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WATCH FOR MOSQUITO BORNE ILLNESSES

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"CAN THEY DO THAT?" - TOWNS ISSUE PILOTS "AFTER THE FACT" NEWARKER DENIED EQUAL ACCESS TO COURT



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File photo of Maplewood City Hall

By Lev D. Zilbermints

NEWARK - Yusuf A. Shabazz says that he has been denied equal access to the court. This has happened because Mr. Shabazz has allegedly not received any notice of his case being dismissed on July 8, 2024. According to Mr. Shabazz, he "did not get any notice - no mail, no electronic notice, no sheriff with paper documents, no phone call - nothing," about the case being dismissed. Mr. Shabazz found out about case being dismissed on July 14.

"Local Talk" interviewed Mr. Shabazz, checked court papers and viewed YouTube video that was posed by Mr. Shabazz. As per standard practice, diligent research was done to establish the

facts of the case. What follows is the story.

Main problem with dismissal of the case

The main problem with the dismissal of the case is that the discovery phase, or evidence and fact-finding part, was supposed to end July 20. Thus, dismissing the case twelve days earlier is a violation of the Fourth Amendment, which guarantees due process, and the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees procedural due process. Dismissing the case early is also a violation of court procedures.

What court papers filed by Plaintiff Shabazz say

(Continued on page 8)

BATTLE OF THE ORANGES AT MOUNTAINEER CLASSIC



PAGE 5

Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens



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Turn
To
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Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-in-Chief

Hello Readers,

The West Indies have become a strong part of our community, especially in the Local Talk area. They have merged with the American Way.

People were enjoying the West Indian American Day parade in Brooklyn, NY this past weekend, with dancing and cheering. All of a sudden, a shooting broke out, and 25-year-old Denzel A. Chan of Texas was shot in the abdomen and later died of his injuries.

Four other people were injured in the shooting, including a 69-year-old woman in the back shoulder, a 64-year-old man in the right arm, a 26-year-old man in the head and a 16-year-old in his left arm. All of the victims

were transported to the hospital, and all are recovering as per the news.

Over the weekend, it was discovered that six hostages kidnapped by Hamas were killed. Israel attacked Hamas right as a ceasefire deal was discussed for the release of the hostages. Right after that attack, Hamas killed six hostages. It is bad judgement by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his team. The war is continuing, and so far does not have any sign of peace. Netanyahu asked for "forgiveness" from Israel for the deaths of the hostages.

Russia attacked a military training academy in Ukraine with two ballistic missiles and killed about 50 people, wounding more than 200. Here is another place in the world where peace seems unlikely at least for a long time. The war started when Ukraine wanted to become a NATO member. Russia objected, as NATO countries would be closer to Russia legally with interna-

tional rules. America always tried to stay close to Russia. First it was Afghanistan, then it was Pakistan, and now it's Ukraine. However, America did not like when Russia had a base in Cuba. Why won't politicians think and act for the peace of the world, rather than military positioning?

Recently, some news outlets have blamed America for the ouster of Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina Sheikh. So far, America has supported an interim government headed by the Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus. Time will tell what comes of this.

Kamala Harris is leading in the polls over Trump. However, after Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. pulled from his candidacy and announced his support for Trump, the former President reduced Harris' lead. Now, Harris is about 2 points ahead of Trump. However, Trump is ahead in the electoral college polling by a few votes. Trump

was leading 287 to 251 at the time of Democratic National Convention. Now, Trump is leading by only 1 or 2 points. 270 votes will win the presidency. So far, it seems like anyone's game.

A lot of undecided people are waiting to make their decision after the September 10th debate between Harris and Trump. It will be interesting to see who controls the debate stage. The rules are the same as in the Biden vs. Trump debate. The microphones will be turned off when the other candidate is speaking, and there will be no audience.

This will be the first time that Harris will face someone this election season who will provide significant pushback to her policies in a live setting. If she does not do well, will Democrats rally behind her, or try to throw her overboard like they did Biden?

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

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
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STATE OFFICIALS URGE RESIDENTS TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES

NJ Health Department Reports Two West Nile Virus Deaths Among New Cases

TRENTON - New Jersey is reporting an additional six West Nile virus (WNV) cases, including two deaths, and two additional presumptive viremic blood donor (PVD). This follows the state's first human case of Eastern Equine encephalitis (EEE) and earlier two cases of West Nile virus infection. The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) urge residents to take precautions to protect themselves from mosquito-borne diseases and to reduce mosquito populations on their properties.

WNV and EEE are viruses which people most often acquire through the bite of a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird or other animal.

The six new WNV cases are residents of Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Hudson, Mercer,

and Middlesex counties (one 50+, two 60+, one 70+, two 80+). The two individuals who died were older adults from Cumberland and Mercer counties. Previously, two human cases of WNV were reported this year in Middlesex and Union counties.

Seven out of the eight cases were hospitalized with neuroinvasive disease, including encephalitis (swelling of the brain) or meningitis (swelling of the lining surrounding the brain and spinal cord).

During routine testing of blood donations, three asymptomatic blood donors from Bergen, Passaic, and Somerset Counties were found to be positive for WNV. This comprehensive testing ensures that all blood donations are screened for WNV, significantly reducing the risk of contracting WNV from blood transfusions and keeping the blood supply safe.

One human case of EEE was reported in Atlantic County with symptom onset in early July. This

was an individual under 18 years of age who was hospitalized but has since been discharged. EEE human cases were last reported in 2019 when the state reported four cases. An EEE-positive horse was also reported in Atlantic County with symptom onset in early August.

"All New Jerseyans should be aware of the potential significant impacts from mosquito-borne illnesses, especially West Nile virus and Eastern Equine encephalitis. The best way to prevent these diseases is to avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellent, protective clothing or gear, and avoiding peak mosquito hours," said NJ Health Commissioner Kaitlan Baston, M.D. "New Jersey has a long and robust mosquito control and prevention program at the state and local levels, which helps to bolster our protections."

To protect against mosquito-borne diseases, residents should:

- Wear EPA-registered insect repellent.
- Avoid being outdoors during dawn and dusk when mosquitos are most active.
- Wear long sleeves and long pants.
- Cover crib, stroller and baby carrier with mosquito netting.
- Repair holes in screens to keep mosquitoes outside and use air conditioning when possible or ensure you have well-fitted screens.

Residents, business owners, and contractors also can take steps to reduce mosquito populations on their properties by emptying or changing outdoor standing water at least weekly to stop mosquito breeding. Areas that may need attention include flowerpots, pet food and water dishes, birdbaths, swimming pool covers, clogged rain gutters, plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows, and any containers or trash that may be difficult to see such as under bushes, homes, or around building exteriors.

Most people infected with WNV or EEE will have no

symptoms. For those who do, symptoms include fever, chills, body aches, and joint pains. Rarely, people may develop severe neurological illness, which often presents as meningitis or encephalitis. Symptoms of severe illness include fever, severe headache, neck stiffness, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, behavioral changes/confusion, limb weakness, and fatigue.

Older adults and people with weakened immune systems are at greater risk of developing severe illness. Specific laboratory tests are needed to confirm WNV and EEE, so anyone with symptoms after a mosquito bite should contact their health care provider.



Recovery from severe illness might take several weeks or months and some effects might be permanent. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately a third of all people with Eastern Equine encephalitis and 1 in 10 people with WNV severe neurological illness die.

The state and county mosquito control programs are working together to minimize potential transmission of these diseases to humans, but mosquito populations have not yet peaked. The state typically sees most human cases of mosquito-borne illnesses between mid-August and mid-to late September, but the season can extend well into October and even into early November depending on weather conditions.

"There are many simple things that the public can do to help control the mosquito population," Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette said. "The main sources for mosquitoes around the home are most often small water-holding places and containers that could easily go unnoticed, such as folds in tarps, pet water bowls, flowerpots, recycling bins, children's toys, buckets, and even downspouts with corrugated extension tubes. Property owners should be alert to these sources and conduct

(Continued on page 13)

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SPORTS WRAP



Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens

By William Hathaway, Jr.

New Jersey's high school football season started this past weekend with a big event that went on from August 29 through September 1st.

The first annual Mountaineer Football Classic featured several local high school teams take the field at West Orange High School. In the first game, Verona beat Jefferson High in a rout 39-6. Verona running back

In the main event, it was a battle of the Oranges, but not a close one as host West Orange defeated Orange 48-0. Senior Charlie Lamonte led WOHS with 187 yards while wide receiver Terrell Wilfong had 79 yards and caught 2 TDs for west orange. David Moore had a TDs and 55 yards while Sydney Paddilla also had a TD. While the result was not what they had in mind, Orange should get better as the season goes on.



Jayden Nigo scored on a 15 yard touchdown to start the scoring, and Bodie Maisano added a 2 yard TD run to make the score 14-0. Jesse Wagner caught a 66 TD pass from Connor Demasi, while Nigo added two more TDs.

Next up was Hillside, who beat Snyder 42-20 in the second night. Zion Risen led hillside on 12-19 passing for 119 yards and a touchdown, while Mitchell Jenkins rushed for 170 yards and 4 TDs. Keyon Thorpe rushed for 100 yards and had 2 TDs for Snyder.

On Saturday afternoon, Columbia slipped by West Side in a close 10-6 victory. Charlie Knutsen gave Columbia an early 7-0 lead, and Jonah Breen tacked on a 32 yard field goal in the 2nd quarter to make it 10-0 lead at the half. West Side getting on the scoreboard when Esahd Wilson reached to make the score 10-6, but without the extra point. It would end up as the last score of the game.

Finally, East Side defeated Plainfield Cardinals by the final of 8-6. Xavier Smith led East Side with 113 rushing yards.



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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SNATCHES VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT'S JET

On Sept. 2, the Justice Department announced the seizure of a Dassault Falcon 900EX aircraft owned and operated for the benefit of Nicolás Maduro Moros and persons affiliated with him in Venezuela. The aircraft was seized in the Dominican Republic and transferred to the Southern District of Florida at the request of the United States based on violations of U.S. export control and sanctions laws.

"This morning (Sept. 2), the Justice Department seized an aircraft we allege was illegally purchased for \$13 million through a shell company and smuggled out of the United States for use by Nicolás Maduro and his cronies," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. "The Department will continue to pursue those who violate our sanctions and export controls to prevent them from using American resources to undermine the national security of the United States."

"Let this seizure send a clear message: aircraft illegally acquired from the United States for the benefit of sanctioned Venezuelan officials cannot just fly off into the sunset," said Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement Matthew S. Axelrod of the Department of Commerce. "It doesn't matter how fancy the private jet or how powerful the officials – we will work relentlessly with our partners here and

across the globe to identify and return any aircraft illegally smuggled outside of the United States."

"The United States' seizure of the Dassault Falcon 900EX aircraft illustrates our unrelenting commitment to enforcing U.S. export control laws and imposing U.S. sanctions for any violations," said U.S. Attorney Markenzy Lapointe for the Southern District of Florida. "This successful seizure was the result of planning, coordination, and execution by the United States government, with invaluable assistance by the authorities in the Dominican Republic. Our office, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to work to forfeit this plane and all other assets that circumvent the law."

"The seizure of this aircraft is another significant action by Homeland Security Investigations working with our domestic and international partners against the illegal activities of the Maduro regime," said Special Agent in Charge Anthony Salisbury of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Miami. "The efforts here highlight HSI's global reach and our continued commitment to enforce US sanctions and stemming the flow of illicit proceeds being generated from high level foreign public corruption."

In August 2019, the President issued Executive Order 13884, which prohibits U.S. persons from engaging in transactions with persons who have acted or purported to act directly or indirectly for or on behalf of, the Government of Venezuela, including as a member of the Maduro regime. To protect U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, the Department of Commerce has also imposed export controls for items intended, entirely or in part, for a Venezuelan military or military-intelligence end user.

According to the U.S. investigation, in late 2022 and early 2023, persons affiliated with Maduro allegedly used a Caribbean-based shell company to conceal their involvement in the illegal purchase of the Dassault Falcon 900EX aircraft (which at the time was valued at approxi-

mately \$13 million) from a company based in the Southern District of Florida. The aircraft was then illegally exported from the United States to Venezuela through the Caribbean in April 2023. Since May 2023, the Dassault Falcon, bearing tail number T7-ESPRT, has flown almost exclusively to and from a military base in Venezuela and has been used for the benefit of Maduro and his representatives, including to transport Maduro on visits to other countries.

The Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security Miami Field Office is investigating the case, along with the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) El Dorado Task Force Miami.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Joshua Paster and Jorge Delgado for the Southern District of Florida and Trial Attorney Ahmed Almudallal of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section are handling the matter. The Justice Department's Office of International Affairs and HSI in Santo Domingo provided significant assistance in working with authorities in the Dominican Republic. The United States thanks the Dominican Republic for its assistance in this matter.

The burden to prove forfeiture in a forfeiture proceeding is upon the government.

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 9-3-2024 at 12 p.m.

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

- Total Mass Shootings: 441
- Total Dead: 521
- Total Wounded: 1822
- Shootings Per Day: 1.79
- Days Reached in Year 2024 as of September 3: 247

MIDDLE EAST HOSTAGES FOUND DEAD IN RAFAH

Attempts to procure a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict have hit a huge and tragic road-

block.

On Aug. 31, six of the hostages taken by Hamas in the October 7 Attack were found dead in a Rafah tunnel. The victims included Eden Yerushalmi, 24, Ori Danino, 25, Alex Lobanov, 32, Carmel Gat, 40, Almog Sarusi, 27, and American Hersh Goldberg-Polin, 23. Israel's Defense Forces revealed that the deceased had gunshot wounds.

The news comes as Israel agreed to pause aggression while children in Gaza received polio vaccinations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made no public comment as of press time, but Issac Herzog, the President of Israel, said, "In the name of the entire State of Israel, I hold their families in my heart and ask forgiveness. Forgiveness for not being able to return your loved ones home safely."

Among those reacting to the news was U.S. President Joe Biden.

"I am devastated and outraged. Hersh was among the innocents brutally attacked while attending a music festival for peace in Israel on October 7. He lost his arm helping friends and strangers during Hamas' savage massacre. He had just turned 23. He planned to travel the world. I have gotten to know his parents, Jon and Rachel. They have been courageous, wise, and steadfast, even as they have endured the unimaginable. They have been relentless and irrepressible champions of their son and of all the hostages held in unconscionable conditions.

"I admire them and grieve with them more deeply than words can express. I know all Americans tonight will have them in their prayers, just as Jill and I will. I have worked tirelessly to bring their beloved Hersh safely to them and am heartbroken by the news of his death. It is as tragic as it is reprehensible. Make no mistake, Hamas leaders will pay for these crimes. And we will keep working around the clock for a deal to secure the release of the remaining hostages."

ASIA VACCINATION ACHIEVE-

(Continued on page 14)

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2024 U.S. OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND PROGNOSTICATIONS

By Felicia Laguerre Owens
OP/ED

Twenty-year-old American Ashlyn Krueger had never won a Grand Slam match at the U.S. Open prior to this fortnight. She lost the first set 6-0 in the first round before toughing out a win. Apparently, Krueger did not get the memo that Mirra Andreeva had a 4th round rendezvous with top seed Iga Swiatek. In the second round, she shocked red-hot Russian teenage sensation Andreeva, 6-1, 6-4. Krueger had four wins, now five wins over Top 25 players. This is why we lace up the sneakers to play the match. For the first time, she made it into the U.S. Open's third round. Well done, Ashlyn. Sadly, Ashlyn would lose in the next round.

Last Thursday, August 29th, there was a missed opportunity in the second-round match-up of Naomi Osaka and Czech Karolina Muchova. Muchova won the first set. Osaka rallied and had a set point in the second set, serving 5-4, to send the match to a third set, but Muchova broke Osaka for a tie of 5 games all. Muchova would eventually go to

a tiebreak. Muchova never looked back on her road to victory.

Kicking off the start of Women's Doubles, in 1st round action, the team of Czech Katerina Siniakova and American Taylor Townsend, already 2024 Women's Doubles Grand Slam champions, took on the team of Italian Lucia Bronzetti and Russian Luimila Samsonova. They split the 1st two sets. In the 3rd set, Siniakova and Townsend never trailed, taking the set 6-2, and the match 5-7.6-2, 6-2, final score.

I am very displeased with 4th seed Elena Rybakina withdrawing after the tournament started when she knew from the beginning that she was injured. Yes, Rybakina was my pick to win the U.S. Open title. But this is a teachable moment. Her entry into the main draw could have gone to Hailey Baptiste, who lost in the last qualifying round. Much respect to Tunisian Ons Jabeur for bowing out before the tournament because she knew she was injured, providing an entry and exposure into the main draw to Kamilia Rakhimova, who played well against top seed



Francis Tiafoe.
Photo By Felicia
Laguerre Owens

and world number one, Iga Swiatek, losing only one break of serve in the first set, and played to 8-6 in the 2nd set tiebreaker, for a final score of 6-4, 7-6 (8-6).

As a Grand Slam champion, Elena Rybakina must act better and consider the ramifications of poor decisions! I advise Rakhimova to spend that \$100k, gleefully, prize money paid for losing the first round. As one who spends their years qualifying for tournaments, like Hailey Baptiste and Kamilia Rakhimova, it would take years to accrue that much money, and so quickly!

Not to mention the new respect in the ladies' locker room for holding your own against the world number one, and the press and, more importantly, the fans finally know your name!

Our African American Brothers in Arms delivered the highly flavored popcorn match of the first week: 13th seed Ben Shelton took on 20th seed Frances Tiafoe in what would become a fifth-set thriller, which the lower seed Tiafoe won. Tiafoe would seek another victory in the round of 16 in the second week, against Australian Alexei Popyrin. This was

(Continued on page 12)

COURT (Cont. from page 1)

According to court papers, "Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz is seeking reconsideration to have the above-mention(ed) case to proceed to trial. Plaintiff did not receive Order from Court indicating date for hearing to present oral argument opposing the dismissal and any other motions (to) halt proceedings."

Who is to blame for plaintiff not receiving any notice or documentation? It is not the judge. Rather, Shabazz feels it is the clerk, Mrs. Samantha Graff, Esq.

Court papers state, "Plaintiff was only made aware of dismissal by going to the Courthouse seeking status of case, which was on July 23, 2024. Ombudsman witnessed this date of notice. Further, the Honorable Judge Holmes - Grant, J.S.C., instructed Mrs. Graff, Esq. to send me, Plaintiff, Yusuf A. Shabazz, a hard copy of any and all correspondences through United States Postal Services.

United States Constitution Amendments 1, 4,5 and 14 state that I am entitled access to the court. Further, I would like to address the

issue concerning affidavit of merit. The Court explained "it would seem redundant and unnecessary to require a plaintiff to spend the funds necessary to hire such an expert when he or she never intended to utilize the expert at the time of trial, Id. 313, 721, A2D 1038., we are mindful that other states have enacted affidavit of merit statutes that specifically exempt common knowledge cases from affidavit requirements. Also, no affidavit of merit is required when alleged lack of informed consent or where attorney intends to rely solely on the doctrine of "Res ipsa loquitur. ...

Pursuant to R.1:6-2(d) plaintiff requests oral argument if this matter is contested and requests oral arguments for the following reasons: ...

According to court papers dated July 24, 2024 and received in Superior Court of New Jersey, Civil Division, Essex Vicinage, Mr. Shabazz personally discussed this matter with the attorney for the opposing party, or the opposing party if appearing pro se, in order to resolve the issues raised by this motion. This effort was not successful. Similarly, Mr. Shabazz states in court papers that he

made a good faith effort to personally discuss the matter with the attorney of the opposing party, or with the party if appearing pro se, in order to resolve issues raised by this motion. The result was that Mrs. Samantha Graff requested a settlement demand.

Court papers state, "I, Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz, would like the Court to rescind order dismissing the abovemention due to lack of knowledge of ECourt, email and of technologies. As a pro se litigant, I should have access to the Court without hindrance. Had the Court properly reviewed correspondences, the Court would have seen the I was opposed to any moving papers in favor of the Defendants, as well as requested oral arguments in all matters."

Plaintiff writes to Court opposing dismissal of Defendants from litigation

In court papers dated June 19, 2024, Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz wrote to Honorable Judge Roselyn L. Holmes - Grant to state his "opposition to dismissal of Defendants

(Continued on page 13)



NJ TRANSIT INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ TRANSIT), in accordance with Section 5 of P.L. 1984 c.578 of SCDRTAP, is conducting a public hearing to gather information and receive comments from interested parties concerning programs developed pursuant to the Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP) Act. **Additionally, each hearing will be available both in-person and virtually and will cover the southern, central, and northern regions of New Jersey. The in-person hearings will be held in Iselin, Blackwood, and Newark, NJ.**

The Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program funds capital, operating, and/or administrative expenses for locally coordinated community transportation services for senior citizens and people with disabilities. The program also funds accessibility enhancements to NJ TRANSIT's fixed route services and programs, the provision of technical assistance to the counties, and the administration of the statewide program. All materials to be reviewed at this hearing are available in accessible formats upon request. Closed captioning is available for hearing-impaired individuals. **For language support, please contact Arielle Lewis at 973-491-7772 at least ten (10) business days before the hearing. If you wish to speak at one of these hearings, reach out to Arielle Lewis via email at aplewis@njtransit.com or leave a voicemail with your contact information at 973-491-7772 by Wednesday, September 25, 2024.**

The public is invited to the **October** hearings below at which time they will have a full opportunity to express their views regarding the Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program. In order to ensure that all members of the public are given an opportunity to be heard, comments will be limited to three (3) minutes. **Written comments for the record may be sent to Public Hearing Comments 2024, NJ TRANSIT, Local Programs & Community Transportation, One Penn Plaza East, 4th Floor, Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246, or via email at publichearings@njtransit.com by Friday, November 1, 2024.**

**SENIOR CITIZENS & DISABLED RESIDENTS TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC HEARING**

Central Region	PLACE:	Iselin Branch Library 1081 Green St. Iselin, NJ 08830
	DATE:	Thursday, October 17, 2024
	TIME:	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Southern Region	PLACE:	The Camden County Sustainability Building 508 Lakeland Rd. Blackwood, NJ 08012
	DATE:	Wednesday, October 23, 2024
	TIME:	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Northern Region	PLACE:	NJ TRANSIT Headquarters Board Room A, 9 th Fl One Penn Plaza East Newark, NJ 07105
	DATE:	Thursday, October 24, 2024
	TIME:	6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the hearing](#) or <https://bit.ly/3SOiIMr>
+1 862-294-4371 (Toll) United States, Newark
Phone Conference ID: 553 789 023#

For those who **have** access to E-mail, please contact Arielle Lewis at aplewis@njtransit.com by **Wednesday, September 25, 2024**, and you will be emailed the link to join the hearing via video teleconference. For those who do **not** have access to a PC, Laptop, iPad, Tablet, or Smart Phone with E-mail, please use the telephone number and conference ID access code listed above to call in via telephone.

With this annual notice, we also invite the public to review and comment on the State Management Plans (SMPs) for the following Federal grant programs administered by NJ TRANSIT.

- FTA Section 5310 The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program
- FTA Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Program for Rural Areas

These are available for review and comment on the S-Rides website at <https://s-rides.njtransit.com>. (Click on the *Additional Documents* link). Copies of the state management plans are also available upon request by calling 973-491-7772 or writing to NJ TRANSIT, Local Programs & Minibus Support Department, 4th floor, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, NJ 07105-2246. All comments can be submitted via the address above or by sending an email to SRIDES@njtransit.com.

An Access Link paratransit update will NOT be provided at this hearing. Access Link holds separate Customer Forums. If you have any questions regarding Access Link forums or service, please email adaservices@njtransit.com or call Access Link at 973-491-4224, choose option #5 for Customer Service, or call TT 1- 800-955-6765.

To obtain a translated copy of this notice, contact Customer Service at 973-275-5555.

Title VI: NJ TRANSIT's Notice to Beneficiaries: NJ TRANSIT operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, or wishing to obtain additional information regarding NJ TRANSIT's Title VI obligations, may contact NJ TRANSIT Customer Service at 973-275-5555. A complaint or inquiry may also be filed by writing to NJ TRANSIT Customer Service - Title VI, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, NJ 07105. A complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.



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 - Petitions by a Newark housing advocacy group, who wants the city's 20 percent rent control increase halved, is in the hands of Essex County Clerk Chris Durkin (D-Roseland) and his Election Division staff.

Durkin and his staffers are verifying the group's petition signatures to pass the minimum signature number for their question to be considered for the Nov. 5 General Election ballot. Any ballot question, by law, has to have the signatures of at least 10 percent of a locality's registered voters.

The group, in mid-August, said that it had more than enough signatures to pass muster.

The prospective question is asking registered Newark voters to consider bringing the maximum rent control increase limit down from 20 percent to 10 percent.

Newark's Municipal Council, earlier this year, had increased the cap limit from five percent in 2023 to 20 percent.

It is presumed that the group's ballot question's voting results will be binding. Orange, by contrast, held back-to-back non-binding and binding public questions on whether to switch its board of education selection format from mayor-appointed to voter-elected. A majority of participating voters favored switching to the elected model both times.

IRVINGTON - The Irving-

ton Police Department and Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers is among those "Local Talk" area law enforcement agencies to take a bow for their part in bringing a gang member to plead guilty in Newark federal court Aug. 15.

U.S. Attorney-New Jersey District Philip Sellinger said that Kareem Green - also known as "Try Me" of the Rollin' 60s Neighborhood Crips, pleaded guilty to one RICO count that Thursday before U.S. Magistrate Judge Susan D. Wigenton. "RICO" stands for the Racketeer Influenced and Corruptions Act.

Green confessed to working with another gang member to distribute March 5, 2021. He also affirmed that he ordered another gang member to shoot a victim on two separate occasions: April 5 and 11, 2021. Green was a Rollin' 60s set member 2015-Sept. 22, 2022.

Green is being held pending a sentencing date. He is facing up to \$250,000 in fines and 20 year's federal imprisonment for RICO and 20 years and up to \$1 million for narcotics trafficking.

Besides IPD and Bowers taking a bow, Sellinger also praised the Newark, East Orange, Bloomfield, Elizabeth and Edison police departments, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and Essex County Sheriff's Office, the New Jersey State Police, the Union County Prosecutor's Office the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation and six federal agencies for their part.

EAST ORANGE - The to-be-announced reopening of the Park Oval off Grove Street and Eaton Place, which has been undergoing a renovation since December, will also set the date for the fifth ward baseball diamond taking alongside Paterson's Hinchliffe Stadium and Birmingham, Ala.'s Rickwood Field.

Oval Park, which has a long-set "late summer 2024" reopening date, will be the third former Negro League home diamond with Hinchliffe and Rickwood - three of such literal handful ball parks or fields that still exist. All three have had recent renovations and celebratory reopenings.

In Oval Park's case, the Newark Eagles, New York Black Yankees, Brooklyn Brown

Dodgers, Brooklyn Colored Giants, Baltimore Eagles, Asheville Blues, Chicago Giants and Birmingham Black Barons had played here between 1920 and 1950. The Newark Eagles, N.Y. Black Yankees and Chicago Cubans had also played home games at Hinchliffe; Birmingham called Rickwood Field home.

Records are not clear which teams had called Oval Park home, which games were between each other for a regular season or played "exhibition" games with outside of Negro League teams.

Main contractor Neglia Engineering had used part of the nearly \$6 million in funding to install a new football gridiron with an "EO" logo at its center. There had been several scholastic, amateur and pro or semi-pro team that played here going back to the 1880s. They include the Orange Tornados athletic club of the 1920s - which inspired the NFL Orange Tornados.

Other improvements thanks to state open space and green acres funding include a new quarter-mile running oval, new grandstands and new night lighting.

ORANGE - Results who were at Aug. 28's planning board hearing may call that panel's suggestion or bluff by asking the City Council of the tax abatement rationale of an under-proposal South Ward project at the latter's Sept. 3 meeting.

One of the planning board members told a public speaker Aug. 29 that the Payment In Lieu of Taxes figures are the province of the council and not the planners. The question was among those asked about a site plan application for 512-22 Scotland Rd.

512 Scotland LLC wants to replace 512-522 Scotland at Hillside Avenue, with a five-story, 30-dwelling unit building. The units would be 23 one-bedroom apartments, two six bedroom units and one studio apartment. Its amenities include ground floor parking, a private fifth floor patio and a gymnasium.

It is not immediately known whether 512 Scotland would include any affordable housing units nor how many parking

spaces will be allocated. The proposed building is within the Central Valley Redevelopment Area.

The public speaker had asked how the \$400,000 proposed annual PILOT (its term length was not mentioned) is based on the \$18,000 in annual property taxes that the current two properties pay. The proposal would demolish a closed doctor's office at 514 Scotland and a 2.5 story house at 518 Scotland.

Public speakers' questions in the virtual planning board meeting revealed that a traffic plan on the motorized tenants' impact on local traffic volume. Scotland Road, also known as Essex County Rd. 638, has only one travel lane in each direction between Highland Avenue and the South Orange border.

WEST ORANGE - Some of West Orange's favorite sons and daughters gathered at the Thomas A. Edison National Park Aug. 15 to honor the late Gov. Brendan T. Byrne's on what would have been his centennial year.

Members of The Friends of Thomas Edison NHP and the Downtown West Orange Alliance unveiled a plaque that Thursday night summarizing the 47th Governor of New Jersey along the Main Street side of the former Edison labs.

The dignitaries included widow Ruthi Byrne, former governors Richard "Dick" Codey (2002-06) and Christie Todd Whitman (1994-2001), Mayor Susan McCartney and mayor-turned-State Senator John McKeon.

The marker was erected at the former Thomas A. Edison Laboratory where son Charles Edison's 1927-1961 presidency of the company overlapped his 1941-44 term as governor. C. Edison and Byrne were the second and third governors from West Orange or resided here with Gen. George McLellan (1877-81) and followed by Codey.

Byrne, who was born here April 1, 1924, most likely visited Edison NHP and dodged traffic while walking across Main Street as a youth. The future governor and part-time comedian was a West Orange High School Class of 1942 was taking

(Continued on page 12)



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TOWNS ISSUE PILOTs AFTER THE FACT

By *Walter Elliott*

MAPLEWOOD / EAST ORANGE - Those following tax abatement or Payment In Lieu of Taxes agreements between developers and municipal officials recently did double takes and asked themselves "Can they do that?" with at least two recent developments.

PILOTs and comparable arrangements are normally done as a condition of a developer getting approval for new housing construction or a major redevelopment.

The Maplewood Township Committee, its affordable housing board and the East Orange-based Sierra House announced a 30-year PILOT on Aug. 6 for a project at 95 Tiffany Place involving two apartment units at that address.

Sierra's 93-95 Tiffany Place Urban Renewal Corp., under the agreement, will be paying the township at least \$7,000 annual-

ly for the first 15 years with regular increases thereafter until full taxation on Year 30.

The arrangement, made after six months' negotiations, will allow 95 Tiffany LLC to rent out the two apartments to Sierra House's clients - "young people that have a job like a substitute teacher or a dental hygienist who makes a decent living but not enough to afford a house."

Sierra House is a homeless shelter who helps transition their clients into the workforce.

93 Tiffany Place is a garage on an otherwise empty lot. 95 Tiffany is a vacant lot.

While Maplewood-Sierra's PILOT allows for more familiar flexibility, the Belleville Township Council and Mayor Michael Melham approved a more radical PILOT arrangement on Aug. 13.

The council and Melham, who is a voting member, authorized a five-year PILOT for "The Maximilian" at 527-535 Union Ave. The Maximilian is a three-

story, 20 apartment unit building with ground level parking - and was built last year.

The conventional thinking with PILOTs and other tax abatements is that the municipality is providing a tax break as an incentive for the developer or redeveloper to build housing. The thinking is that the housing would not be built without the PILOT or abatement.

Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, early in his first term, said he accepted the granting of PILOTs as a standard operating practice.

There are PILOT and abatement objectors who say that such financial instruments shortchange municipal services like public schools, first responders and utilities. Some call for varying the PILOT or abatement terms to between five and 20 years to keep City Hall from "giving away the store."

Concern over routing PILOTs or abatements is part of a concern by petitioning Orange

residents. They contend that 30-year pilots granted to developers, along with 11 years of property tax increases, are pricing out longtime residents.

The PILOT tax abatement controversy comes at a time where the decades-old Council on Affordable Housing's municipal allocations are being changed. Some, like Orange, have long fulfilled their allocation; others, like Millburn, have not.

Maplewood committeeman and former mayor Victor De Luca is urging homeowner to make small scale affordable housing available.

"For those who scoff at there being only two units, I invite them to be part of the solution," said De Luca. "Build an accessory dwelling unit to your property to rent to somebody needing affordable housing or take in a boarder who needs a place to live."

U.S. OPEN (Cont. from page 8)

Tiafoe's fifth straight year in the round of 16. After the three hour battle, Tiafoe would be victorious against the man that defeated the defending champion, Novak Djokovic. Tiafoe's victory was very impressive, indeed.

Many of the seeds have fallen, including men's seed favorites #2 defending champion Novak Djokovic and #3 Carlos Alcaraz, French Open and Wimbledon Champion. No record-breaking 25th Grand Slam title for Djokovic this 2024 season. First time in years that Djokovic hasn't won at least one grand slam in a year.

We are now coming up on Championship Weekend at the 2024 U.S. Open, and as the fortnight comes to a close, I dare to make some bold predictions.

Last year's Women's finalists, Belarussian Aryna Sabalenka and African American Coco Gauff, will not meet in the 2024 semifinals this year as many had

hoped. Sabalenka will defeat American Emma Navarro (Navarro already defeated Gauff, who had 19 double faults) in three sets in the semifinals and make the women's final again this year, back-to-back years. I say Coco Gauff defeated herself! If top seed and world number one, Poland's Iga Swiatek, can get past #5 seed Italian Jasmine Paolini in the semifinals, she will take on Aryna Sabalenka in the women's final. Nerves will get the best of Swiatek, and Sabalenka will become the 2024 Women's Champion of the 2024 US Open.

As for the men, surprise! Surprise! We have four Americans remaining in the draw for week two: In the top half, 14th seed Tommy Paul; In the bottom half, unseeded Brandon Nakashima, 12th seed Taylor Fritz, and our African American Brother in Arms 20th seed Francis Tiafoe, whose mantra is "Why not me?!" Paul played #1 seed Italian Jannik Sinner in the

4th round and would have to defeat Sinner, only to meet #5 seed Russian Daniil Medvedev in the quarterfinals.

I feel this task was too tough for Paul and that he will fall to Sinner. Fritz should have an easier time against 8th seed Casper Ruud and defeat him in the 4th round, and if Nakashima had of defeated 4th seed Alexander Zverev, too. We would have an All-American matchup in the quarterfinals. Tiafoe had the tough task of defeating giant killer Alexi Popyrin, only to meet #9 seed Gregor Dimitrov in the other quarterfinal. Let's get these parlays! Miracles do happen.

If we get an All-American quarterfinal, Fritz beats Zverev, and Tiafoe beats Dimitrov, that guarantees two Americans in the semifinal. Here is my bold prediction: An American male will make it to the 2024 Men's US Open final to fight for the title!!! An American male hasn't won the US Open Men's title since

2003 with then-teenager Andy Roddick.

To dream the impossible dream! The Time Is Now! I think that man will be Our African American Brother in Arms, "Mr. Why Not Me" Frances Tiafoe. It's on and popping!

Kudos to Doubles Specialist African American Taylor Townsend, who won the Women's Double Wimbledon Title with Czech Katerina Siniakova this year, for partnering with tennis veteran African American Donald Young, Jr., to help him retire in style by playing mixed doubles this fortnight!

Lastly, I want to shout out to New Jersey native Tommy Paul from Voorhees, who is the fourteenth seed this fortnight and has reached the fourth round as of this writing. An honorable mention to Amanda Anisimova, a native of Freehold, who lost in the first round.

Until January 2025 (the Australian Open), remember, "Love means nothing in tennis."

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from page 10)

classes in Seton Hall University until he enlisted with the U.S. Army Air Corps. He resumed pursuing a law degree at Princeton after is tour as a B-17 navigator in World War Two's European Theater ended in 1945.

Lt. Byrne was a private lawyer for a Newark and an East Orange firm until he was appointed by Gov. Robert B. Meyner to the Essex County Prosecutor's Office in 1958. He was appointed as a State Superior Court Assignment Judge William T. Cahill in 1970.

Judge Byrne resigned to successfully run for governor in 1972. Gov. Byrne established the state energy and public advocate departments, set state through municipal spending limits, signed the Pinelands Protection Act and created the state income tax.

Byrne died from a sudden illness Jan. 4, 2018 and was given a military funeral.

Councilwoman Michele Casalino and a Friends representative donated a copy of "Gov. Brendan Byrne: The Man Who Couldn't be Bought," to the West Orange Public Library.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD

New South Orange-Maplewood School District superintendent Jason Bing, at the school board's Aug. 25 meeting, noted progress on the district's technology and facilities fronts.

Bing said that some of the facilities improvements that were being made over the summer will be ready on or by Sept. 5.

Those revisions include a new retaining wall at Maplewood Middle School, a new front sidewalk before South Orange Middle School, a new sidewalk horseshoe at Seth Boyden Demonstration School, a new sidewalk and ramp at Montrose Early Learning Center and a new handicapped access ramp at Tuscan Elementary School.

The new superintendent of schools said that replacing the sub-Olympic-sized swimming pool at Columbia High School with an expanded Media Center and a new student center is coming along. The new construction prompted cancellation of this year's district pre-school year convocation. He thanked Facilities Director Tom Giglio, staff and contractors for their work.

On the technology front, he thanked its director, Keith Bonds for setting up 75-inch LED screens in five classrooms. Teachers there can plug in their laptops and show online lessons before students.

The developments could be viewed as progress on Bing's "First 100 Days Plan" he had unveiled at the BOE's July 25 meeting. Technology is one of the 10 major areas the superintendent wants the district to focus on; the facilities revamps fall into "Organizational Review.

The other eight areas are: Developing key relationships, Financial review, Curriculum review, Career and technical education/workforce readiness, Human resources, Observations, Public relations and communication and Transportation. The 10 areas are driven by four mission values: equity, excel-

lence, integrity and teamwork.

BLOOMFIELD - NJ Historic Sites Council denied NJTransit's application to renovate Bloomfield Station over the plan's raising of the 1912 station's platform height.

NJTransit had been raising platform heights so its Arrow III and later trains can load and unload passengers faster and improve handicapped riders' access. The council, at its Aug. 15 meeting, said that the stations would have to be removed to clear the proposed high-level platforms.

The former DL&W Bloomfield Station, like most NJTransit's Morris & Essex and Montclair-Boonton Line stations, have been on the national and state historic registers since 1984.

The council's ruling may be reversed should NJTransit provide an alternative. It had built short high-level platforms at the ends of South Orange and East Orange stations. The council had approved NJTransit's high-level platforms and replacing the 1903 westbound waiting room at Newark Broad Street Station by keeping the original elements as much as possible and installing historic markers about the station.

Bloomfield had its eastbound waiting room renovated and reopened in 2005, thanks to a \$1 million federal grant provided by the late Cong. Bill Pascrell (D-Eighth Congressional District).

The approval is contingent on NJTransit making the station whole by buying its street

(Continued on page 15)

COURT

(Continued from page 8)

from litigation.” According to court papers, “an affidavit of merit is not always required in certain instances. When a corporation hire (s) an employee to perform service or duties and that person (employee) (causes) error, cause harm of breach contract, the employee or corporation are held responsible. (This is) Similar to conspiracy when two or more individuals participate in a lawful or unlawful activity in a certain manner.”

Less fortunate at a disadvantage in court

Mr. Shabazz asked the Court to “acknowledge how can the less fortunate obtain an affidavit of merit when lacking funds, resources or legal assistance. Records will reflect that Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz sought in the beginning of litigation to obtain legal help from various legal entities and corporations, public and private. No one was willing to help, (so) still today I search for representation.

It is a shame that Justice is not on the bench in certain courts at certain times, especially attorneys. When some first start out lawyering, they fight until they sell their soul or the soul of their client.”

Facts of the case. Allegations of Medical Malpractice.

According to court papers dated May 7, 2023, “Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz, was and still is experiencing medical related issue that initially brought Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz, to University Hospital, Rutgers, referred to Dr. Aziz Merchant M.D., by Dr. Rachel Kay, M.D., medical records will reflect. Dr. Merchant, without properly evaluating Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz’s condition; misdiagnosed Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz, prepared and medical team and scheduled a surgery which occurred on December 23, 2020. Shortly thereafter, Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz complained of issues as an after ef-

fect of surgery. This complaint and many others fell on a deaf ear, and went unheard and unacknowledged by Dr. Aziz Merchant, M.D.

On May 5, 2021, Ms. Guadalupe injected a chemical into Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz’s nose causing burning and nose bleeding. When the doctor appeared, he informed Ms. Guadalupe that Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz was not his patient. Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz immediately called for supervisor. None came forward. Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz went to Patient Advocates office to file complaint. Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz followed up with Dr. Rachel Kaye, M.D. for treatment and medicine. Records will reflect. (See complaint filed through Patients Advocates Office attached with Claim. Exhibit A).

Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz complained to Patient Advocates Office at 140 Bergen Street, Newark, New Jersey, 07102 of issues and complication which was acknowledged, but no action was taken. Plaintiff even file tort claim and contacted the Board of Trustees. It was to no avail.

This is the pattern of University Hospital. All complaints go unacknowledged, or uninvestigated, which is a continued pattern of negligence and deviation from standard practices.

After discharge from hospital, during follow-up visits Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz explain to Dr. Aziz Merchant and attending nurses. During follow-up visits (instances) of complications [with] eating, swallowing, and passing bowel movements, as well as developing hernia on right lower side from straining to move bowel. Dr. Aziz Merchant M.D. acknowledged (this) and said it would pass. For six (6) months Plaintiff suffered in pain.

On June 12, 2021, Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz’s daughter, Shalease M. Shabazz, took Plaintiff A. Shabazz, to Mountainside Hospital where an emergency surgery was performed to remove developed hernia from lower side of Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz’s body. Medical records will reflect. Dr. Joao Lopes, M.D. performed surgery. (see Exhibit (1)).

MOSQUITO

(Continued from page 4)

weekly inspections to ensure they are free of standing water. Some species may travel miles from their breeding habitat, so if you are still experiencing mosquito problems, contact your county mosquito control program for advice and help.”

September marks the 25th anniversary of the emergence of West Nile virus in the U.S., and New Jersey had its first human case in 2000. WNV is now the most common locally-acquired mosquito-borne disease.

The first WNV case was reported this

year in early July, which is earlier than what is typically seen in New Jersey. In a typical year, there are 13 human WNV infections reported. Last year, New Jersey had 14 human cases of WNV and one death.

This year, the detection of WNV in mosquitoes has also been considerably earlier than expected. WNV has been detected in 702 mosquito pools, which is higher than average and has been found in all New Jersey counties except Cumberland. WNV detections in mosquitoes are highest in the northeastern part of the state, particularly in Bergen, Hudson, Middlesex, and Union counties. EEE has been detected in mosqui-

Returning to University (Hospital) for another follow-up, I explain(ed) to Dr. Aziz Merchant M.D., about the recent surgery at Mountainside Hospital to removing hernia caused by surgery DR. Aziz Merchant M.D. performed on December 23, 2020, which resulted to Plaintiff not being able to swallow, eat and the straining to move bowels (passing waste).

Around about May 2022, Dr. Kaven Hajifathalian, M.D., only after the proper consultations, evaluations and work up through medical testing by other doctors in this specialty he scheduled and structure a Poem procedure operation ... for June 12, 2022. This procedure (operation) was to correct the error that Dr. Aziz Merchant M.D., committed when he misdiagnosed Plaintiff’s Yusuf A. Shabazz, situation (medical issue).

On June 2, 2022, Dr. Kaven Hajifathalian, M.D., called Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz to inform him (Plaintiff Yusuf A. Shabazz) that his insurance company which was and is Horizon N.J. Family Care, denied coverage for the surgery. See Exhibit 2. Further stating, that it was imperative that I have this corrective surgery to rectify my eating, swallowing, and digestive issue caused by Dr. Aziz Merchant, M.D., on December 23, 2020, so therefore I should come to the Emergency Room at University Hospital in Newark, New Jersey, on June 11, 2022, to be admitted for procedure to be performed. I did as directed. Records will reflect. See Exhibits 3 and 4.”

Unanswered Questions

The big question is, how many indigent people like Yusuf A. Shabazz are denied equal access to the court because they do not have the money, resources or legal assistance? Why do law clinics that are supposed to help poor people turn them down? Could something more be done to help poor people have proper legal representation and equal access to courts?

toes in Cape May, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Monmouth, Morris, and Union counties.

WNV and EEE also affect horses, with EEE having a significantly higher risk of death in horses than West Nile virus infection, according to the New Jersey Department of Agriculture. EEE and WNV infections in horses are not a significant risk factor for human infection because horses (like humans) are "dead-end" hosts for the virus. Effective equine vaccines for EEE and WNV are available commercially. Horse owners should contact their veterinarians if their horses are not up to date on their vaccinations against both EEE and WNV.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

DRINK WATER AND MIND MY BUSINESS

TRAVEL LOG

Yesterday, I took full advantage of the Labor Day holiday. I binged on snacks at its arrival and well past 12:00 am, slept late, and made the most of New Jersey's Fare Holiday by hopping on buses and trains on a whim. Flagging those buses down just added to my feeling of being at a financial advantage, which I think I've come to like. Come with me, if you wish, as I revisit my adventure...

BROOKLYN (WEST INDIAN DAY FESTIVAL)

Patricia Roberts' "Drink Water and Mind My Business" was

the tune I'd been humming all day. Mostly just that hook because, well, that's basically all I know.

I was introduced to this Soca song by one of my muses, Diana the Dragon, during one of her dance routines. Yesterday (Sept. 2) was also the very first time I traveled to New York City alone. Before going, I had solicited the help of a few people. Each suggested I use Google Maps, but I wanted to have it written down just in case my phone failed me - as it did as soon as I entered the train. I couldn't connect to the internet. Penn Station, the Brooklyn Museum, and West Indian Parade were the keywords I used when soliciting help.

The first people I met that day were three aspiring photographers and models. I hung out with them for a bit, then made my way to a seat, and that's how



I met Thomas, an Evangelist who wore a particular hat that I loved. We chatted the whole way, and after reaching Penn Station, we stood dead center in the space and had a prayer. After leaving Thomas, that's when my feeling of being lost began.

Soon after soliciting help from a few others who couldn't point me in the right direction, I stumbled upon a very interesting character. When introducing himself, he asked if I wanted to know his government name or what the street called him. I told him to choose, and he chose his street name, which happens to be a part of the body. Nothing vul-



gar, but if I were to repeat it, it would expose who he was when what he'd done was more important.

His explanation was more than overwhelming, as noted by my looking like a lost, wide-eyed child. He positioned my hand on his shoulder and led the way - a dealer for over twenty years, who was working at the moment. Obviously, he had broken the rules and used some of his own supply. I don't know how he could lead me with those eyes open shut.

When I reached the platform, that's when I met my guardian angel number two. She walked with me to the left side of the platform, and as we waited, she stepped into that mother role the entire trip on the 2 train. ...

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.



Photos Courtesy Andrea Dialect

WORLD NEWS (Cont. from pg. 6)

MENT UNLOCKED

More than 800,000 children and 120,000 pregnant women will be vaccinated in a nationwide campaign launched on Sept. 2 by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) - aka North Korea - with the support of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

"This campaign is a major milestone in our drive to vaccinate every child in the DPRK and protect them from common childhood diseases," said UNICEF's Acting Representative for the country Roland Kupka.

"This is the first step in restoring routine immunization

and closing the gap that has left children vulnerable to preventable diseases," he added.

Over four million doses of essential vaccines - including Pentavalent, Measles-Rubella (MR), Tetanus-Diphtheria, BCG, Hepatitis B, and Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine (IPV) - were delivered to the DPRK in July to kickstart this comprehensive catch-up effort.

Of these, two million doses will be used in the current catch-up vaccination campaign, while the rest will be sent to health centers nationwide to boost routine immunization programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a major setback in immunization rates in DPRK.

While national rates exceeded 96 per cent before the pan-

demic, they dropped to below 42 per cent by mid-2021, leaving countless children at risk of deadly diseases such as polio, diphtheria, measles, rubella, and hepatitis.

Between 2021 and 2023, UNICEF supported three previous catch-up vaccination campaigns in the DPRK, reaching a combined total of nearly 1.3 million children who missed essential vaccinations during the pandemic's peak.

The current vaccination campaign is set to reach children and pregnant women in all 210 counties who missed out on life-saving vaccines since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020.

Over 7,200 health workers have been trained to manage

vaccination campaigns and handle any potential vaccine reactions.

Additionally, UNICEF supplied new freezers, fridges, cold boxes, and temperature taggers to keep vaccines effective in even the most remote areas.

The agency is also supporting the campaign by overseeing vaccine delivery and administration and tracking coverage to ensure its success.

"To sustain progress in restoring pre-pandemic vaccination levels and ensuring every child receives essential, life-saving vaccines, we urge the DPRK government to swiftly allow the return of UNICEF and UN international staff in the country," remarked Mr. Kupka.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 12)

level from the township. Bloomfield bought the ground floor from Haberman Corp., of West Orange, as part of its Town Centre redevelopment plan. Haberman, until 2000, had wanted to open a restaurant where the westbound waiting room was until around 1970. The then-Erie Lackawanna sold that space to a vendor who put in a pizzeria and, later, a florist's shop.

MONTCLAIR - The Mills Reservation hiker who was found unconscious Aug. 24 by Montclair and Cedar Grove first responders may have been likely released from a local hospital by press time.

Acting Montclair Fire Chief Robert Duncan said his first units had responded to a missing persons report made 8:30 p.m. that Saturday from 36 Warfield St., They and Cedar Grove police officers conducted a search in the darkness for the hiker.

They found the hiker unconscious and wedged between a tree and a cliff face some 75 feet above the ground; she had fallen 20 feet down from the cliff's edge.

Firefighters and police officers used rope lines to rappel to the hiker and fastened more lines to the ground. They carefully extricated the hiker and lowered her to earth 30 minutes later.

A Montclair Ambulance crew, waiting at 36 Warfield, then took the hiker to the local hospital/ Duncan said that no one was injured in the rescue.

GLEN RIDGE - The newly-arrived Glen Ridge Public Schools superintendent, Kyle Arlington, is fine-tuning what he calls the "Capturing Kids' Hearts" initiative for the 2024-25 school year.

Arlington, who came from Kenilworth to succeed the retired Dirk Phillips over the summer, is launching "Kids' Hearts" with the Glen Ridge Educational Foundation. The program aims to support students' emotional and social development among the Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade ranks.

The initiative, which is found in some other public school districts, aims to reduce social anxiety, strengthen students' voices and create self-managing classrooms. The program will be found in Glen Ridge's four elementary schools.

2024-25 is also the year when the district's physical education and health curriculum is up for review. PE and health were last reviewed in 2019. It and other curricula are on five-year review cycles.

Arlington will be fine-tuning this year's central office initiatives by continuing meet-and-greets among parents, stu-

dents and other stakeholders in the borough's six-school district.

BELLEVILLE - Those at Ronnie's Service Center here at 605 Washington Ave. may remember this summer as one of looming mortality.

On the institutional level, the Belleville Planning Board, on June 27, approved plans to replace the longtime automotive garage and filling station at Washington and Greylock Parkway's northwest corner with a five-story, 51-unit apartment building.

On the personal level, the Enrite-branded gas station suffered the loss of its mechanic, Joseph B. Costa, 35, on July 28 at the Clara Maass Medical Center.

The property owners took advantage of Belleville's elders designating the corner as an Area in Need of Redevelopment a few years ago by submitting a site plan application to the planning board last spring.

Costa, who was a Nutley resident July 28, was born in Morristown Oct. 29, 1988 and came here by way of Newark and Bloomfield. The Bloomfield High School Class of 2006 had a passion for cars and motorcycles. He and wife Michelle Rizzo-Costa lived in Bloomfield until she died in 2022.

Parents Manuel and Maria Costa, brother Michael and stepdaughter Riley are among his survivors. His Funeral Mass was held in Bloomfield's Sacred Heart Church Aug. 3, followed by a private cremation.

Ronnie's was a Texaco station until parent Texaco-Chevron withdrew from the Northeast market in 2001.

NUTLEY - New Jersey Department of Education's appointed monitor issued her first veto here at the Nutley Board of Education meeting Aug. 26 - and a Nutley Public Schools employee may be thanking her for it.

The NBOE voted 5-2 that Monday night to deny a resolution that would have allowed the unnamed employee to collect \$27,957.71 in unused vacation time. The circumstances on why the Nutley Public Schools staffer not using that time up to now was not elaborated.

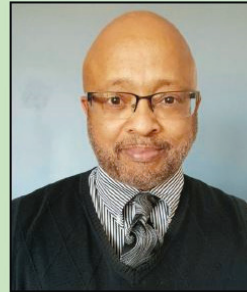
Board President Salvatore Ferraro and Vice President Joseph Battaglia abstained from the vote. The other members - Salvatore Balsamo, Thomas D'Elia, Lisa Danchack-Martin, Daniel Fragnals, Charles Kucinski, Teri Quirk and Nicholas Scotti - noted "No."

State Monitor Jeanette Makus, however, overrode the board's denial. Makus, after the session, said that she vetoed the vote in the best interests of NPS students and cited the legal expenses the district could face should the employee bring

BANKRUPTCY

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
TENNESSEE AT CLARKSVILLE

NON RESIDENT NOTICE

CASE NUMBER: CC 2024 CV 714

TO: Reynaldo Ramos

You are ordered to appear and defend a civil action filed against you entitled

Meliana Lopez-Cruz

vs.

Reynaldo Ramos
(f/k/a Jose Mario Hernandez Perez)

which has been filed in Circuit Court, Montgomery County, Tennessee, and your defense must be made within thirty (30) days from the date of the last publication of this notice, which shall be published for four consecutive weeks in

in Elizabeth, New Jersey

You are further directed to file your defense with the Clerk of the Court and send a copy to the Plaintiff's attorney at the address listed below. In case of your failure to defend this action by the above date, judgment by default may be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Issued: Wendy Davis, Clerk

By: *[Signature]*
Deputy Clerk

Plaintiff Attorney:
Caroline Wright
Attorney at Law
151 W. Dunbar Cave Road
Clarksville, TN 37040

court charges against the employer.

Monday night was Makus' first veto since coming aboard May 7. NJDOE had assigned her to NBOE as a condition of granting the district a \$7 million loan to have it cover its suddenly-discovered 2023-24 budget deficit.



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