that will mean fewer people who experience severe illness," National Center for Immunization and

Respiratory Diseases Director Dr. Demetre Daskalakis said. "That includes taking enhanced precautions that can help protect people who are at higher risk for getting seriously ill."

The updated guidance also includes specific sections with additional considerations for people who are at higher risk of severe illness from respiratory viruses, including people who are immunocompromised, people with disabilities, people who are or were recently pregnant,

young children, and older adults. Respiratory viruses remain a public health threat. CDC will continue to focus efforts on ensuring the public has the information and tools to lower their risk or respiratory illness by protecting themselves, families, and communities.

This updated guidance is intended for community settings. There are no changes to respiratory virus guidance for healthcare settings.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

ALL WOMAN

DOING US PROUD

This year's, the National Women's History Month theme is "Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion."

This time, when the taskmasters of process shouts popped into my head, it triggered a quantum leap into the past. Instantly, I could once again hear my sister Pam ever so passionately massacring one of our favorite sing-alongs at the time, as she often had. When she did her thang, her voice would loom over us and the artist we really wanted to hear. The rest has become our history. That memory

brought me much laughter and joy, as it always had. Also, it had gifted me a title. In this instance, it was the name of Lisa Stansfield's hit song "All Woman."

Thankfully, a convo with one of my future subjects, who also will be donning the page for the theme, reminded me about this month's theme. For March, THE OBSERVATION BOOTH is a dedication to those knowingly intelligent and beautifully inspiring Women of Change. When thoughts of such a woman's image flashed in my head, the past had been quite generous. It appeared like "Tada," and I got my first subject.

This person is a person who embodies the 2024 Women's Month theme and all things women. I had the pleasure of interviewing her many years ago, although we officially met only once. Making her acquaintance had given me a sense of pride. When I'd see testaments of her name or image, be it at the Department of Motor Vehicles as I had, transfixed on a school above its doors or adorned in print of all types, which, I often have, imagine how I felt when I'd get that last hello from her on social media. It had been years; I was shocked.

Although she is no longer with us, she inspires and motivates me simply by seeing or hearing her name. She has truly



left a legacy that will propel us forward for times to come to eternity. I went into the archives and yanked that article, and as I read it, as my sister's bellows, it once again brought me such joy.

She was such a beautiful soul, and I shall forever praise and revere her name. Rest in Heaven, Lieutenant Governor Shelia Y. Oliver; job well done. I also wanted to thank Terry Tucker, who was the Chief of Staff, and all those who had the privilege of working beside her. Blessings also to the family and

friends of our beloved. Google her name for a more extensive view of this woman that was all woman... Lieutenant Governor Shelia Y. Oliver. ...

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 12)

brother Frank, daughter Agnes, companion Joan Melluso and the Melluso family are also among his survivors. His visitation and funeral at Stuart's Aycock Funeral Home Young & Prill Chapel, followed by a graveside service, were held there Feb. 23.

BLOOMFIELD - Neighbors of the former Peerless Tube factory complex here, who have been irked over a proposed new use of the site last month, got to practice their presentation and civic skills here at the Feb. 26 Township Council Meeting.

The mostly Williamson Street homeowners came before Mayor Ted Gamble and the council that Monday night to voice their objections to a proposed apartment building on 78-88 Locust Ave. in the Watsessing section. The Zoning Board of Adjustment postponed the Golemis Realty LLC public hearing from

their Feb. 22 meeting to 7 p.m. March 17.

Golemis, of Tenafly, is proposing to build a four-story, 44 apartment building at 78 Locust Ave. and resume using the parking lot at 88 Locust. Golemis had bought the .964 acre 78 Mocusst lot from Bloomfield Parkside LLC for \$1.9 million Aug. 26, 2021 and had brought questions before the ZBA Traffic Expert at their April 6 meeting.

The neighbors of Williamson Street, to the lot's south, ate saying that Golemis has not done enough planning to mitigate any dust or debris that the proposed construction may dig up. They are also concerned about the noise wafting west on Locust to the Watsessing Elementary School on Prospect Street.

78-88 Locust used to have a four-story brick factory that was built by Peerless in 1920. Bloomfield Parkside had that building demolished Aug. 7, 2021 after they bought it from neighboring Parkway Self Storage in 2015. Parkway, in turn, bought the Peerless complex on 56-76 Locust Ave. and JFK

Parkway from a Peerless Holdings federal bankruptcy judge in 2003.

Peerless, who held patents on aluminum aerosol cans and collapsible tubes, came here from Newark in 1912. It hired 750 people to produce two million tubes a year in the 1970s, however, before it dwindled to 150 by 1994.

The company known by locals and Garden State Parkway drivers for its paint tube sign and aerosol aroma had built a second factory in Freehold in 1970 and a third in Puerto Rico - but failed to dispel its decline. Peerless Holdings were in a New York City judge's hands when Parkway pitched plans for converting the main plant into 676 self-storage lockers in 2001.

MONTCLAIR - A New Jersey State Fire Marshal and Montclair Fire Department inspectors are tracing the cause of a Feb. 21 fire that damaged three cars parked in Montclair State University's Red Hawk Park-

(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

ing Deck. The blaze, which also brought first responders from the township, MSU and Clifton. limited parking garage and adjacent bus stop access into Feb. 22.

The MSU campus community first got word of a car fire on the seven story garage's third floor on the Red Hawk Alert Rave system at 11 a.m. that Wednesday. MUS Police, who has its headquarters to the deck's west, and a campus EMS crew promptly responded, as well as the first of Montclair's fire and police units.

The garage's public access was promptly closed. The adjacent bus stop for MSU campus shuttles and NJTransit's No. 28, 191 and 705 services were moved south to Normal Avenue. The Red Hawk Parking Deck is about 10 feet south of the Montclair, Essex County-Little Falls, Passaic County border.

The fire had spread to two adjacent cars at 11:30 although mutual aid from the Clifton Fire Department had arrived. The fire was extinguished by 12:30 p.m. It is not known whether the attached Alexander Kasser Theater and George Segal Gallery were evacuated.

Although structural MSU engineers deemed the garage as structurally safe at 3:26 p.m. directed parkers to remove their vehicles to other lots by 6 p.m. The garage reopened at 7:30 a.m. Feb. 22 after contracted towers and MSU maintenance crew had finished cleaning up.

No Mayoral Re-election for Spiller

Mayor Sean Spiller announced on social media Feb. 29 that he is preparing "to pass the baton of leadership to the next elected leader of our community," ending his 12 years as Mayor and councilman. Spiller, who will be still working as New Jersey Education Association President, has been rumored since late 2022 to be running for the Democratic Gubernatorial nomination in 2025.

BELLEVILLE - Mourning bunting went up on Belleville Town Hall, the Belleville Public Library and Information Center, Belleville Fire Station No. 2 along Washington Avenue and on other township buildings by Noon March 1 in tribute to the late Mayor William J. "Bill" Escott.

Escott, 78 - who served Belleville as a councilman, mayor and police and school safety officer for five decades - died Feb. 29. It is not clear whether he moved here soon after his March 12, 1945 birth in East Orange or after his Vietnam era honorable discharge from the U.S. Navy.

Escott first served the Belleville Police Department for 25 years, retiring as Captain in command of the Detective Bureau. He was first elected as Third Ward Councilman in 1996 and was re-elected in 2000.

His then-Township Council colleagues named him as their mayor 1999-2001 before his council term ended in 2004. (Belleville was on a Council Commission form of government then.) He ran for an unsuccessful return in 2016.

Escott was meanwhile appointed as the Belleville Public Schools' Supervisor of Safety and Security 2012-14. Wife Cecilia and sons William Jr., Michael and Thomas P. are among his survivors.

Escott's visitation was held March 5 at Nutley's S.W. Brown & Son Funeral Home and his Funeral Mass March 6 here at St. Peter's Church. Memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, www.stjude.org and/or the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, www.t2t.org.

NUTLEY - The township and its police department are nearly two months into reviving and expanding a neighborhood watch program. There are groups, like the Newark-based ACLU-NJ, who are interested in what the resident watchers will be instructed on.

Nutley Public Safety Commissioner Alphone "Al" Petracco and Police Chief Thomas Strumolo, at their Feb. 22 in-person and Zoom meeting at the township's courtroom, introduced the four lieutenants, captain and deputy chief who will make up the Nutley Neighborhood Watch Command Staff who will supervise team watchers and block captains.

Petracco and former commissioner and retired NPD lieutenant Steve Rogers recalled how the watch worked decades ago. Rogers told of how an observant resident called police about suspicious activity at an apartment complex here - which led to the activity "being linked to the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks."

Petracco and Strumolo, at the Jan. 17 meeting, had volunteer team watchers and block captains sign up after explaining the intent and logistics of the watch program. Volunteer residents and/or business owners will be assigned a block or a neighborhood to observe.

"We're partnering with our neighbors, our residents, because when there are more eyes on the street - 'When you see something, say something,' " said Petracco to a reporter Feb. 26.

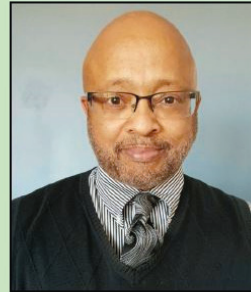
Participating watchers and block captains are being instructed to call in any suspicious activity - and not to personally intervene. How and what constitutes suspicious activity has given ACLU-NJ Senior Supervising Attorney Alexander Shalom cause for concern.

"You have untrained folks who can't identify the difference between someone borrowing a friend's car and someone stealing a car," said Shalom. "(They) wind up playing police officer when we've trained people who should be doing that."

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