

LOCAL TALK

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

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25¢

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

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE BERYL PAGE 6

IS YOUR CITY REALLY SAFE?

By Dhiren Shah

The Crime Index is very good when a person is looking for a house or an apartment to buy or rent. For the “Local Talk” area, I would like to tell our readers to have a summarized crime index to understand your neighborhood.

Every year, local administrations show off data to tell everyone there is a reduction in the crime rates. It shows that crime has gone down a little, but if the crime rate is down every year, drastically as they say, then there should not be any crime in those

cities. So, it is harder to believe the statements given by the administrations.

We all should check the data with other sources first, and then believe them, as they have a biased interest in making the numbers look good. With that in mind, I decided to put the rhetoric of the administrations to the test.

Data here is taken from www.neighborhoodscout.com. According to their index rating system, 100 is the safest, and anything low is not as safe. For example, a number of 95 means the city is 95% safer than most cities. Per the ratings, the

least safe city in the index is Irvington, as their number is 14, followed by Newark at 16.

Basically, Irvington is safer than only 14% of cities in the U.S. On the other hand, you would be safer in 84% of the other cities in the United States of America.

Here are numbers for other cities in Essex County. Do you think your city is “safe” compared to what your mayors say?

Irvington: 14. Newark: 16. Orange: 19. Belleville: 21. East Orange: 23. West Orange: 27. Maplewood: 31. South Orange: 37. Bloomfield: 37. Montclair: 40.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
2023 Crime Index											
1 Local Talk Area	Irvington	Newark	Orange	Belleville	East Orange	West Orange	Maplewood	Bloomfield	South Orange	Montclair	
2 Population	59,977	305,344	336,780	37,480	68,446	47,957	25,220	52,948	18,220	39,821	
3 Violent Crime	238	1,627	127	69	311	90	29	51	9	48	
4 Total Crimes	1,527	7,454	746	776	1,337	831	387	700	242	496	
5 Crime Index	15	16	19	21	23	27	31	37	37	40	

12 VYING TO SUCCEED PAYNE IN JULY 16 SPECIAL PRIMARY

STEVENSON WINS AGAIN PAGE 5



The late
Cong. Donald
M. Payne, Jr.
(1958-2024)

PAGE 8



Photo By
Gardy Lopez
Top Rank

	<p>Primary Care Multi Specialty Group THE HEART CENTER OF THE ORANGES 60 Evergreen Place, Suite 400, East Orange, NJ</p>	<p>Offering Same Day Appointments for All Specialties and DOT Exams</p>	<p>Turn To PAGE 16</p>
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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

The Fourth of July is a happy occasion for all of us. Originally, there was a ban on selling or using fireworks, except on July 4th. In 2017, they made the law legalizing ground fireworks like hand-held sparklers, smoke devices and party poppers. Is allowing fireworks in New Jersey a good idea? I asked a few people; some say children and some adults can have fun with fireworks, while others says that it is not a good idea. Aerial fireworks are not allowed, but the fireworks are allowed to be sold and used in New Jersey.

This year, about 4,000 acres at Wharton State Forest was scorched in a fire in Burlington County, New Jersey, which was blamed on fireworks. This was not the largest NJ fire of all time, as there was a 5,000 acre fire in 2023, while the largest one back

in 1920 was more than 10,000 acres. So, everyone has to be very careful using fireworks.

Hurricane Beryl first impacted Barbados, Jamaica and some surrounding Caribbean Islands. Then it impacted Mexico and finally landed in the United States. Over 2 million people were without power in Texas when Beryl landed as Category 1 Hurricane on July 7 and 8. Heavy rain and winds between 60 to 85 miles per hour battered many streets. Many large trees fell on in Houston and surrounding suburbs. One person died in Texas along with two persons in the Caribbean, but these numbers could change. The disruption of life was handled very good by the authorities in Texas as I've heard. Beryl was once a Category 5 while over the Atlantic Ocean.

President Biden has more troubling news. Parkinson disease expert Dr. Kevin Cannard visited the White House eight times between last summer and this spring. Dr. Cannard also contacted and met Biden's personal physician once. This is a recorded data from the White House logbook. White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre has been bombarded with questions about

Biden's health by the press, including those who used to favor Biden before. So far, the President has refused to step down. There was a closed door meeting of Democratic Party leaders on July 9, but no outcome of the meeting has been announced as of press time. However, there were many democratic leaders asking for Biden to withdraw as the Party's nominee at the Democratic Party Convention.

If Biden does not withdraw, no one can do anything, as Biden won the delegates in all 50 states of the Democratic Primaries. He is officially the Democratic Party nominee, unless he himself withdraws his nomination. If Biden wins and he becomes weak or sick, VP Kamala Harris automatically becomes president. Also, if Biden wins and resigns after taking the oath of office, Harris becomes president. If Biden withdraws his candidacy, Kamala Harris is the best candidate to run against Donald Trump, as there is not enough time for a new candidate to campaign and win.

Trump is ahead of Biden by 3.6 points and ahead of Kamala Harris 3.3 points. So, Harris has a better chance to compete against Trump per these numbers. She

calls herself Black, and does not count herself as Indian (her mother) or Jamaican (her father). However, she counts herself as Black (It was her mother's Indian father who worked in Zambia decades ago, helping to settle refugees in the newly independent African country.) While Black women voters may not mind her too much, Black men are different, as they do not like her calling herself Black. Also, there is a feeling of resentment among Black men as Kamala made her name by locking up a lot of people during her legal career.

The Democratic National Convention will take place in August 19-22 in Chicago. There over one month left for the DNC and for the first time, Democratic leaders are talking about their nominee withdrawing his nomination. Some of the big donors have pulled their backing for Biden, including Abigail Disney, heiress to the Disney family fortune and some Hollywood power players, including Netflix co-founder Reed Hastings. It will be interesting to watch how the development will take place at the DNC!

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

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy	Scattered Storms	AM Rain	Partly Cloudy	Scattered Storms	Mostly Sunny	Scattered Storms
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LO 75	LO 72	LO 72	LO 75	LO 76	LO 75	LO 73

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The Doctor Is In



OP-ED BY DR. ADIL MANZOOR

The Underprescribing of Critical Treatment for Diarrhea: An Unspoken Danger

Did you know diarrhea is the third leading cause of death among children less than 5 years old? No, seriously, consider it; chances are that you as an adult have had diarrhea before, and while the condition is discomforting for a few days, it's literally just that - discomforting. You don't go to the toilet thinking you

will die. For children, it's different because not only can they die from it, but they actually do, in their millions.

With health concerns like this, you will be forgiven if you think it only really applies to developing countries, and not the great United States. Well, not quite. Diarrhea accounts for close to 9% of hospitalizations in the United States. And the major complication of diarrhea - dehydration - is among the top ten causes of hospitalizations in the United States. So, yes, it's actually a problem that affects the US, too.

Now, to the actual point of this article - research has shown that diarrhea is not treated well in the US. That does not seem so surprising until you consider how simple the general treatment of the condition is, which according to the WHO is oral rehydration therapy (ORT). As I mentioned, the major threat posed by diarrhea is dehydration.

You may be reading this thinking, if dehydration is the major complication, then why not just drink water? Eh, because not only does the body lose water, but it also loses electrolytes. This is where it gets complicated.

These electrolytes are essential for a lot of functions necessary for survival, from regulating nerve and muscle function to balancing blood pressure and rebuilding damaged tissues. This also explains why when there is an electrolyte imbalance in the body, symptoms like severe lethargy, abnormal heart rate and pressure, mental disorders, convulsions, and spasms may arise.

So, to replenish the water and electrolyte content of the body, WHO has recommended ORT. This is basically one liter of water, sodium chloride (table salt), potassium chloride, sodium citrate, and glucose. In fact, some people make do with just adding salt and sugar to water - not the best but does a decent job.

Considering how simple and effective this treatment is, you will be shocked to find out that many healthcare professionals do not prescribe it nearly enough. Why?

Well, not because it is expensive, nope, not even close. Not because it is complicated to use, nope, it is quite literally just dissolving the product in water and drinking it. It's not because it has dangerous side effects, nope, it is very safe. It is because - get this - according to research, some physicians assume their patients do not want oral rehydration salts because they aren't "real medicines" or do not taste that good. If you're like me, you're thinking, when did the taste of medicine ever stop doctors from prescribing because my childhood was pretty rough in that regard?!

There are also suggestions that some pharmacists in many countries do not suggest ORT because they make more money off antibiotics. While diarrhea is often caused by bacterial infections (which can also be viral or parasitic), antibiotics are not the first line of treatment for the condition because they are simply not needed. The body does a great job of regulating its own system, and you only need to support it. Antibiotic overuse is already at dangerous levels, and it is irresponsible to start prescribing antibiotics for kids who only need ORT. That should be the message to all prescribers and physicians. That should also be the message to parents and caregivers.

When your child has diarrhea, your default thought is not

to stock them up with antibiotics. You will likely be doing more harm than good in the long term if you keep at this. Instead, contact your healthcare provider, and even if they do not prescribe ORT, suggest it to them, and then use it diligently for your kid. This also works for adults, by the way.

However, if you notice there are other symptoms, like blood in the stool or diarrhea that refuses to go away after more than a week, you should definitely go back to the hospital. There may be another problem.

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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SPORTS WRAP

Photo By
Evan Korn
Top Rank



By William Hathaway, Jr.

This past weekend at the Prudential Center, Newark once again welcomed home its native son Shakur Stevenson along with the excitement of another Top Rank boxing showcase. Eight matches made up the card, with many local area boxers taking to the ring.

who registered a Technical Knockout over Hunter Turbyfill in the 2nd round before his friends and family at The Rock. The win sparked memories of Vito Mielnicki, Jr.'s debut almost exactly five years ago.

In another key boxing match, Junior Lightweight Eridson Garcia extended his record to 19-1 after a 10 round unani-

Photo By
Evan Korn
Top Rank



The first match of night saw Ali Feliz defeat Robinson Perez in a 4 round Heavyweight clash in a unanimous decision. Next up was Kelvin Davis who came into his match at 12-0 in a Junior Welterweight 8 round match against Kevin Johnson. After a majority decision, Davis remained undefeated.

One of the most exciting events in boxing is when a young pugilist makes his pro debut, and that was the case with Newark Resident and Featherweight Keith Colon,

mous decision against William Foster III.

The fifth match of the night was in the Junior Lightweight division, with young Abdullah Mason scoring a 5th round TKO over Luis Lebron who went into the fight at 20-5. Next, Lightweight Keyshawn Davis remained undefeated after beating 31-2 Miguel Madueno in a 10 round unanimous decision.

Then, in a major upset, Robinson Conceicao shocked O'Shaquie Foster, who went into the fight with a 22-2 mark. In a



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12 round split decision, Conceicao took the bout and the WBC Jr. Lightweight Title.

Finally, the main event of the night saw Newark native Shakur Stevenson defend his WBC Lightweight Division Title and 21-0 record against Artem Harutyunyan, who came into this match with a 12-1 record and seven knockouts. Stevenson was a heavy favorite to win, and had a lot of friends and celebrities who came to see him fight. The Champ also donated tickets to the youth of Newark and Boys Club in the city.

This fight at times was intense and the crowd enjoyed the match, contrary to what was said online. While Harutyunyan avoided being added to Stevenson's 10 KOs, he was still outclassed by his opponent. After 12 rounds, Stevenson went to 22-0 by a unanimous decision that had the judges scoring the bout 119-109, 118-110 and 116-112 in his favor.

"It's kind of hard to prove it if you don't have a fighter who wants to fight back. He's just trying to make sure he survives. He's a good fighter. He's tough. He's strong. I would've wanted

Photo By Felicia
Laguerre Owens



him to try a little harder, so that way it could be a more fun fight," Stevenson said after the win. "I have to cut off the ring a bit more. He'd go one way and then go the other way, so I gotta go back in the gym and work on cutting off the gym."

With that match in the books, Stevenson is now a free agent as a boxer regarding his contract with Top Rank boxing.



WORLD NEWS FLASH

UNITED STATES



BIDEN UNDER FIRE

Despite an abysmal debate performance and several people asking him to step away, the Commander-in-Chief says he is not going anywhere.

Over the past week, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. has made the rounds on television, radio, and in person to vehemently declare that he is staying the 2024 Presidential Race despite people in his own party expressing their concerns about his health.

First up was a taped interview with ABC News correspondent George Stephanopoulos. While there were no extreme slip ups like in the debate, Biden did draw concern from the fact that when he was asked if he watched the debate afterwards, he could not remember if he did.

In subsequent events, Biden did not have much trouble, as he declared he is the only one who could defeat former President Donald J. Trump - which he did in 2020. The current President even wrote a two-page letter to Democrats staunchly defending his position.

Still, the doubts did not stop. On July 8, Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre had to fend off questions regarding the President's health after reporters prodded her on the presence of a neurologist who visited the White House eight times in the past year.

One thing that is absolutely certain since the debate is that the mainstream media has now turned on the President. The era

of calling videos painting Biden in a bad light "Cheap Fakes" has already ended, with the gaffes no longer being called inauthentic.

Finally, this new stance of uncovering every little detail has given credence to some of his opponent's rants about the system being rigged, from calling the media "fake news" to some of his more outlandish theories, such as the 2020 Presidential Election. Although he lost, the cover-up of Biden's health struggles does not give the smell of a "smoking gun" but the smell of something "fishy."

Even worse for Biden, the July 11 sentencing of Trump in the hush money case has been pushed back to Sept. 18, due to Judge Merchan allowing the former President's lawyers to argue about certain evidence used in the trial, now rendered inadmissible due to the Supreme Court's July 1 Presidential Immunity ruling.

"The July 11, 2024, sentencing date is therefore vacated. The Court's decision will be rendered off-calendar on September 6, 2024, and the matter is adjourned to September 18, 2024, at 10:00 AM for the imposition of sentence, if such is still necessary, or other proceedings," Merchan said in response to the request to delay sentencing.

The part where Merchan said, "if such is still necessary" draws concern, as it opens the door for the case to either get a re-trial or be dismissed all together. Should that happen, then Trump would no longer be a "convicted felon" - one of the main sticking points of Democratic campaigning this November.

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 7-9-2024 at 12 p.m.

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

- Total Mass Shootings: 327
- Total Dead: 403
- Total Wounded: 1357
- Shootings Per Day: 1.71
- Days Reached in Year 2024 as of July 1: 191

WORLD



THE AFTERMATH OF BERYL

Hurricane Beryl, which left a trail of destruction from the Caribbean to Mexico - and now the United States - has once again underscored the urgent need for robust early warning systems, the UN meteorological agency (WMO) said on July 8.

Beryl is the strongest hurricane ever to form in the Atlantic during June and rapidly intensified from a tropical depression to a Category 4 storm, briefly reaching Category 5 with winds up to 240 km/h (150 mph).

It made landfall in Texas early Monday morning local time as a Category 1 hurricane, causing a dangerous storm surge and the risk of flash flooding.

It is expected to weaken rapidly as it moves further inland, according to the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO) specialized regional center Miami, which is operated by the US National Hurricane Center (NHC).

WMO also warned of a very intense hurricane season, with up to 25 named storms expected through November. Among them, eight to 13 could develop into hurricanes.

"We need to be especially vigilant this year due to near-record ocean heat in the region where Atlantic hurricanes form and the shift to La Niña conditions, which together create the conditions for increased storm formulation," said Ko Barrett, WMO Deputy Secretary-General.

"This is why WMO and its partners have prioritized early warning action in small islands under the international Early Warnings For All initiative."

As access improves, the full impact of Hurricane Beryl is becoming clear.

UN humanitarian teams in Jamaica, where the hurricane made landfall at 5:00 PM on July 3, report a "sobering picture of widespread damage and de-

struction."

More than 250 roads together with critical infrastructure have been extensively damaged by fallen trees, flooding, and storm surges. Many houses have lost their roofs, according to a humanitarian bulletin issued on July 7.

"(A UN team) visited Old Harbor Bay, Portland Cottage, Rocky Point, Alligator Pond and Treasure Beach. They witnessed many families in need of water, food, cleaning, and reconstruction supplies for their homes, as well as psychological support."

About 160,000 people, including 37,000 children, are estimated to require humanitarian assistance.

In the eastern Caribbean, where Hurricane Beryl first made landfall on 1 July, islands have reported "severe damage" and "significant destruction."

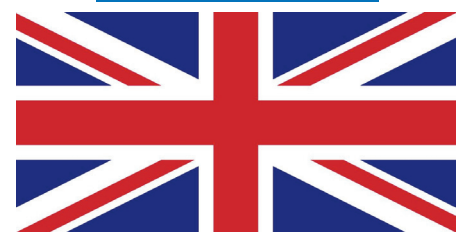
"Exact numbers remain a challenge, as assessments are ongoing amid damage to logistics, power and communications services, as well as power cuts," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a bulletin, also issued on Sunday.

Damage to small airstrips and reliance on smaller boats are hampering logistics efforts, complicating assessments, and delivery of aid.

In Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, as well as northern areas, are among the hardest-hit, with limited public transportation links between Carriacou and the mainland.

Union Island in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is also severely affected. Authorities are housing vulnerable people in tourism facilities and conducting assessments. An unknown number of people have evacuated the island.

UNITED KINGDOM



A NEW ERA IN THE UK

On July 4, citizens of the United Kingdom had their own

(Continued on page 9)

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SUSPECT ARRESTED IN EAST ORANGE ASSAULT : AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATE DEATH IN NEWARK

ESSEX - Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II and East Orange Police Chief Phyllis Bindi have announced that a suspect has been arrested in connection of an assault that occurred during the early morning hours of July 4, 2024.

At approximately 1:30 a.m., East Orange officers were dispatched to an apartment in the 100 block of Park Avenue on reports of a disturbance. Arriving officers located an adult female and two small children, who had all been assaulted.

The victims were rushed to University Hospital in Newark. The adult female, 31, was pronounced dead the next day, while one of the children suffered life-threatening injuries. The

other child is being treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

The identity of the adult female is being withheld pending notification of next of kin and to protect the identity of the surviving victims, who are minor children.

An investigation by East Orange detectives with assistance from the Essex County Prosecutor's Major Crimes and Special Victims units led authorities to identify and charge Jihad Hagler, age 27, of Newark, NJ with attempted murder, aggravated assault and endangering the welfare of a child.

On the evening of July 4, Hagler was arrested by the Newark Police Department for an unrelated incident. He was then turned over to East



Orange and Prosecutor's detectives to be processed on these charges.

Hagler is being held in the Essex County Correctional Facility pending a court appearance in the Essex County Central Judicial Processing (CJP).

The charges against the defendant are merely accusations. He is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

NEWARK - Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens, II and Newark Public Safety Director Fritz Frage have announced that authorities are investigating the death of an individual in the city's Ironbound section.

At approximately 3:30 am on Friday, July 5, 2024, Newark police officers located an unresponsive male in the area of Magazine and Ferry Street. The male, who appeared to be suffering from stab wounds was pronounced dead at the scene at 4:07 am. The identity of the victim is being withheld pending formal identification and notification of next of kin.

The exact cause of death will be determined by an autopsy at the New Jersey Northern Regional Medical Examiner's Office in Newark.

The incident is being investigated by the Prosecutor's Homicide Task Force, which includes detectives from the Newark Police Department. The investigation is active and ongoing. There is no additional information currently available.

Anyone with information is asked to the contact the Essex County Prosecutor's tip line at 877-847-7432.

12 VYING TO SUCCEED PAYNE IN JULY 16 SPECIAL PRIMARY

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - The 11 candidates looking to get Democratic voters' nomination and the solo ballot Republican candidate are the long and short of July 16's special primary election to succeed the late Cong. Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-Newark).

Registered voters among Payne's N.J. Congressional District 10 in parts of Essex, Hudson and Union counties should be getting their sample and/or Vote By Mail Ballots in the mail by now.

Those 18 CD 10 towns, as drawn up in the wake of the 2020 U.S. Census, include East Orange, Irvington, Orange, West Orange, Newark except for its East and North Wards and Montclair's South End. The district includes the "West Essex" towns of Caldwell, Essex Fells and Verona.

The district outside of Essex County also includes "Central" Jersey City in Hudson County plus Union County's Hillside, Union Township, Kenilworth, Cranford, Garwood, Roselle, Roselle Park and part of Linden.

Those ballots are to feature 11 candidates for the Democratic nomination and the one Republican candidate - the winners of each will go head-to-head in Sept. 18's special general election.

The winner would be filling for Payne in what would have been the remainder of his current term though Jan. 3. The winner may also be considered by his or her respective county Democratic or Republican party com-

mittees to run in Nov. 5's General Election for a full two-year term in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The counties' Democratic committees have until Aug. 29 to replace Payne on that General Election ballot. A majority of participating registered voters gave the posthumous seven-term Congressman tribute by making him the winner of their June 4 primary.

Payne, 65, died of a heart attack here, complicated by his diabetic condition, April 4. The second-generation Congressman's death came after the deadline to replace his name on the June 4 primary ballot.

Democratic and Republican party officials called for the special primary and general election due to the narrow majority that the latter has in the House of Representatives. It would take less than a handful of newly-elected Congress members to preserve or sway the balance of party power there.

Essex County Clerk Christopher Durkin (D-Roseland) has not posted the July 17 special primary ballot on essexclerk.com as of 10 a.m. July 9. Durkin's Hudson and Union county colleagues, however, had - and their ballots are similar in format.

Hudson and Union voters are getting a single ballot for both parties, regardless of being registered as a Republican or a Democrat. They are both using the ballot block layout that was used for the June 4 regular primary election by federal court order.

Sample ballot and VBMB readers will be seeing CARMEN BUCCO's name in the special and regular elections. The Nutley native has received the endorsement from all three Republican party organizations.

It is not clear whether Bucco has moved to an address within CD 10 as of press time. State rules need not have a federal level of office holder reside in the Congressional district he or she represents.

He does have a tailoring store and the Bucco Rising Stars Foundation for orphans transitioning into adulthood in Nutley. The "Man of Style with Bucco" talk show producer and host is also a licensed real estate agent.

There is a blank space to Bucco and the Democratic candidates' right-hand side for a write-in candidate.

While Bucco is running by himself with county GOP support, the 11 Democratic Party candidates can fill an average-size minivan. Those Democratic candidates, in alphabetical -not ballot - order are:

Linden Mayor DEREK ARMSTEAD bills himself as "Democrat For The People" on the Union and Hudson county ballots. The lifelong city resident was Fourth Ward Councilman 1993-2014, and has received the endorsement of State Senate President Nicholas Scutari (D- Linden) as Union County Democratic Committee President. The Hudson County Democratic Committee has de-

(Continued on page 11)



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WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 6)

Independence Day of sorts, as by way of their vote they are free of Conservative governance.

In an election called forth by then-UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, the Labour Party took power by claiming 411 of the 650 available seats in Parliament, leaving the Conservative Party out of the driver's seat for the first time in 14 years. The "Tories" only took 121 seats, while the Liberal Democrats picked up the rear with 72.

Once the election was done, Sunak gave notice to King Charles III and the UK public that he would step down as Prime Minister, clearing the way for Labour Party leader Keir Starmer to take the seat.

"I have heard your anger, your disappointment; and I take responsibility for this loss," said Sunak in defeat. "To all the Conservative candidates and campaigners who worked tirelessly

but without success I am sorry that we could not deliver what your efforts deserved.

"It pains me to think how many good colleagues who contributed so much to their communities and our country will now no longer sit in the House of Commons. I thank them for their hard work, and their service.

"Following this result, I will step down as party leader, not immediately, but once the formal arrangements for selecting my successor are in place.

"It is important that after 14 years in government the Conservative Party rebuilds, but also that it takes up its crucial role in Opposition professionally and effectively."

As for the winning, Starmer made his own remarks and then soon after made his introduction to various world leaders via phone calls.

"Good afternoon... I have just returned from Buckingham Palace where I accepted an invi-

tation from His Majesty the King to form the next government of this great nation," Starmer said.

"I want to thank the outgoing Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak. His achievement as the first British Asian Prime Minister of our country, the extra effort that will have required, should not be underestimated by anyone. We pay tribute to that today, and we also recognise the dedication and hard work he brought to his leadership.

"But now our country has voted, decisively... For change. For national renewal. And a return of politics to public service.

"When the gap between the sacrifices made by people and the service they receive from politicians grows this big, it leads to a weariness in the heart of a nation. A draining away of the hope, the spirit, the belief in a better future..."

"...If you voted for Labour yesterday, we will carry the responsibility of your trust, as we rebuild our country. But whether

you voted Labour or not, in fact - especially if you did not, I say to you, directly, My government will serve you.

"Politics can be a force for good - we will show that. And that is how we will govern. Country first, party second..."

"...You have given us a clear mandate... And we will use it to deliver change... To restore service and respect to politics... End the era of noisy performance... Tread more lightly on your lives... And unite our country.

"Four nations... Standing together again... Facing down, as we have so often in our past... The challenges of an insecure world... Committed - to a calm and patient rebuilding.

"So with respect and humility, I invite you all to join this government of service. In the mission of national renewal.

"Our work is urgent... And we begin it today."



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 - Last rites for New Jersey's only African American woman athletic director, Central High School's Syidah O'Bryant, were held here at Metropolitan Baptist Church June 2. O'Bryant, 49, lost her two-year fight against ALS, Lou Gehrig Disease, here at RWJBarnabas Health Newark Beth Israel Medical Center June 23.

O'Bryant was a lifelong Newarker except for studies at Charlotte's John C. Smith University, who more than returned to University Hospital to be the assistant coach of the Peacocks girls basketball team she had once played on. The future St. Peter's University holder of a master's in education and administration also assisted at Shabazz and was Newark Tech's head coach before getting the AD call from CHS in 2014.

O'Bryant was also a Seventh and Eighth Grade teacher for 10 years at Avon Elementary School. Parents John Walker and Jacqueline Travis Bryant, sister Samerah Bryant and brothers Alboo White and Maurice Ware are among her survivors.

Gamer on Gamer Crime in Florida

Nassau County, Florida authorities have been holding a Newark man since June 24 for attacking one of their own residents with a claw hammer over a video game dispute.

Nassau County Sheriff Bill

Leeper said Monday that Edward King, 20, flew from Newark Liberty International Airport to Jacksonville on his way to the other online gamer's Fernandina Beach address. King, said Leeper, was dressed in all black clothing, mask and gloves while he entered the victim's residence and used a claw hammer on him.

IRVINGTON - Mayor Anthony "Tony" Vauss and a capacity audience here at the Transcend Worship Center witnessed the four "Team Irvington Strong" ward council members who were re-elected May 14 get sworn into their new four-year terms. July 1.

Orlando Glen Vick, Jamilliah Z. Beasley, Dr. October Hudley and Vernon Cox were formally returned to their respective North, South, East and West Ward seats. Beasley's colleagues then returned her as Council President.

Teen Boy Shot

Detectives from the Irvington Police Department and the ECPO Homicide Task Force have been looking for the person or persons who fatally shot a 17-year-old boy since July 3.

Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers said his officers had responded to a "shooting in progress" report from the 1100 block of Grove Street at 1:26 a.m. that Wednesday.

Medics rushed the youth, who had "multiple gunshot wounds," from the 2.5-story house to Newark's University Hospital. He was declared dead at 2:17 a.m.

EAST ORANGE - City police officers have been looking for at least two people who opened fire on each other on South Burnett Street here June 19.

Neighbors and witnesses said that two individuals confronted each other, pulled out their handguns and traded a dozen shots at each other on the block just south of the Central Avenue intersection just before 7:30 p.m. that Friday.

The people so told responding East Orange police officers before they ran for shelter. The combatants had fled by then.

That night's police blotter and Police Chief Phyllis Bindi said no one was injured in the gunfight. Two houses and around five parked cars, however, took bullets.

The incident remains under active investigation.

ORANGE - Mayor Dwayne D. Warren and his three "Moving Orange Forward" at-large council members were officially sworn into their new four-year terms here at the Orange Preparatory Academy auditorium stage July 1.

Warren was sworn into his fourth straight mayoral term that Monday night, followed by now-second term councilmen Wheldon "Monty" Montague III and Clifford Ross.

Warren's fourth term will be breaking a three-way tie with William Howe Davis (1942-54) and George Huntingford Hartford (1878-90) as Orange mayors with three consecutive terms. Davis resigned in 1954 to become the N.J. Director of the Alcohol Control Board. Hartford is best known as a co-founder of the A&P 1859-2015 supermarket chain.

Adrienne Wooten was sworn into her third straight term - and was appointed as Council President. Outgoing president and North Ward Councilwoman, Tency Eason, was named Council Vice President.

South African Mishap Kills Mother, Son

Although funeral arrangements for Dr. Daniela Small-Bailey and son Sidanii Bell have not been set as of press time, their July 4 loss in South Africa is being felt here, in Englewood, Passaic and in the republic.

Small-Bailey, 57, and Bell, 35, according to the South African Police Service, were in a white four-door cab when it had a head-on collision with a marked police pickup truck on the R540 between Dullstroom and Belfast at 4:20 p.m. local time that Thursday. The mother and son were visiting relatives. The police officer and another woman in the other car were also killed.

Small-Bailey was principal of Englewood's Dr. John Grieco Elementary School since 2013

and had been an assistant principal since 2004 at other Englewood Public Schools. The ordained minister was senior pastor of Passaic's Bethel AME Church. Bell, who died July 5, was a South Ward digital marketing specialist and a mixed martial arts boxer.

WEST ORANGE - Community Coach 77 riders joined their NJTransit bus and rail counterparts in grumbling about July 1 fare increases here - after a fashion.

CoachUSA, citing "operational costs," June 28, announced the following fare increases from Livingston effective Monday: 10-trip book - \$99.35; 20-trip book (good for 45 days after purchase) - \$188; 40-trip book (good for 90 days) - \$353.50; Monthly passes - \$331.50.

CC77, like NJT riders, may be mumbling "Paying more money for the same old service" under their breath. NJTransit's woes on one hand, especially on the Northeast Corridor lately, have been well chronicled.

The CoachUSA-run 77 route has had ebbs and flows of service quality the last 14 year or so. The 77 serves Livingston, West Orange, Orange and East Orange riders before going express to New York's Port Authority Bus Terminal.

NJTransit riders, taking their first fare increase in 10 years, have the hope of the increase going to the statewide public carrier's operating and capital project improvements.

CoachUSA, however, has put CC77 up for sale among other bus routes as part of its June 11 Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing. There is Renco Holdings, a venture capital company from Manhattan, expressing interest in CC77 but has not closed on its purchase.

There is a Livingston municipal rush hour minivan stopping in West Orange before going to South Orange Village Station. Boxcar, a Boston outfit running rush hour buses from Maplewood Station, is conducting a survey on starting a parallel CC77 service.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - The South
(Continued on page 14)

STATE GRAND JURY DECLINES TO CRIMINALLY CHARGE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN NEWARK FATAL SHOOTING

TRENTON - A state grand jury has voted not to file any criminal charges at the conclusion of its deliberations regarding the death of Everett Rand, 29, of Newark, who was fatally shot by officers from the Newark Police Department on May 3, 2023.

Mr. Rand's death was investigated by the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability (OPIA) and presented to New Jersey residents serving on the grand jury, in accordance with the 2019 Independent Prosecutor Directive. In July 2021, OPIA issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure these grand jury presentations are conducted in a neutral, objective manner, with appropriate transparency regarding the process, consistent with the directive.

The investigation included witness interviews, video footage, ballistics, and autopsy results from the medical examiner. This evidence, including video of the incident, was presented to the state grand jury. After hearing the testimony and evidence, the grand jury concluded its deliberations on July 8, 2024, and voted "no bill," meaning jurors decided no criminal charges should be filed against Newark Police Officers Steven Ferreira and Ryan Castro.

The investigation revealed that, on May 3, 2023, Newark officers responded to a 911 call reporting individuals had been shot in-

side a residence on Johnson Avenue. Responding officers observed a man (Mr. Rand) leaving the residence and discarding an item in a nearby dumpster. Multiple officers then chased Mr. Rand while other officers gained entry to the home on Johnson Avenue.

According to Officer Ferreira's later statement, he observed Mr. Rand reach into his waistband during the foot pursuit and grab what appeared to be a handgun. Officer Ferreira then fell to the ground as he discharged his firearm at Mr. Rand several times. Officer Castro also fired his weapon at Mr. Rand. After Mr. Rand was arrested, his handgun was recovered.

Officers rendered medical aid until EMS arrived and transported Mr. Rand to University Hospital in Newark, where he was pronounced deceased at approximately 9:14 p.m.

Further investigation revealed that, earlier, Mr. Rand discarded another weapon, a semi-automatic handgun with a large capacity magazine, in the dumpster where he was first observed by the police.

When police entered the residence, they found a 27-year-old man from Newark deceased from a gunshot wound and an 8-year-old boy who had been struck by gunfire. The child was transported to University Hospital

in Newark where he was later pronounced deceased. The Essex County Prosecutor's Office investigated the shootings that happened in the residence. The investigation revealed that a third person sustained non-life-threatening injuries from being shot while inside the Johnson Avenue home.

Footage from four police officers' body-worn cameras related to the police-involved shooting was previously released. Those recordings are posted online here: <https://njoag.box.com/s/780hssklelsvjijvwd4f9z9lu7vue12>

A 2019 law, N.J.S.A. 52:17B-107(a)(2), requires the Attorney General's Office to conduct investigations of a person's death that occurs during an encounter with a law enforcement officer acting in the officer's official capacity or while the decedent is in custody. It requires that all such investigations be presented to a grand jury to determine if the evidence supports the return of an indictment against the officer or officers involved. The grand jury is instructed on the elements of the potential criminal offenses, including criminal homicide offenses, that could be brought and, as required by statutes, the grand jury is instructed on self-defense and other forms of legal justification.

(Continued on page 13)

PAYNE PRIMARY

(Cont. from page 8)

cided not to make an endorsement for this primary.

Armstead, a lifelong Lindenite, used his Union County College computer science degree to work for Prudential. He has received awards from the NAACP's Elizabeth and Roselle branches and from NJBIZ.com.

Former one-term East Orange Second Ward councilwoman BRITTANY D. CLAYBROOKS bills herself as "Claybrooks for Change." The campaign manager for Congressman Andy Kim (D-Bordentown) has worked in House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office and was a member of the Young Invincibles youth advocacy group.

Claybrooks had challenged LaMonica McIver campaigners before Administrative Law Judge Kim Belin May 17 over their petition signature validity, saying that one volunteer could not have received 1,200 signatures in 24 hours. One McIver worker said that it had happened - only to shortly recant. Judge Belin, after barring several McIver and Claybrooks petitions, allowed both candidates on the ballot.

JOHN J. FLORA says he is "Endorsed by Lincoln, Kennedy And Grant." Flora has posted on his campaign website a photo of his three children dressed as President Abraham Lincoln, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and President/Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

The resident of Jersey City's Greenville

section teaches in that city's public schools was born in Union County and holds respective associates and bachelors degrees from Hudson County Community College and Jersey City State University. Flora, who holds respective masters in political science and education policy from George Washington and Columbia universities, has railed against the county/party line ballot design.

Newark born and raised DARRYL GODFREY calls himself as the "Democrat for Healthcare, Jobs, And Affordability." The South Orange villager is the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority's Chief Operating Officer and Invest Newark's Executive Vice President going back 15 years.

The Rutgers Class of 1985 Economics diploma holder, who came from a banking background, said that he can raise campaign funds and, if necessary, self-fund his run.

Third-generation Newarker ALBERTA GORDON says on the Hudson County ballot that she is "Rooted In Tradition, Driven By Innovation" and, on the Union ballot, "Traditional Values, Modern Solutions."

Gordon has been a small business owner-operator since her time at an ice cream parlor while attending Science High School - on her way to graduate from Seton Hall University. The former Newark Housing Authority Community Engagement Manager has co-founded Above the Rim and South Ward Concerned Citizens to respectively address youth violence and resident/senior opportunities.

Rutgers Law School professor EUGENE

D. MAZO says he is backed by the Hudson County Democratic Corporation and the "Normal Democratic Organization of Union County."

Mazo, who came to Newark as a five-year-old Russian refugee, is a recognized expert on democracy and the rule of law. The author of "The Best Candidate" and four other books calls himself a "proud Newarker."

LaMONICA McIVER has Essex County Democratic Committee endorsement, party campaign machinery and a constellation of public official endorsements.

The current Newark Municipal Council President and Central Ward Councilwoman hopes voters will allow her to follow the trail blazed by Donald M. Payne Jr., and Sr.

McIver was first elected in 2018 as part of Mayor Ras Baraka's "Moving Newark Forward" slate. The founder of the GALS encouragement group for female leaders had been Montclair Public Schools' personnel director and part of PSE&G's public affairs office.

SHANA MELIUS, under her "Fighting for Progress" banner, has said on her LinkedIn page that she wants to become "the first person from the Hip Hop industry elected to Congress."

Melius, was digital coordinator and press assistant in Cong. Payne's office since 2021. She had founded March for Equity, a social justice-oriented cannabis group. The Newark resident has been an Army reservist.

Essex County College professor SHEILA

(Continued on page 12)

PAYNE PRIMARY

(Continued from page 11)

MONTAGUE is running under her own "Together We Serve" slate. Voters in her native Newark may be most familiar with Montague as an independent candidate for city offices from mayor to the board of education.

The Newark Public Schools elementary and high school teacher for 20 years is co-founder of Parents United for Local School Education and Change The Lens Together. The notary public holds Kean University degrees for public education and African American studies.

Former Essex County College Board of Education Student Representative DEBRA SALTERS proclaims, "Salters Gets It Done!" on her ballot places. She has made

recent independent runs for Newark mayor and school board member.

"Newark born and bred" Salters has certifications as an OSHA trainer and a self-employed CPR and AED instructor. The 10-year community activist is founder of "Newark One Ward Wide."

Hudson County Commission Vice Chairman JERRY WALKER (D-Jersey City) has "Jersey's History is Helping Others" on the Hudson ballot and "The Peoples Politician" on the Union ballot.

The city basketball scholar-athlete-turned Seton Hall graduate had founded the "Team Walker Learning Center" to provide summer and afterschool STEM, tutoring and GED preparation to county-wide children three-to-18. The certified Life Skills Instructor is a Jersey City Recreation Department supervisor.

Vote by mail balloting and early voting

polling station locations will be open July 12 -14 and 16.

Those using VBMB may send their ballots in the mail or at designated drop boxes so long as they get postmarked or deposited before 8 p.m. July 16.

Essex County Clerk Durkin will have his Election Division workers, municipal clerks and/or Essex County Sheriff's officers open drop boxes and early voting stations 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday-Saturday and through 6p.m. Sunday at the following locations:

Early Polling Stations

- EAST ORANGE - City Hall, 44 City Hall Plaza.
- IRVINGTON - Municipal Building, 1 Beasley Civic Sq. West.
- NEWARK:

(Continued on page 13)

SENATOR TIMBERLAKE CO-ORGANIZES COALITION TO SUPPORT FIREFIGHTERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

TRENTON - July 5th commemorates the one-year anniversary of the passing of Newark Fire Captains Acobou and Brooks. In their memory, State Senator Britnee N. Timberlake and Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka spearheaded a coalition in the fall of 2023 to participate in drafting legislation that strengthens safety protocols for firefighters, and offers vital assistance to the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

This joint effort includes federal, state, and city legislators, firefighter unions, municipal officials, the Coast Guard, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

As a result of the coalition's efforts, State Senator Timberlake, who is also the spouse of Newark Firefighter Dimitri Charles, Sr., introduced a set of bills designed to reinforce fire department infrastructure, improve training programs, mandate staffing ratios, upgrade equipment, and enhance support for the relatives of deceased emergency workers. The objective is to have this legislative package enacted by this fall.

The driving force behind this legislative effort was the tragic fire that consumed the Grande Costa d'Avorio cargo ship at Port Newark on July 5, 2023, resulting in the loss of veteran Newark firefighters Captain Augusto "Augie" Acabou, 45, and Captain Wayne "Bear" Brooks Jr., 49. Additionally, the loss of Plainfield Firefighter Marques Hudson in January 2024 deepened the urgency for legislative action. Hudson - a father of three - tragically succumbed to injuries sustained while battling a blaze at a two-family home on Emerson Avenue in Plainfield. The sacrifices made by this group of firefighters underscore the unwavering commitment of first responders.

"The tragic Port Newark fire last year and the earlier house fire in Plainfield this year are sobering reminders of the dedication, duty, and sacrifice our valiant uniformed personnel display every day. As a State Senator and the wife of a Newark fire-

fighter, I am conscious of the steadfast service these brave souls render to our community, despite limited resources. I also recognize the distinct challenges faced by their families. The families of each fallen hero have not only Dimitri's and my prayers, friendship, and heartfelt sympathies but also our firm pledge to act within our capacities to better prevent further heartbreaking loss of life," stated Senator Britnee N. Timberlake Charles (D-Essex).

"This extensive legislative package written with experts a part of the coalition, will aid all firefighters and their families throughout the state while also supporting Newark's fire department, which safeguards the state's largest airport and seaport," Senator Timberlake continued. "I offer my special gratitude to the entire coalition, all state legislators who stand with our first responders and support this legislative package as sponsors, and the late Congressman Donald M. Payne, Jr., a coalition member who was deeply invested in this legislative effort. Together, we can enact these bills and prioritize Principles Over Politics."

The Bill Package

Three bills in the package would help to better prepare firefighters for careers at the applicant, training, and professional level:

- S-3426: Requires the Civil Service Commission to establish a mentoring program for civil service firefighter applicants in low-income areas. Aspiring firefighters who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often face greater obstacles to enter the firefighting profession, such as a lack of professional connections or access to preparatory programs. This bill would help diversify the firefighter population and offer guidance for individuals seeking positions within a fire department.

- S-3428: Requires that both paid and volunteer firefighters who serve in municipalities within a coastal zone complete a Coast Guard approved marine firefighting training course.
- S-3423: Requires that standards for organization and deployment for career firefighters be consistent with national standards set by the National Fire Protection Association, which includes staffing ratios. This would help prevent local units from relaxing firefighter safety requirements due to variables like finances or political concerns.

Two bills in the package would secure funding to upgrade firefighting equipment and fire station infrastructure and provide for maintenance of certain fire departments:

- S-3476: Establishes a grant program to provide thermal imaging equipment and body cameras to certain fire departments. Thermal imaging equipment allows firefighters to see through thick smoke and heat-permeable barriers, significantly improving their ability to locate victims and navigate through a blaze. While body camera video may not always be visible due to smoke, the audio can serve as documentation of a fire and can help to better understand what happened if requested.
- S-XXXX (number not yet assigned): This bill seeks to appropriate funds for the development of a Fire Station Rehabilitation, Machinery Upgrade, and Maintenance Fund for fire departments serving populations of 300,000 or more in the State, ensuring a safe and sanitary environment for the State's firefighters.

Finally, two bills in the package would adjust compensation benefits provided to surviving families in the event of in the line

(Continued on page 13)

NJ ATTORNEY GENERAL CO-LEADS MULTISTATE COALITION TO FIGHT FOR GHOST GUN REGULATION

TRENTON - Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin is co-leading a coalition of 23 attorneys general in filing an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in *Garland v. VanDerStok*, in support of a federal government rule that closes a loophole regulating ghost guns in the same way as conventional guns, in order to keep them from away from people who should not have them.

Ghost guns are weapons without serial numbers that are often made at home from kits or partially complete frames and receivers, which can be purchased without background checks. These weapons, which are untraceable and are often sought out by people who are otherwise not permitted to possess firearms, including individuals convicted of felonies, domestic violence perpetrators, and minors, have been illegal in New Jersey since 2018.

More than two years ago, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) issued a Final Rule to clarify that the Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) applies to the key building blocks of ghost guns. This commonsense clarification does not ban gun kits. Rather, it subjects kits and nearly-complete guns to the same rules as conventionally manufactured guns - including serial number and background check requirements

- and requires manufacturers and all licensees keep records so that law enforcement officers can trace any self-made guns later used in a crime. It also limits gun traffickers' ability to distribute these illegal weapons into New Jersey.

This spring, the Supreme Court agreed to review a lower court decision invalidating federal regulations on ghost guns - rules that are already showing every indication that they are working as intended to get these deadly weapons off New Jersey streets. The Supreme Court is expected to hear the case in the next term beginning in October 2024.

"Ghost guns are a pernicious scourge, and we are standing up to ensure that homemade guns cannot wreak havoc in our communities," said Attorney General Platkin. "Without ATF's important rule, law enforcement are left to navigate a patchwork system of laws that allow otherwise untraceable guns to slip through the cracks. Gun violence is a public health crisis, and we need every tool available to combat it. There is no time to waste."

The brief, which was also co- led by Attorneys General Brian L. Schwalb of the District of Columbia and Michelle A. Henry of Pennsylvania, argues that the Final Rule, which has been partially in effect for almost a year,

fills a crucial public safety gap and may already be working to stop gun violence.

Specifically, the brief notes that before the Final Rule went into effect in August 2023, the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) recovered an average of 34 privately made firearms (PMFs) used in crimes per month from January to July 2023. That number dropped to approximately 19 per month between August and December 2023.

NJSP numbers also show that, as of June 28, 2024, 100 PMFs were recovered in crime investigations so far this year, as compared to 195 in the first six months of 2023 - a nearly 50% drop in the same time period. The PMFs themselves may be reused in multiple crimes, as 15 of the PMFs recovered had been involved in a total of 26 shootings.

Although the data is preliminary and subject to update, it shows encouraging trends. The data also show how PMFs are attractive weapons for individuals with backgrounds that could disqualify them from gun ownership: of 78 unique individuals found to possess PMFs so far in 2024, 81% had prior criminal histories, 58% had prior felony convictions, 51% had prior gun-related arrests, and 17% were involved in previous shootings.

This is not the first time that

a coalition of States has defended the rational, logical regulation challenged in this case. The States submitted amicus briefs throughout this litigation, including during the fight against preliminary and permanent injunctions before the Northern District of Texas, which eventually vacated the entire ATF rule, and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. The coalition also filed an amicus brief at the Supreme Court previously, urging the Court to allow the ATF rule to remain in effect as the legal challenge continued. The Supreme Court granted both requests.

The brief was joined by the Attorneys General of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

This matter is being handled by Assistant Section Chief Andrew Yang and Deputy Attorney General Samuel Rubinstein under the supervision of Section Chief Jessica Palmer and Assistant Attorney General David Leit of the Special Litigation Section within the Division of Law's Affirmative Civil Enforcement Practice Group.

TIMBERLAKE (Cont. from page 12)

of duty death and would establish a new survivor support liaison to assist these beneficiaries in the Department of Treasury:

- S-3427: The compensation provided through the Police and Firemen's Retirement System of New Jersey (PFRS) to surviving family members would pay out the fallen firefighter's families the maximum amount regardless of how many years served. Additionally, the bill allows for compan-

ions to receive PFRS accidental death pension benefits when there is no surviving spouse.

- S-3441: Designated as the "Captains Acabou's, Brooks', and Firefighter Hudson's Act " establishes a new survivor support liaison position in the Department of Treasury to assist beneficiaries of emergency responders who died in the line of duty. This assistance would include providing help during the application process for available benefits.

PAYNE PRIMARY (Continued from page 12)

- ◆ Essex County Complex Parking Garage
- ◆ W. Market Street Entrance
- ◆ Weequahic Park Community Center
- ◆ Elizabeth and Meeker avenues Entrance.
- ◆ West Side Park Community Center
- ◆ 600 W. 17th St.
- WEST ORANGE - Richard J. Codey Arena, 560 Northfield Ave.
- VERONA - Verona Community Center 880 Bloomfield Ave.

Dropbox locations in each of the county's 22 municipalities are unchanged from previous elections. Questions and details are to be found at essexclerk.com.

GRAND JURY (Continued from page 11)

A conflicts check was conducted pursuant to the Independent Prosecutor Directive and no actual or potential conflict of interest was found involving any individual assigned to the investigation. Prior to presentation to the grand jury, the investigation was re-

viewed by OPIA Executive Director Drew Skinner in accordance with the policies and procedures established for these presentations in the SOPs.

At the conclusion of these investigations, pursuant to the Independent Prosecutor Directive and SOPs, OPIA determines whether any principal should be referred to the appro-

priate law enforcement agency for administrative review in accordance with the AG's Internal Affairs Policy & Procedures. OPIA monitors any resulting review and takes such actions as are necessary to ensure that the review is completed in a timely fashion, and that appropriate actions are taken based on the results of the review.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

OUTTA MY WAY

Older generations tend to stereotype recent generations of young people, questioning their intelligence and self-control, and calling them lazy, selfish, and uncaring.

Intergenerational relationships have been linked to improved health and well-being for both younger and older individuals. For older adults, engaging with younger generations can promote a sense of purpose and motivation, reduce feelings of depression and anxiety, and enhance cognitive function.

What do older people misunderstand about our generation?

Our generation is constantly portrayed as lazy and privileged;

we are told that we aren't accomplishing anything in life. Older generations misunderstand our generation as lazy when in reality we are educated, engaged, productive, and we will change the world for the better in the future. (Google)

PAGE JACKER

FEATURE: Evan Evering

"Regardless of age, anyone can probably attest to an older family member or acquaintance drilling into their ear, claiming that kids are disrespectful. Younger people, in general, often are, but why is that? I've been asked to share my perspective as a young adult to explain what I think disconnects younger people from older generations, and hopefully, upon request, I can give a good answer.

"My name is Evan, I'm 19 years old, and this issue obviously extends beyond me and my few experiences, but a large part of my opinion as to what makes younger people seem not to care for the same things as older peo-



Photos By Andrea Dialect

ple would be that they don't.

"As a student and a young person, in my experience, a lot of the time older people seem occupied with things that younger people aren't thinking about because it doesn't come across to them, and younger people are too occupied with what they already have going on to focus on what the older people are trying to show them.

"Younger people being loud and obnoxious is something that follows any older person I know, and as a younger person, I'm a bit obnoxious at times, but maybe that negative connotation simply puts a divide between my generation and older ones by encouraging older people to discredit younger generations and claim that the things they're focused on aren't real enough or don't 'actually' matter.

"With this in mind, despite younger people ironically think-

ing the same thing, those same people are just unable to let go of how people used to act when they were young, and that includes manners. Older people insist on respecting elders because they're older, and that statement, along with many others like it, doesn't carry the same weight for practice because it often seems like a set of arbitrary rules that aren't explained because older people assume we can't understand the language(s) they taught us. ...

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TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

Orange-Maplewood School District and its legendary Columbia High School track and field coach are facing lawsuits from two women who said Leonard Klepac had sexually abused them during the late 1980s. The duo has also named former CHS Athletic Director Robert Curcio for allegedly neglecting to supervise Klepac.

It had been recently publicized in late June that a judge found Klepac guilty in a March summary judgement after he had stated in court records that he had sexual relations with her. The other plaintiff's suit is being litigated - and both have a joint

suit against SOMSD.

CHS did not have a girls track and field team when Klepac arrived as coach and physical education teacher in 1975. Klepac, before he left for Eastern Carolina University and the University of Texas in 1998, had turned the Columbia Cougars running team into a powerhouse, winning 15 state titles. Some athletes were sent out to Florida and Texas for national meets - some of whom, like Joetta and Hazel Clark, joined the USA Olympic team. (Neither Clarks are the plaintiffs.)

The two women, now in their 50s and filed suit in 2020, said that Klepac had left them with chronic PTSD and "injuries permanent in nature." They said that the two-town school dis-

trict's officials had failed to check Klepac.

They were 16 and 17 when Klepac, in his mid-40s, began making sexual remarks. He had befriended them and their parents to where they allowed him to take one or the other to motels in mostly interstate meets.

The plaintiff, in the suit that resulted in the March summary judgement, said that there were between 50 to 60 assaults in motels or in his van or his private Newark office. Klepac, said the same plaintiff, said he tried to visit her at her college dormitory.

Klepac, now a retired Mercer County resident, said in court papers that he had "consensual" sexual activity with them when they were 17 when the state min-

imal consent law was at 16." The summary judgement found him liable for violating the state's Child Sexual Abuse Act.

BLOOMFIELD - New Jersey Attorney General Matthew Platkin, on June 24, said that the office's Division of Civil Rights has filed a complaint against Ironworkers Local 11, which has an office here, for discriminating against some of its members.

The DCR is accusing Ironworkers Local 11 of "systematically bypassing Black union members for jobs, giving those members less desirable assignments and creating a hostile work environment."

Regarding the hostile work environment, the suit alleges that

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TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 14)

2008-22 business manager Raymond Woodall, "it's leadership and members, in using racist slurs, sexist and homophobic language and distributing homophobic materials." Local 11, as a hiring hall, is accused of bypassing "qualified Black union members for jobs in favor of similarly situated non-Black members."

Nor had Local 11, continued the suit, "had made no meaningful effort to discipline those conducting discriminatory conduct."

Former ironworker Kesha Green brought the allegation with her complaint to the DCR - which had issued a finding of probable cause. It had verified that the local had retaliated against Green for raising complaints.

Woodall and other Local 11 leadership were replaced in July 2022. The local has otherwise denied the allegations.

Local 11 had moved to 1500 Broad St, here in the Brookdale section, after its former Bloomfield Centre office on Ward Street had to make way for the Royal residential-commercial redevelopment.

MONTCLAIR - Dr. Renee E. Baskerville and an all-new Township Council were inaugurated in a July 1 ceremony here at the Montclair Council Chamber.

Baskerville received the mayor's gavel from Sean Spiller - the man she had lost to in the 2020 mayor-council elections by 156 votes. She had risked her Fourth Ward council seat in a bid to become mayor in an all-seats-open election.

Montclair's first African American woman mayor then witnessed her "Team Montclair" running mate, Susan Shin Anderson, sworn in as an at-large councilwoman and appointed as Deputy Mayor. Carmel Loughman, who ran on outgoing councilman Robert "Bob" Russo's "Montclair Good Government Team," was sworn into the other at-large seat and appointed as a Class III member of the Montclair Planning Board.

"Clean Government Advocate" Erik D'Amato, Eileen "Genuinely Cares" Birmingham, "Team Montclair" runner Rahun Williams and independent Aminah Toler were sworn into their Ward seats. It remains to be seen whether Montclair's new elders will put aside their nonpartisan campaign banners and govern. (Montclair does not hold municipal-level partisan party elections.)

Bomb Threat Clears Library

Montclair Public Library Trustees President JoAnn McCullough confirmed on July 1 that the previous day's bomb threat that cleared the Montclair Mail Library was tied to a children's drag story hour that was set at 5 p.m. that Sunday.

The New Jersey Attorney General's office has taken the investigative lead in what is considered as a bias crime.

An employee had received an e-mail at 3:58 p.m. that Sunday that a bomb had been "placed" there, at 185 Bellevue Ave. and at 40 North Fullerton Ave. 40 North Fullerton - The First Congregational Church of Montclair - had long finished its worship services. MPL's branch at 185 Bellevue is never open on Sundays.

McCullough, MPD Lt. Terence Turner and the ECPO said that municipal police and the Essex County Sheriff's Office K-9 unit were deployed to all three sites and swept the premises in the "false alarm." The 11 staff members and 47 members of the public - 25 of whom had registered for the "Story Hours with Harmonica" - were evacuated.

BELLEVILLE - It was not long after the four ward candidates, who were just sworn into Belleville Council office July 1, that some of the newly constituted panel signaled that the 2024-25 term will be different.

Tracy Williams-Muldraw, Frank Velez, incumbent Vincent Cozzarelli, Jr. and Diana Guardabasco were sworn into their respective First through Fourth Ward council seats that Monday. While Guardabasco ran on Mayor Michael Melham's "A Better Belleville" ticket and previous ABB runner Cozzarelli understated his connection, Williams-Muldraw and Velez ran under their "Believe in Belleville" banner.

The foursome then took their places alongside Melham and at-large council members Thomas Graziano - who he named as Deputy Mayor - and Naomy DePena. Graziano and DePena ran on the ABB platform with Melham.

Williams and Velez abstained on several reorganization appointments, with Velez saying that he had not had the opportunity to review the appointees' resumes. Velez then called for an end to social media sniping among Belleville elders and appealed for transparency.

Deputy Mayor Graziano agreed with Velez on transparency - and moved to not reappoint Anthony Iacono as Town Manager. (A family commitment kept Iacono away that night.)

That "non-reappointment" resolution failed on a 2-3-2 vote. Graziano and Velez voted "Yes," Melham, Cozzarelli and DePena voted "No" and Williams-Muldraw and Guardabasco abstained.


NUTLEY - Mayor John V. Kelly III and the old-new Board of Commissioners have had a 42-day governing head start on the other towns who had their newly-elected elders sworn in on or by July 1.

Kelly, 39, in the township's May 21 reorganization meeting, officially took his

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fellow commissioners' appointment as Nutley's latest and youngest mayor. The grandson of the late Hon. John Kelly, Sr. received the most votes among the five commissioners at their May 14 election. (The elder Kelly was Nutley mayor 1988-92 and a former assemblyman.)

Kelly, who doubles as Public Affairs Commissioner, reappointed the Hon. Alan J. Genitenpo and Jonathan Bruno, Esq. as respective Municipal Judge and Municipal Attorney.

Alphonse "Al" Petracco, outgoing mayor Dr. Joseph Scarpelli, Thomas J. Evans and Mauro G. Tucci, Sr. were inaugurated and returned as respective commissioners of public safety, public works, revenue and finance and parks and public property.

Although all five incumbents ran individual campaigns, a majority of participating Nutley voters returned them into office from among a field of seven candidates.



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