

QUEENS TODAY

MARCH 27, 2024

COUNCILMEMBER SANDRA UNG presented a City Council proclamation to park advocate and local community activist Leona Chin this week. “Leona Chin exemplifies the very essence of civic engagement and service, selflessly devoting her time and energy in spaces like senior centers and food pantries to improve her local community,” said Ung. “However, it is her unwavering dedication to Kissena Park that truly sets her apart. This City Council Proclamation is just a small token of gratitude for her years of dedicated service.” In 2018, Chin formed the Kissena Velodrome Friends Group to advocate for the upkeep, maintenance, and transformation of the Velodrome and the park surrounding it. In 2019, the group changed its name to Kissena Synergy to reflect a desire to work with other partners to improve community green spaces across Flushing. Since then, Chin has become a NYC Parks Forestry and Trails steward.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE GRACE MENG announced the introduction of the Fair Access to Co-Ops for Veterans Act, a bipartisan bill to make it easier for veterans in Queens and across the nation to purchase co-ops. The legislation would expand the Veterans Home Loan Guarantee program to include co-ops, allowing the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs to guarantee co-op loans taken out by veterans. The bill would also direct the VA to advertise this co-op program to eligible veterans, participating lenders and interested realtors. “The VA home loan program has been a transformative benefit for servicemembers for 80 years,” Meng said during the hearing on Capitol Hill. “But this program cannot be fully enjoyed by New Yorkers who served in our armed forces...Currently, a veteran or service member can use their VA home loan to purchase a condo, a townhome, a mobile home, or a manufactured home, but not a co-op. It is our job to serve those who serve us.”

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY CELEBRATED the transformation of the library system’s longstanding site at the Ravenswood Houses on Tuesday into a community learning center focusing on workforce development, digital literacy and re-entry services. “Since 1951, this location has provided vital resources to generations of Ravenswood residents and the wider community,” said Queens Public Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott. “We are thrilled to welcome back our customers and offer programs and services focused on workforce development and digital literacy, reflecting the current needs of people who live and work in Long Island City and Astoria. I want to thank the New York City Housing Authority, the Ravenswood Resident Association, Amazon, and Rise Light & Power for working with us to revitalize this important space.”

NYPD officer killed in Far Rockaway

By Ryan Schwach
Queens Daily Eagle

An NYPD officer was shot and killed in Far Rockaway on Monday evening.

Officer Jonathan Diller, a 31-year-old, three-year veteran of the NYPD assigned to the Community Response Team – which is focused on quality of life issues – was conducting a traffic stop in the Southeast Queens neighborhood when he was shot, according to NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban.

According to a preliminary investigation, the officer and his partner approached a vehicle around 5:48 p.m., outside of 19-19 Mott Avenue for being illegally parked in a bus stop.

NYPD officials say that the officers ordered the man in the passenger seat of the vehicle, 34-year-old Guy Rivera, to get out of the car multiple times – though they did not say why he was being ordered out of the vehicle.

Rivera then pulled out a gun and pointed it toward the officers, police claim. Caban said that shots rang out shortly after but didn’t say who shot first.

Diller is believed to have been shot in the torso, underneath his bullet-proof vest. His partner returned fire, striking Rivera once in the back. Rivera is expected to recover.

Diller was rushed to Jamaica Hospital where he later died.

“We lost one of our sons today, and it is extremely painful,” said Mayor Eric Adams, who called the incident a “senseless act of violence.”

“We witnessed a person who had a total disregard for the safety of the city,” Adams, a former NYPD captain, said.

Diller, who lived in Massapequa Park in Long Island, was married with a young son.

There is a candlelight vigil currently scheduled for Wednesday night in Diller’s native Massapequa.

The driver of the car, reported to be 41-year-old Lindy Jones, was put into custody. It is currently not known how the two men knew each



NYPD officer Jonathan Diller was shot and killed while conducting a traffic stop in Far Rockaway on Monday night.

NYPD News

other, or why they were together on Monday night, but NYPD officials said they know the two had “associations with people in Queens.”

Reports show that both Rivera and Jones had over 20 prior arrests. Jones is currently out

on bail for a gun charge in April of last year, according to the New York Daily News.

Both at Jamaica Hospital on Monday night and at his “off-topic” press availability on Tuesday, *Continued on page 16*

Good government groups call for state to reform Judicial Conduct Commission



Robert Tembeckjian, the administrator of the Commission on Judicial Conduct. Half a dozen good government groups this week issued their support for a bill that would effectively boost the budget and power of the commission.

Screenshot via NY State Senate, File

By Jacob Kaye
Queens Daily Eagle

Over half a dozen good government groups this week issued their support for a bill that would effectively boost the budget and power of the state’s Commission on Judicial Conduct, the oversight agency that investigates ethics complaints made against New York’s judges.

The commission recently had its budget request to Governor Kathy Hochul denied, a move the commission’s director said will affect the group’s ability to conduct investigations into complaints made against the judiciary, which have increased each year over the past several years.

In the wake of the budget boost denial, groups like Citizens Union, Reinvent Albany and Common Cause New York are calling for support of a bill from State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal and Assemblymember Charles Lavine to reform the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

The bill from Hoylman-Sigal and Lavine, who chair their respective legislative body’s Judiciary Committee, would require the governor *See story on page 2*

Support for Judicial Conduct Commission reform grows

Continued from page 1

to accept budget requests from the commission without revision.

The bill, among other things, would also close what critics call a loophole in the commission's powers. Under current law, any investigation into a complaint made against a judge by the commission is required to close once that judge retires, stifling whatever due process may have otherwise come as a result of the investigation.

"Our groups support this bill because robustly funded ethics oversight agencies are the first line of defense against corruption, misconduct, and the abuse of public trust," the groups, which also included the League of Women Voters of New York, the New York Public Interest Research Group, Scrutinize and The Sexual Harassment Working Group.

"We strongly support independent budgeting mechanisms for oversight agencies like the Commission on Judicial Conduct, because here agencies are vulnerable to political retaliation just for properly doing their job, which includes ensuring influential public officials follow the rules," the groups added. "It is crucial that the Commission on Judicial Conduct have the funding they need to hold judges accountable."

During a January budget hearing in Albany, the commission's administrator, Robert Tembeckjian, called Hochul's proposed budget for the watchdog commission disappointing, and told lawmakers that without the increased funding, the commission's work would be put in jeopardy.

Tembeckjian originally requested the commission's approximately \$8 million budget be increased by \$770,000 but was only given a \$184,000 increase in Hochul's executive budget proposal.

The administrator said that the 75 percent reduction in the fiscal request would not only affect the commission's ability to conduct investigations, but would also make it impossible for the commission to fund its staff's mandatory salary increases or pay for the software needed to manage its work, Tembeckjian said.

"All of the tools that we need to efficiently and effectively meet this burgeoning challenge are unaddressed in this budget," Tembeckjian said.

The independent commission is made up of 11 members, who together receive and investigate and publicly discipline judges for engaging in ethical misconduct. Over the course of its nearly five decade history, the number of

complaints it has received against judges have grown and grown – particularly in the past several years – and its staff has been depleted.

In 1978, the year the commission was cemented into the state's constitution, the commission had 63 people working full time on its staff. To start 2024, the commission had 49 members.

"We really need to pay attention to the degree of appropriate funding that's called for us to be able to meet this daunting and growing challenge," Tembeckjian said. "I'm sorry to say, and I'm disappointed to say that this executive budget, this recommendation falls short."

In 2023, the commission received 2,982 complaints, the most in its history. The year's total, which was detailed in the commission's annual report released earlier this month, represented a 22 percent increase from the number of complaints received in 2022, the previous record high.

With the exception of a dip in the number of complaints made in 2020 – likely related to the pandemic – the number of complaints made to the state commission have been on the rise in the past decade.

Each year, around 6 percent of those complaints lead to investigations. Of those cases, around 1 percent result in disciplinary measures.

Of the approximately 2,900 complaints the commission received in 2023, around 400 were launched into full-fledged investigations.

Following investigations from the commission, eight judges were publicly disciplined, including four who were removed from office.

Additionally, nine judges resigned and publicly agreed never to return to judicial office following the completion of the commission's investigation.

Six judges resigned while complaints against them were pending, forcing the commission to close the complaints.

But Hoylman-Sigal and Lavine's bill would change the loophole which critics say was employed by former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore in 2021 when she abruptly retired from office.

The bill would allow the commission's investigations to continue until their completion, regardless if the judge is an active member of the judiciary or not.

The legislation, in addition to closing the retirement loophole and requiring the governor to accept the commission's budget request, would require that any investigation opened into a judge be made public. Currently, the



A bill from State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal to reform the Commission on Judicial Conduct – that was partially prompted by the abrupt resignation of former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore – is supported by a number of good government groups.

File photo via NY State Senate

commission is not required to make any of its investigative work public unless it substantiates the allegations made against the subject of the complaint.

Additionally, the bill would require that any judge subject to investigation file a written response to the allegations and that that written response be made public as well.

Under the legislation, the commission would continue to have the power to keep complaints that don't result in an investigation under wraps.

Commission Chair Joseph Belluck issued his support for the bill in the commission's annual report.

"Faith in the integrity of the courts is fun-

damental to the rule of law," Belluck said. "The work of the Judicial Conduct Commission promotes public confidence in a judiciary that is both independent and accountable. We believe the passage of pending legislation, which would responsibly bring a measure of transparency to our work, would also enhance public understanding of the judicial disciplinary process."

Tembeckjian reiterated his call for more funding in the report.

"The Judicial Conduct Commission is a notable success story in government ethics enforcement," he said. "It promotes both judicial independence and public confidence in the courts, by disciplining those judges who have engaged in misconduct, while exonerating those who have been wrongly accused."

"Hopefully, when the final state budget is enacted later this month, our resources will be suitably matched to our ever-increasing workload," he added.

Queens man charged in counterfeiting, money laundering scheme

By Ryan Schwach
Queens Daily Eagle

A Queens man was charged this week for allegedly selling phony automobile accessories for luxury cars and laundering the money he earned selling the fake wares.

Fei Wu, a 39-year-old man from Glendale, allegedly sold counterfeit custom items to buyers who purchased tire rims from him on eBay, where he was among the biggest sellers of such rims.

An investigation was launched in 2019 into numerous eBay accounts selling replicas of patented luxury car tire rims with center caps bearing counterfeit logos of car manufacturers such as BMW, Honda, Mercedes Benz and Audi.

Some of the seller accounts were registered under corporations linked to Wu who maintained a storefront on Myrtle Avenue in Glendale. The location functioned as a warehouse to receive, store and ship thousands of replica rims sold on eBay for a fraction of the price of authentic rims, according to prosecutors.

Wu typically fulfilled each order by first shipping the rims. He would then separately ship the stickers, emblems, decals or plastic inserts bearing a counterfeit car manufacturer logo, according to the charges.

According to the Queens district attorney's office, investigators made several purchases of car accessories that were determined to be counterfeits, and also conducted several searches of Wu's home and Glendale store which resulted in thousands of dollars in seized counterfeit items.



A Queens was man busted for perpetrating an alleged phony luxury automobile accessory scam.

Photo via Office of Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz

A search warrant executed last week at Wu's home and the Glendale storefront resulted in the seizure of more than 1,000 tire rims and over 3,300 counterfeit center cap stickers, decals, plastic inserts and/or emblems bearing logos of several luxury brands. More than \$100,000 in cash was also seized. The retail value of completed sets of rims bearing the 3,300 counterfeit logos is approximately \$650,000.

Wu was arraigned on two counts of trademark counterfeiting in the first degree; two counts of money laundering in the second de-

gree; and two counts each of trademark counterfeiting in the second and third degrees.

He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted. Queens Criminal Court Judge Srividya Papachan ordered him to return to court on June 4.

"The trafficking of counterfeit goods robs legitimate businesses and their employees and often leaves consumers with substandard products," said Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz. "The serious charges leveled here are the result of a long-term investigation into an elaborate scheme."

PUBLISHERS:

Michael Nussbaum J.D. Hasty
Michael@queenspublicmedia.com Jdh@queenspublicmedia.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Jacob Kaye
Jacobk@queenspublicmedia.com

REPORTER

Ryan Schwach
Ryans@queenspublicmedia.com

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Kat Ramus
Kat@queenspublicmedia.com

LEGAL ADVERTISING MANAGER

Gina Osnovich
Legals@queenspublicmedia.com

SALES ASSOCIATE

Nadia Hack
Nadia@queenspublicmedia.com

INTERN

Lauren Berardi
Lauren@queenspublicmedia.com

QUEENS
Daily Eagle

Is published daily except Saturdays, Sundays and Federal Holidays by Queens Public Media, 8900 Sutphin Blvd., Lower Suite, LL11, Jamaica, Queens, NY 11435. Subscription price is \$130 per year, \$65 for six months. Periodicals Postage paid at Brooklyn, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Daily Eagle, Circulation Office, 195 Montague Street, Suite 1414, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Tel: 718-422-7402 Legal Advertising. 718-422-7409 Editorial.

Choose the newspaper you want sent to your home – or your computer.

Dear Readers,
During Pandemic, with limited opportunities to pick up our newspapers, we offered and sent print editions in a digital format to you.

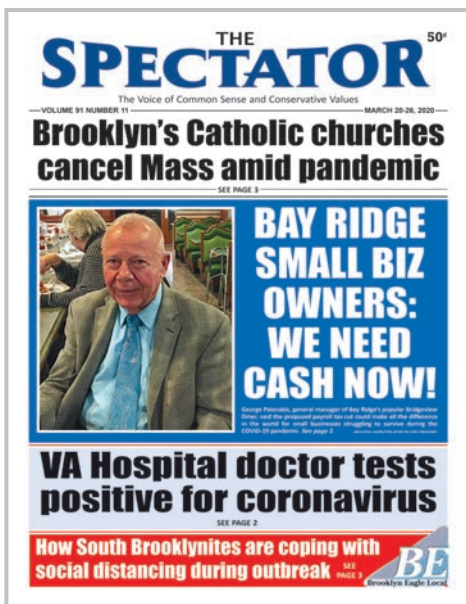
Now we can mail hard copies to your homes and business if you prefer. Please send your request to receive copies to Jen Hopewell (jdh@brooklyneagle.com); please specify if you would like digital version of print editions sent to you as well.

Our newspapers, collectively and continuously, have been publishing for more than 600 years when you add up all the local news service. The HEIGHTS PRESS, BROOKLYN RECORD, and the SPECTATOR have been publishing since the 1930s; the HOME REPORTER since the 1950s and the PHOENIX, and the GAZETTE since the 1970s.

BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE, of course, goes back to 1841.

We hope you will support our efforts in local journalism.

Jen Hopewell,
Assistant to the Publisher
jdh@brooklyneagle.com



Here's how wild animals died in New York City last year

By **Katie Honan**
THE CITY

Flaco, a Eurasian eagle-owl who escaped the Central Park Zoo last year and captured New Yorkers' hearts, shocked fans last month when he died after colliding with an Upper West Side building.

The beloved bird's official cause of death has not been determined, according to a spokesperson for the Wildlife Conservation Society, which operates the zoo. But it has renewed discussion on the dangers for wildlife living and existing in the nation's largest city.

Last year, the city's Parks Department sent 11 dead animals to the state's Department of Environmental Conservation's Wildlife Health Unit to reveal their cause of death.

THE CITY obtained the 2023 necropsies of those animals via Freedom of Information request, and found many of the birds, mostly Red-tailed hawks, were poisoned by rodenticide.

Although pesticides are restricted in the city's public parks, birds still often eat rats who have consumed poison somewhere else — and they are often slower, and easier to grab, because of it. As such, rat poison has been a frequent cause of death for other animals, particularly birds, according to previous years' necropsies reviewed by THE CITY.

Barry the owl, another beloved bird who died in 2021 after colliding with a Central Park Conservancy vehicle, was found with high traces of rat poison in her system that veterinarians believe could have impaired her flying.

The Parks Department has restrictions on if and when it can use rodenticides in its parks; it is suspended during the nesting season, which runs February through August, and also whenever there is a breeding pair of birds of prey present in an area, according to a spokesperson.

But the natural world still poses many dangers to wild animals. Last year, the Urban Park Rangers conducted 1,380 animal rescues across the city, according to Marc Sanchez, the deputy director of the rangers.

The dangers in New York City are different for each type of animal.

"The greatest threats to different bird species vary; for waterfowl, it tends to be trash and fishing line left near water bodies, leading to entanglement. Birds of prey are most endangered by rodenticides, while songbirds primarily suffer from human impacts," Sanchez wrote.

Last year, a coyote was found dead on a high-



Flaco on 60th and 5th Avenue, February 2, 2023.

Credit: Benny Polatseck/Mayoral Photography Office

way, likely struck by a vehicle. Turtles died in a pond during construction at a Queens park. And some of the birds, although later poisoned to death, had previously been shot.

Cataloging the Corpses

The 2023 list of animal causes of deaths sheds light on not just what killed the beasts, but what hazards they had to deal with in life.

Last year, three Red-tailed hawks were found dead at Fort Greene Park in Brooklyn, according to the necropsy for one of the birds. (Only two of those birds appeared to have necropsies performed, however.)

One female juvenile hawk was found in a garden bed in the park, with damage to her right leg likely caused by being previously shot with an air gun pellet, according to the report conducted last April. But it was the high concentration of rat poi-

son that likely killed her, veterinarians wrote.

Another red-tailed hawk was found at the bottom of the Monument Steps at the park months later, killed by rat poison, according to the necropsy.

Up in The Bronx, a peregrine falcon was found dead near Jacobi Medical Center and brought to nearby Pelham Bay Park. A necropsy found it died of the Avian flu.

A Red-tailed hawk was found dead at Orchard Beach parking lot in The Bronx, its body emaciated, its necropsy found. Experts ruled the cause was starvation.

An adult Cooper's hawk was found on the Crotona Malls near the parkway, with blunt impact determined as its cause of death — although it had also previously been shot by an air pellet rifle, her necropsy found. It's not clear if the hawk had been struck by a car.

An adult female coyote was found dead near the High Bridge, likely due to a vehicle strike, veterinarians found.

Coyotes aren't totally uncommon across New York City, and prey on the smaller animals present throughout the five boroughs to survive. The necropsy for this coyote, estimated to be around a year and a half old, found raccoon hairs, bones, and claws inside her stomach. She was sent to the DEC for a necropsy and to also possibly contribute to genetic research, according to her report.

In Queens, an after-hatch male Merlin falcon

was found dead on the beach in Arverne, with rodenticide as its cause of death.

Queens was also the final resting place of several turtles at Bowne Park Pond in Flushing. A necropsy was formed on one Florida soft-shell turtle, whose death was ruled a bacterial infection, particularly shell rot disease, according to its necropsy. The Urban Park Rangers who sent the turtle up for examination noted its death could be related to ongoing construction at the park — which a spokeswoman noted is working to improve conditions at the pond for other turtles.

In Manhattan, a Red-tailed hawk was found dead in the parking lot of Tavern on the Green in Central Park, with blood around its beak and mouth. Rodenticide was listed as the cause of death, and two rat feet and whiskers were still present in the bird's intestines.

Another female Red-tailed hawk was found on a walking path in the park, also killed by rat poison.

And finally, just outside the park, a Red-tailed hawk was found dead on the steps of the Museum of the City of New York. Although its ultimate cause of death was not determined, the young male bird did have "potentially lethal levels" of rodenticide. The veterinarians also didn't rule out a possible bacterial infection, according to the necropsy.

THE CITY is an independent, nonprofit news outlet dedicated to hard-hitting reporting that serves the people of New York.



A red-tailed hawk greets crowds at bird festival Raptorama at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Oct. 17, 2021.

Credit: Katie Honan/THE CITY



A bird hangs out in Fort Greene Park, March 20, 2024.

Credit: Ben Fractenberg/THE CITY

Research Shows Federal Workers are Effective and Committed, not Subversive

By Jaime Kucinkas and James L. Perry
The Conversation

It's common for political candidates to disparage "the government" even as they run for an office in which they would be part of, yes, running the government.

Often, what they're referring to is what we, as scholars of the inner workings of democracy, call "the administrative state." At times, these critics use a label of collective distrust and disapproval for government workers that sounds more sinister: "the deep state."

Most people, however, don't know what government workers do, why they do it or how the government selects them in the first place.

Our years of research about the people who work in the federal government finds that they care deeply about their work, aiding the public and pursuing the stability and integrity of government.

Most of them are devoted civil servants. Across hundreds of interviews and surveys of people who have made their careers in government, what stands out most to us is their commitment to civic duty without regard to partisan politics.

From spoils to merit

From the country's founding through 1883, the U.S. federal government relied on what was called a "spoils system" to hire staff. The system got its name from the expression "to the victor goes the spoils." A newly elected president would distribute government jobs to people who helped him win election.

This system had two primary defects: First, vast numbers of federal jobholders could be displaced every four or eight years; second, many of the new arrivals had no qualifications or experience for the jobs to which they were appointed.

Problems resulting from these defects were smaller than modern Americans might expect, because at that time the federal government was much smaller than it is today and had less to do with Americans' everyday lives. This method had its defenders, including President Andrew Jack-

son, who believed that government tasks were relatively simple and anyone could do them.

But even so, the spoils system meant government was not as effective as it could have been — and as the people justifiably expected it to be.

In 1881, President James Garfield was assassinated by a man who believed he deserved a government job because of his support for Garfield but didn't get one. The assassination led to bipartisan passage in Congress of the Pendleton Act of 1883.

The law brought sweeping change. It introduced for the first time principles of merit in government hiring: Appointment and advancement were tied to workers' competence, not their political loyalties or connections. To protect civil servants from political interference, they were given job security: Grounds for firing now revolve around poor performance or misconduct, rather than being a supporter of whichever political party lost the last election.

Nearly 3 million career civil servants continue to have these protections today. New presidents still get to hire roughly 4,000 political appointees with fewer protections.

As a result of these changes and related reforms in the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, the U.S. government is far more effective today than it was prior to the Pendleton Act.

In fact, U.S. civil service institutions, built on merit-based appointments, merit-based advancement and security of employment, have become the standard for democratic governments around the globe. U.S. federal workers are generally high-performing, impartial and minimally corrupt compared with other countries' civil servants.

Increasing government responsibilities

Since 1776, the U.S. population has increased from about 2.5 million people to over 330 million today. With its growing size and with technological advances, the federal government now provides a great



A postal worker empties a box near the Fiserv Forum on Aug. 18, 2020, in Milwaukee.

AP Photo/Morry Gash, File

many services, including protecting its citizens from complex environmental, health and international threats.

Environmental Protection Agency employees help maintain clean air and water, and clean up toxic waste dumps to protect human health. Department of Energy scientists and managers oversee the treatment and disposal of radioactive nuclear waste from our weapons program and power plants. National Park Service staff manage over 85 million acres of public land across all 50 states. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's forecasters' advance detection of potential weather emergencies enable early warnings and evacuations from high-risk areas, which has saved countless lives.

Federal Emergency Management Agency employees aid survivors of natural disasters. That agency also subsidizes flood insurance, making home insurance available in flood-prone areas. The U.S. government additionally provides billions of dollars in subsidies per year to support farmers and maintain food security.

These programs are all administered by government employees: environmental scientists, lawyers, analysts, diplomats, security officers, postal workers, engineers, foresters, doctors and many other specialized career civil servants. Andrew Jackson's idea of government work no longer applies: You do not want just anyone managing hazardous waste, sending a space shuttle into orbit or managing public lands constituting one-third of the country's territory.

A dedicated workforce

Research, including our own, shows that these workers are not self-serving elites but rather dedicated and committed public servants.

That's generally true even of Internal Revenue Service staffers, postal service clerks and other bureaucratic functionaries who may not earn much public respect. Federal employees mirror demographics in the United States and are hired, trained and legally obligated to uphold the Constitution and serve the public interest.

One of us, Jaime Kucinkas, with sociologist and law professor Yvonne Zylan, tracked the experiences of dozens of federal employees across the EPA, Department of Health and Human Services, State Department, Department of Interior, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and various other agencies

during the Trump administration. That research found these workers were dedicated to serving the public and the Constitution, upholding the missions of their agencies and democracy, and working to support leadership and the elected president.

Even though 80% of the centrist and Democratic Party-leaning government workers they spoke with did not believe in the ideas behind the Trump presidency, they were careful to follow legal official orders from the administration.

They noted the importance of speaking up while leaders deliberated what to do. After political appointees and supervisors made their decisions, however, even the civil servants who most valued speaking truth to power acknowledged, "Then it's time to execute," as one State Department employee told Kucinkas. "As career professionals we have an obligation to carry out lawful instructions, even if we don't fully agree with it."

Another international affairs expert told Kucinkas, "People have voted and this is where we're at. And we're not going to change things. We don't do that here." He said if political appointees "want to do what you consider bad decisions ... we do our best to give more information. ... And if they still decide to do (it), then we say okay, that's what we're going to do."

He was firm in this loyal and deferential position to the elected president and his administration in 2018 and again in a 2020 follow-up interview. "If you want to be an advocate, you can leave and work in a different sector," he concluded.

Some decided to do just that: More than a quarter of the upper-level government workers Kucinkas spoke with left their positions during the Trump administration. Although exits typically rise during presidential transitions, they typically remain under 10%, making this degree of high-level exits unusually high.

Even as many Americans express frustration with the president, Congress and the federal government as a whole, however, we believe it is important not to take for granted what federal government workers are doing well. U.S. citizens benefit from effective federal services, thanks in part because the government hires and rewards civil servants due to of their merit rather than loyalty.

Jaime Kucinkas is an assistant professor of sociology at Hamilton College. James L. Perry is a professor of public and environmental affairs emeritus at Indiana University.



Census worker Jennifer Pope wears a mask and sits by ready to help at a U.S. Census walk-up counting site in Greenville, Texas, on July 31, 2020.

AP Photo/LM Otero



QUEENS Daily Eagle

For Legal Advertising in the
Queens Daily Eagle
and assistance filing notices

Contact Gina Osnovich, Legal Advertising Manager
Legals@queenspublicmedia.com



LET US TELL YOUR STORY

We can even reach backseat multi-taskers



**Effective ad campaigns for
Less than you spend on coffee.**

Contact us about seasonal promotions **online** and in **print**.

Ask for a consultation:

BROOKLYN:
jdh@eagleurbanmedia.com

QUEENS:
jdh@queenspublicmedia.com

Short-handed Nets Out- Grind Raptors

**Brooklyn snaps season-high
six-game slide in Toronto**

By John Torenli, Sports Editor
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Youth and desire proved to be the magic formula for the Brooklyn Nets as they snapped their longest losing streak of the season in Toronto Monday.

Second-year forward Trendon Watford scored a season-high 19 points and Nic Claxton pulled down 16 boards as the Nets ended a six-game slide with defense and rebounding, grinding out a 96-88 win over Toronto in front of 18,376 fans at Scotiabank Arena.

Brooklyn (27-45) found out just before tip-off that it would be without leading scorer Cam Thomas due to a back issue and starting forward Cam Johnson because of a sprained toe.

Backup point guard Dennis Smith Jr. was also shelved with a sore right hip and forward Keita Bates-Diop remained out with a shin injury.

That allowed Watford and rookies Jalen Wilson and Noah Clowney to see serious action.

With the Nets desperate to get back in the win column as they pursue 10th-place Atlanta for the final play-in spot in the Eastern Conference, Watford shot 7-for-10, including 2-for-4 from 3-point range.

He also grabbed seven boards in only 21 minutes off the bench.

"When it got down to crunch time, we just took care of the ball and executed," said Watford, who put up a career-best 24 points in Los Angeles against the Clippers last April 8.

Wilson finished with 12 points, and Clowney added seven and six rebounds as Brooklyn out-caromed Toronto (23-49), 50-30.

The Nets also snatched 16 offensive boards, helping them overcome 20 turn-



Trendon Watford had his best game of the season in Toronto Monday, helping the Nets snap a season-high six-game slide.

AP Photo by Matt Kelley

overs on a night that began with bad news and ended with their first win since March 10 in Cleveland.

Brooklyn outscored Toronto, 28-19, over the final 12 minutes.

"I told these guys it's hard to win in the NBA," Brooklyn interim coach Kevin Ollie revealed. "We're going to get a nice team dinner. The wine is going to taste a little bit better."

The Nets may have savored their meal even more if not for a shocking result in Atlanta Monday.

The Hawks, down by as many as 30 points, rallied to knock off the NBA-best Celtics, 120-118, leaving Brooklyn 5 1/2 lengths behind in the chase for their sixth consecutive postseason appearance with only 10 games to play.

Dennis Schroder scored 19 points, Mikal Bridges had 13 and Dorian Finney-Smith added 11 for the Nets, who were eager to enjoy their late dinner north of the border before heading to Washington Wednesday for the finale of this four-

game trip.

The slumping Raptors, losers of a season-high 11 in a row, were even more hampered by injuries and other issues than the Nets.

Toronto was without seven regulars, including four starters. All-Star Scottie Barnes was missing with a hand injury and the Raptors also were dealing with gambling allegations against center Jontay Porter.

Gary Trent Jr. put up 18 points and Javon Freeman-Liberty added 15 for Toronto, which will be at Barclays Center on April 10 for the Nets' final home game of the year.

"We were focused on basketball, we were focused on the game," Raptors coach Darko Rajakovic noted. "Nobody wants that kind of situation to happen to anybody, to any team. We're just going to deal with it."

The Raptors certainly weren't able to deal with Claxton, who fell one rebound shy of his career best and scored nine points on 4-of-5 shooting in Brooklyn's

lowest-scoring win of the campaign.

"Nic really attacked the backboards and got us some extra possessions, which was huge because we had 20 turnovers," Ollie told the Associated Press.

Ollie indicated postgame that he wasn't sure if Thomas would be ready for the Wizards in our nation's capital on Wednesday.

"We'll have to get him a few extra pillows in his hotel room," jabbed Ollie.

NOTHING BUT NET: Brooklyn took a 2-1 lead in the regular-season series with the Raptors. After visiting the Wizards, the Nets will open a two-game homestand on the corner of Atlantic and Flatbush Friday night vs. Chicago. LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers will visit Brooklyn Sunday. ... Bridges went 3-for-12 from 3-point range Monday after hitting 10 of 23 shots from beyond the arc in his previous two games. The Nets held Toronto to a dismal 5-for-27 effort on 3-balls. ... Lonnie Walker IV came off the bench and went 0-for-6 with a quartet of missed 3-pointers for Brooklyn.



Nic Claxton fell one rebound shy of his career best in Toronto, helping the Nets to their first win in seven contests Monday night.

AP Photo by Morry Gash



Nets interim coach Kevin Ollie revealed that his team would celebrate its first win in over two weeks with a late-night meal in Toronto.

AP Photo by Doug McSchooler



Our World In Pictures

GRINDAVIK — Knock, knock, it's nature calling, reminding us of the power of our core: A view of the lava flowing from the volcano backdropped by the Northern Lights, near the town of Grindavik, Iceland, early Monday, March 25, 2024.

Photo: Marco di Marco/AP



PORT-AU-PRINCE — Aftermath of gang violence, which is, let's face it, an autocratic system: People look for salvageable pieces from burned cars at a mechanic shop that was set on fire during violence by armed gangs in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Monday, March 25, 2024.

Photo: Odelyn Joseph/AP



MADRID — Sports has generally broken down racial barriers globally... so what's Spain's problem? Vinicius Junior breaks down in tears during a press conference after a training session of the Brazil team ahead of a friendly soccer match against Spain on Monday, March 25, 2024, in Valdebebas, Madrid, Spain. Vinicius Junior broke down in tears on Monday while talking about the racist insults that he has been subjected to in Spain, saying that he is losing his desire to keep playing because of what he has been going through.

Photo: Oscar J. Barroso/AP



CONNECTICUT — Good feelings run high in March Madness, women's division: UConn guard Paige Bueckers, left, celebrates with teammate KK Arnold in the second half of a second-round college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament against Syracuse, Monday, March 25, 2024, in Storrs, CT.

Photo: Jessica Hill/AP



Our World In Pictures

CAIRO — A downright religious experience — breaking the fast together in a festive setting: Residents of Ezbet Hamada in Cairo's El Matareya district celebrate a mass breakfast, "Iftar", the meal to end their fast at sunset, during the holy fasting month of Ramadan in Cairo, Egypt, Monday, March 25, 2024. Photo: Amr Nabil/AP



SAN ANTONIO — Just basketball? No, it's the attack of the tats: Phoenix Suns forward Kevin Durant, bottom, fights for a loose ball with San Antonio Spurs forward Jeremy Sochan during the second half of an NBA basketball game in San Antonio, Monday, March 25, 2024.

Photo: Eric Gay/AP



BALTIMORE — Long-term heartache, and yet-to-be measured economic impact: A cargo ship is stuck under the part of the structure of the Francis Scott Key Bridge after the ship hit the bridge Tuesday, March 26, 2024, in Baltimore, MD.

Photo: Steve Helber/AP



CONNECTICUT — Basketball — sport of hardworking feet and the most dexterous of fingers: UConn guard Paige Bueckers (5) and Syracuse forward Saniaa Wilson (21) reach for a rebound in the first half of a second-round college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament, Monday, March 25, 2024, in Storrs, Conn.

Photo: Jessica Hill/AP

NYC schools disband teaching and learning division, which oversees Banks' top literacy initiative

By Alex Zimmerman
Chalkbeat

In a major shakeup, the city's Education Department is disbanding its division of teaching and learning, which oversees schools Chancellor David Banks' centerpiece literacy initiative.

The deputy chancellor who leads that department is leaving at the end of the school year, according to a letter Banks sent to Education Department staff on Monday.

The announcement of Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning Carolyn Quintana's departure took some staff by surprise. Quintana has been supervising Banks' top education priority to reshape how the city's elementary schools teach children to read, mandating that all elementary schools across the five boroughs are using one of three curriculums by next school year. The department has also been working to overhaul high school algebra programs.

"We are moving forward with dissolving the Division of Teaching & Learning and integrating its work into the Division of School Leadership under the leadership of Deputy Chancellor Dr. Danika Rux," Banks wrote in a Monday letter to Education Department staff.

Banks signaled that the move was designed to put resources closer to schools — a pledge he made with Mayor Eric Adams when he first took the helm of the nation's largest school district more than two years ago. He suggested some of the staff could be placed under the purview of local superintendents, who directly supervise principals.

The shakeup follows other efforts to give superintendents more power, with Banks previously assigning other Education Department staff who work in central offices to local superintendents' offices.

"The superintendents are clearly in charge, and the content experts are subordinate," one staffer who works in a superintendent's office wrote in a text message, adding that they were "shocked" to learn of Quintana's departure.

Shakeup could be logical for next phase of literacy push

Some observers are optimistic that the restructuring could help create clearer lines of authority



Carolyn Quintana, the Education Department's deputy chancellor for teaching and learning, is leaving the department at the end of the school year as her division is being dissolved.

Alex Zimmerman / Chalkbeat

and streamline the implementation of the curriculum changes. Before the latest shakeup, decisions about which curriculums to mandate and how to set up teacher training came from Quintana's division. But the local superintendents who work with principals to implement those curriculums answer to Rux, the deputy chancellor responsible for school leadership.

There are challenges "having decision making split between the curricular choices and the implementation of those across two different deputy chancellors," said Evan Stone, the CEO and co-founder of Educators for Excellence, a teacher advocacy group. The organization supported the Education Department's push for a curriculum mandate, and Stone said Quintana is an "incredible leader."

Another source involved with implementing the NYC Reads initiative said shifting responsibility for the program closer to the superintendents was logical now that districts have all chosen which curriculum to use and are focused on the daily work of helping schools adjust.

"This makes complete sense in terms of managing the NYC Reads initiative in particular," said the source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "Now we're more into the implementation ... and that falls on the superintendents."

But other observers said that they are concerned that the reorganization will wind up shuffling many of the system's literacy experts into superintendent offices where those leaders may not be able to deploy them as effectively. Education Department officials have not said how many staffers will remain in central offices or sent to local superintendents.

"Many of these district superintendents are just getting on board [with the new reading curriculums] and literacy is not necessarily their field of expertise," said Susan Neuman, a professor at New York University who serves on the city's literacy advisory council. She added the literacy council wasn't in the loop on the shakeup which "came out of nowhere for us."

Another department employee who works in a superintendent's office said change could deliver needed manpower to help schools implement new curriculums.

"We don't have the people to do that effectively on top of everything else," the staffer said. Still, they added it was unclear who would be sent to their office and whether they would have relevant expertise.

The reorganization also comes at a delicate moment for Banks' signature literacy initiative. The second half of the city's districts will begin implementing the mandated curriculums in September, which requires a massive effort to train thousands of teachers. The initial rollout, which

began this school year, has been bumpy so far with some teachers reporting that they have not received sufficient training on the new curriculum materials.

The overhaul of the high school algebra curriculum, which has drawn mixed reactions from educators, is also poised to expand next year.

Layoffs not expected

In his letter to Education Department staff, Banks indicated that the restructuring would not result in layoffs.

"I know change is hard," Banks wrote. "I want to assure you that this restructuring is not a negative reflection of your work. In fact, we want to make sure that your hard work is as close to our students as possible."

The teaching and learning division is staffed by about 2,000 people. The division includes hundreds of staff who oversee support for special education and multilingual learners; those people will not move to superintendent offices and will instead report to Rux.

Quintana did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the circumstances of her departure or whether she has another job lined up. The New York Post previously reported that Quintana was frustrated that she was paid less than a male deputy chancellor, though an Education Department spokesperson said that did not play a role in her departure.

"I want to thank the dedicated team of the Division of Teaching & Learning for their tireless work to improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of students daily," Quintana wrote in a statement. "It was an honor to lead you, and I will always be your ally in fighting for educational equity. I look forward to supporting this transition."

Banks indicated the department's Chief of School Support Miatheresa Pate will oversee the restructuring effort and will be the "interim executive chief" of teaching and learning during the transition period. The superintendent of Bronx District 10, Maribel Hulla, will move into the chief of school support role.

The chancellor indicated that Quintana will spend the remainder of the school year helping with the transition and advising him on "other key projects."

Chalkbeat is a nonprofit news site covering educational change in public schools.

QUEENS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL DINNER
AND INSTALLATION OF THE 2024-2025 OFFICERS & MANAGERS

at
Terrace on the Park • Flushing, NY

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Installation of Officers and Managers

ZENITH T. TAYLOR

KRISTEN J. DUBOWSKI BARBA

JOSHUA R. KATZ

JOEL SERRANO

HAMID M. SIDDIQUI

PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT-ELECT

VICE PRESIDENT

TREASURER

SECRETARY

Class of 2025

Frank Bruno, Jr.

Etan Hakimi

Sharifa Milena Nasser

Tammi D. Pere

A. Camila Popin

Class of 2026

Desiree Claudio

Ruben Davidoff

Mark L. Hankin

Adam Moses Orlow

Estelle J. Roond

Class of 2027

Michael D. Abneri

Beverly Benjamin-George

Janet L. Brown

Sydney A. Spinner

Jasmine I. Valle

INSTALLING OFFICER:

HON. ROWAN D. WILSON

CHIEF JUDGE

NEW YORK STATE COURT OF APPEALS

Cocktails: 5:30 pm • Dinner & Program: 7:00 pm

Business Attire

Reservations: \$190 per person

Early Reservations: \$165 per person through May 12

Trump's social media company soars in its first day of trading on Nasdaq

By The Associated Press

Shares of Donald Trump's social media company jumped more than 30% in the first day of trading on the Nasdaq, boosting the value of Trump's large holdings in the company as well as the smaller stakes of fans who purchased shares as a show of support for the former president.

Trump Media & Technology Group Corp. merged Monday with a blank-check company called Digital World Acquisition Corp. Trump Media, which runs the social media platform Truth Social, has now taken Digital World's place on the Nasdaq stock exchange.

Before trading began, Trump Media had a market value of about \$6.8 billion, a figure that will rise significantly if the gains in the shares hold. The shares are trading under the ticker symbol "DJT." Trump holds a nearly 60% ownership stake in the company. As of 12:00 p.m. ET, the shares were up 34% to \$67.

The stock created such a frenzy that Nasdaq briefly halted its trading just two minutes after it began for the day.

Many of Trump Media's investors are small-time investors either trying to support Trump or aiming to cash in on the mania, instead of big institutional and professional investors. Those shareholders helped the stock of Digital World more than double this year in anticipation of the merger going through.

Truth Social launched in February 2022, one year after Trump was banned from major social platforms including Facebook and X, formerly Twitter, following the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol. He's since been reinstated to both but has stuck with Truth Social.

On Truth Social Tuesday, #DJT and the ticker of Digital World were two of the top trending topics in posts. Truth Social users were posting about being shareholders or seeking tips on how to buy shares.

One user urged conservatives to "get behind the DJT stock and sent it over \$100 per share" to "drive the liberals insane!" Another declared: "Get yourself a piece of #DJT stock if your a true MAGA supporter."

A day before, Trump Media CEO Devin Nunes, a former House Republican, said, "As a public company, we will passionately pursue our vision to build a movement to reclaim the Internet from Big Tech censors."

Despite the enthusiasm, investors could experience a bumpy ride. For one, they're betting on a



Pedestrians walk past the Nasdaq building in New York on Tuesday, March 26, 2024. Donald Trump's social media company begins trading publicly Tuesday. Trump Media & Technology Group Corp. was acquired Monday by a blank-check company called Digital World Acquisition Corp. Trump Media, which runs the social media platform Truth Social, now takes Digital World's place on the Nasdaq stock exchange.

AP Photo/Peter Morgan

company with vague prospects of turning a profit. Trump Media lost \$49 million in the first nine months of last year, when it brought in just \$3.4 million in revenue and had to pay \$37.7 million in interest expenses.

In a recent regulatory filing, the company cited the high rate of failure for new social media platforms, as well as the company's expectation that it will lose money on its operations "for the foreseeable future" as risks for investors.

Research firm Similarweb estimates that Truth Social had roughly 5 million active mobile and web users in February. That's far below TikTok's more than 2 billion and Facebook's 3 billion — but still higher than other "alt-tech" rivals like Parler.

However, Trump Media has said it doesn't keep track of some numbers that rivals use as key measures of their performance, such as average

revenue per user or active user accounts. It says it wants to focus on the long-term instead of "short-term decision-making."

For the long term, though, skeptics see struggles ahead for a company that's estimated to have far fewer users than rivals in a business where gaining a critical mass is key.

"I think there is a possibility of, sooner or later, the stock price falling by 95%," said Jay Ritter, a professor and expert on initial public offerings of stock at the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business.

Trump would undoubtedly disagree with that assessment. On Monday, he told reporters that "Truth Social is doing very well. It's hot as a pistol and doing great." On Tuesday, he posted "I LOVE TRUTH SOCIAL, I LOVE THE TRUTH!," on the platform.

So far, investors' bet on the former president and Truth Social have paid off. But the company

has acknowledged that there are risks associated with Trump's outsized influence.

Trump Media, which is based in Palm Beach, Florida, said in a regulatory filing that it "is highly dependent on the popularity and presence of President Trump." If the former president were to limit or discontinue his relationship with the company for any reason, including due to his campaign to regain the presidency, the company "would be significantly disadvantaged."

Acknowledging Trump's involvement in numerous legal proceedings, the company noted that "an adverse outcome in one or more" of the cases could negatively affect Trump Media and Truth Social.

Another risk, the company said, was that as a controlling stockholder, Trump would be entitled to vote his shares in his own interest, which may not always be in the interests of all the shareholders generally.

New York City to send 800 more officers to police subway fare-beating

By The Associated Press

New York City plans to intensify a crackdown on subway fare-beating by sending at least 800 police officers specifically to keep watch on turnstiles, officials announced Monday.

It's the latest in a string of recent moves to address concerns about safety and unruliness in the nation's busiest subway system. Hours after the announcement, a person was shoved onto the tracks in East Harlem as a train was approaching the station. The train could not stop and the person was struck and was pronounced dead at the scene, the New York Police Department said.

A 45-year-old man was taken into custody. NYPD said the incident was unprovoked.

The NYPD said earlier Monday it plans to deploy hundreds of uniformed and plainclothes officers this week to deter fare evasion.

"The tone of law and order starts at the turnstiles," department Transit Chief Michael Kemper said at a news conference. Chief of Patrol John Chell said the additional officers would fan out to various stations, based on crime, ridership statistics and community complaints.

Data shows the crackdown on fare-skippers is already under way. Over 1,700 people have been arrested on a charge of turnstile-jumping so far this year, compared to 965 at this time in 2023. Police have issued fare evasion tickets to over 28,000 people so far this year.

A single subway ride is \$2.90, though multi-



Police officers patrol in the passageway connecting New York City's Port Authority bus terminal and the Times Square subway station, Dec. 12, 2017. New York City plans to intensify a crackdown on subway fare-beating by sending at least 800 police officers specifically to keep watch on turnstiles, officials announced Monday, March 25, 2024.

AP Photo/Seth Wenig, File

ple-ride and monthly passes can cut the cost. Officials have complained for years that fare evasion

costs the city's transit system hundreds of millions of dollars a year. However, the policing of turn-

stile-jumpers has drawn scrutiny of tickets and arrests that disproportionately affected Black and Hispanic people, at least in some past years.

Police and Mayor Eric Adams, a former transit officer himself, in recent weeks have suggested some links between fare-skipping and violence on the trains.

Subway safety fears have proven difficult to put to rest since people in New York and other cities emerged from COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns to a 2021 spurt in crime.

After taking office in 2022, Adams rolled out a plan to send more police, mental health clinicians and social service outreach workers into the subways.

Police reports of major crimes in the transit system dropped nearly 3% from 2022 to 2023, and officials said Monday that overall crime so far this month is down 15% compared to last year.

But worries ratcheted up after some shootings and slashings in the last few months, prompting the NYPD to say in February that it was boosting underground patrols. Earlier this month, Gov. Kathy Hochul — like Adams, a Democrat — announced she was sending National Guard troops to help conduct random bag checks in the underground system.

Hours before Monday's news conference, a man was stabbed multiple times on a subway train in a dispute over smoking, police said. A suspect was arrested.

2ND DEPARTMENT/ PUBLIC LEGAL NOTICES

CITATION
FILE NO.: 2021-1421/C CITATION THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK BY THE GRACE OF GOD, FREE AND INDEPENDENT TO: EDWARD J. SITTler, JR., MARILYN NICHOLSON, ES-TATE OF CAROL CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, ANGELO MAGNOTTA, VIRGINIA ANN JAHRMARKT, NANCY ELAINE WEBB, DOUGLAS WEBB, CAROLYN SCHONE, JUDY PECHULIS-GARCIA, LINDA PECHULIS, JULIENNE RYAN, WAL-TER WILLIAM PECHULIS, JR., DAVID SMOREN, ESQ., ALAN BERNSTEIN, AT-TORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK THE UNKNOWN DISTRIB-UTEES, LEGATEES, DEVISEES, HEIRS AT LAW AND ASSIGNEES OF SUSAN K. SITTler, DECEASED, OR THEIR ES-TATES, IF ANY THERE BE, WHOSE NAMES, PLACES OF RESIDENCE AND POST OFFICE ADDRESSES ARE UN-KNOWN TO THE PETITIONER AND CANNOT WITH DUE DILIGENCE BE ASCERTAINED A COPY OF THIS CI-TATION AND THE ACCOUNTING, AS WELL AS ALL AMENDMENTS TO IT, IF ANY, SHALL BE SERVED ON THE GUARDIAN AD LITEM, RICHARD MI-CHAEL GUTIERREZ, ESQ. BEING THE PERSONS INTERESTED AS CREDI-TORS, LEGATEES, DISTRIBUTEES OR OTHERWISE IN THE ESTATE OF SUSAN K. SITTler, DECEASED, WHO AT THE TIME OF DEATH WAS A RESIDENT OF 84-59 GOLDINGTON COURT, MIDDLE VILLAGE, NY 11379, IN THE COUN-TY OF QUEENS, STATE OF NEW YORK. SEND GREETING: UPON THE PETITION OF LOIS M. ROSENBLATT, PUBLIC AD-MINISTRATOR OF QUEENS COUN-TY, WHO MAINTAINS HER OFFICE AT 88-11 SUTPHIN BOULEVARD, JAMAICA, QUEENS COUNTY, NEW YORK 11435, AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF SUSAN K. SITTler, DE-CEASED, YOU AND EACH OF YOU ARE HEREBY CITED TO SHOW CAUSE BE-FORE THE SURROGATE AT THE SUR-ROGATE'S COURT OF THE COUN-TY OF QUEENS, TO BE HELD AT THE QUEENS GENERAL COURTHOUSE, 6TH FLOOR, 88-11 SUTPHIN BOULE-VARD, JAMAICA, CITY AND STATE OF NEW YORK, ON THE 2ND DAY OF MAY, 2024 AT 9:30 O'CLOCK IN THE FORE-NOON, WHY THE ACCOUNT OF PRO-CEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC ADMIN-ISTRATOR OF QUEENS COUNTY, AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF SAID DECEASED, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED, SHOULD NOT BE JUDI-CIALLY SETTLED, AND WHY THE SUR-ROGATE SHOULD NOT FIX AND AL-Low A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION TO GERARD J. SWEENEY, ESQ., FOR LEGAL SERVICES REnDERED TO PETITIONER HEREIN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$117,858.94 LESS \$4,405.00 PREVIOUSLY PAID AND THAT THE COURT FIX THE FAIR AND REASONABLE ADDITIONAL FEE FOR ANY SERVICES TO BE REnDERED BY GERARD J. SWEENEY, ESQ., HERE-AFTER IN CONNECTION WITH PRO-CEEDINGS ON KINSHIP, CLAIMS ETC., PRIOR TO ENTRY OF A FINAL DE-CREE ON THIS ACCOUNTING IN THE AMOUNT OF 3.5% OF ASSETS OR IN-COME COLLECTED AFTER THE DATE OF THE WITHIN ACCOUNTING; AND WHY THE SURROGATE SHOULD NOT FIX AND ALLOW AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO ONE PERCENT ON SAID

SCHEDULES OF THE TOTAL ASSETS ON SCHEDULES A, A1, AND A2 PLUS ANY ADDITIONAL MONIES RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT TO THE DATE OF THIS ACCOUNT, AS THE FAIR AND REASONABLE AMOUNT PAYABLE TO THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC ADMINIS-TRATOR FOR THE EXPENSES OF SAID OFFICE PURSUANT TO S.C.P.A. SEC. 1106(3); AND WHY THE PETITION-ER SHOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO RETAIN THE SUM OF \$75,000.00 TO SATISFY THE CONTINGENT AND POSSIBLE CLAIM OF ALAN BERN-STEIN AND DAVID SMOREN, ESQ., FOR A PERIOD OF 6 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE DECREE TO BE SET-TLED HEREON; AND WHY, UPON SER-VICE ON THE PETITIONER OF AN OR-DER FROM THE NEW YORK SUPREME COURT FIXING THE LEGAL FEES AND COMMISSIONS OF ALAN BERNSTEIN AND DAVID SMOREN, ESQ., FOR SER-VICES RENDERED TO THE DECEDENT, PETITIONER SHOULD NOT BE FUR-THER AUTHORIZED TO PAY ALAN BERNSTEIN AND DAVID SMOREN, ESQ., SAID AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$75,000.00; AND WHY IF ALAN BERN-STEIN AND DAVID SMOREN, ESQ., SHOULD FAIL TO OBTAIN AN OR-DER FROM THE NEW YORK SUPREME COURT FIXING HIS LEGAL FEE AND COMMISSIONS FOR SERVICES REnDERED TO THE DECEDENT WITHIN SIX MONTHS FROM THE NOTICE OF EN-TRY OF THE DECREE TO BE SETTLED HEREON, THE AMOUNT RETAINED BY THE PETITIONER SHALL BE DISTRIB-UTED AS SET FORTH IN THE PETITION; AND WHY THE CLAIM OF JULIENNE RYAN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,557.25 SHOULD NOT BE PAID; AND WHY EACH OF YOU CLAIMING TO BE A DISTRIBUTE OF THE DECEDENT SHOULD NOT ESTABLISH PROOF OF YOUR KINSHIP; AND WHY THE BAL-ANCE OF SAID FUNDS SHOULD NOT BE PAID TO SAID ALLEGED DISTRIB-UTEES UPON PROOF OF KINSHIP, OR DEPOSITED WITH THE COMMISSION-ER OF FINANCE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK SHOULD SAID ALLEGED DISTRIB-UTEES DEFAULT HEREIN, OR FAIL TO ESTABLISH PROOF OF KINSHIP, DATED, ATTESTED AND SEALED 7TH DAY OF MARCH, 2024 HON. PETER J. KELLY SURROGATE, QUEENS COUN-TY JANET EDWARDS TUCKER CHIEF CLERK GERARD J. SWEENEY, ESQ. (718) 459-9000 1981 MARCUS AVENUE, SUITE 200 LAKE SUCCESS, NEW YORK 11042 NOTICE: THIS CITATION IS SERVED UPON YOU AS REQUIRED BY LAW. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO APPEAR; HOWEVER, IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR IT WILL BE ASSUMED YOU DO NOT OBJECT TO THE RELIEF RE-QUESTED. YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE AN ATTORNEY APPEAR FOR YOU, AND YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MAY REQUEST A COPY OF THE FULL ACCOUNT FROM THE PETITIONER OR PETITIONER'S ATTORNEY ACCOUNT-ING CITATION

CITATION
SURROGATE'S COURT, QUEENS COUNTY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, BY THE GRACE OF GOD FREE AND INDEPENDENT FILE NO. 2006-417/E TO: BRIAN MAURICE BOUDREAU, IF LIVING, AND IF DEAD TO HIS HEIRS AT LAW, NEXT OF KIN,

DISTRIBUTEES, LEGATEES, EXECU-TORS, ADMINISTRATORS, ASSIGN-EEES AND SUCCESSORS IN INTEREST WHOSE NAMES ARE UNKNOWN AND CANNOT BE ASCERTAINED AFTER DUE DILIGENCE BEING PERSONS IN-TERESTED AS CREDITORS, LEGATEES, DEVISEES, BENEFICIARIES, DISTRIBU-TEES OR OTHERWISE OF THE ESTATE OF DAVID C. BOUDREAU DECEASED, WHO AT THE TIME OF DEATH RESID-ED AT 9 EAST 10TH ROAD, BROAD CHANNEL, NEW YORK, 11693. A PE-TITION HAVING BEEN DULY FILED BY KAREN BROWN, WHO IS DOMI-CILED AT 78-41 73RD PLACE, GLEN-DALE, NEW YORK 11385. YOU ARE HEREBY CITED TO SHOW CAUSE BE-FORE THE SURROGATE'S COURT, QUEENS COUNTY, AT 88-11 SUTPHIN BLVD., JAMAICA, NEW YORK, ON MAY 9, 2024, AT 9:30 A.M. WHY THE COURT SHOULD NOT GRANT AN ORDER AU-THORIZING THE LAW OFFICES OF LAWRENCE P. BIONDI, AS ESCROW AGENT FOR THE ESTATE OF DAVID C. BOUDREAU, DECEASED TO: 1. ALLO-CATE THE ENTIRE PROCEEDS FROM SUCH SETTLEMENT TO THE DECE-DENT'S WRONGFUL DEATH; 2. DIS-ALLOW DISTRIBUTION TO THE DECE-DENT'S SONS, DAVID P. BOUDREAU AND BRIAN M. BOUDREAU; 3. ALLO-CATE AND DISTRIBUTE THE REMAIN-ING BALANCE OF \$646,259.99 AS FOL-LOWS: THE SUM OF \$305,034.71 TO THE ESTATE OF DANA BOUDREAU, POST-DECEASED SPOUSE, REPRESENTING HER DISTRIBUTIVE SHARE PURSUANT TO EPTL 5.4-4, BY KAR-EN BROWN AS ADMINISTRATOR; THE SUM OF \$166,088.82 TO PATRICK D. BOUDREAU, SON, REPRESENTING HIS DISTRIBUTIVE SHARE PURSU-ANT TO EPTL 5.4-4; AND THE SUM OF \$175,136.46 TO JAMES C. BOUDREAU, SON, REPRESENTING HIS DISTRIBU-TIVE SHARE PURSUANT TO EPTL 5.4-4 TO BE PAID FROM THE PROCEEDS CURRENTLY HELD IN THE ESCROW ACCOUNT OF LAWRENCE P. BIONDI, ESQ.; 4. DISALLOW THE REIMBURSE-MENT OF THE FUNERAL EXPENSES TO THE PETITIONER, KAREN BROWN, AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF DANA BOUDREAU, IN LIGHT OF KAREN BROWN, PATRICK DAVID BOU-DREAU, AND JAMES CONNOR BOU-DREAU WAIVING REIMBURSEMENT OF THE FUNERAL EXPENSES; 5. MOD-IFY THE RESTRICTIONS TO ALLOW THE SETTLEMENT OF THE AFORE-SAID WRONGFUL DEATH ACTION AGAINST THE DEFENDANTS, SOUTH NASSAU COMMUNITIES HOSPI-TAL, ORLIN AND COHEN ORTHOPE-DIC ASSOCIATES, LLP AND MICHAEL SHAPIRO, M.D.; 6. DISPENSE WITH THE FILING OF A BOND; 7. JUDICIAL-LY SETTLE THE ACCOUNT OF KAREN BROWN AS ADMINISTRATOR DBN; AND 8. SUCH FURTHER RELIEF AS TO THIS COURT SEEMS JUST AND PROP-ER. DATED, ATTESTED AND SEALED, MARCH 18, 2024 SEAL HON. PETER J. KELLY ACTING SURROGATE JAN-ET EDWARDS TUCKER CHIEF CLERK MEREDITH CHESLER, ESQ. ATTORNEY NAME VISHNICK MCGOVERN MILIZIO LLP (516) 437 4385 3000 MARCUS AVENUE, SUITE 1E9, LAKE SUCCESS, NEW YORK 11042 MCHESLER@VMMLEGAL.COM NOTE: THIS CITATION IS SERVED UPON YOU AS REQUIRED BY LAW. YOU ARE NOT OBLIGED TO APPEAR IN

PERSON. YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE AN ATTORNEY APPEAR FOR YOU. IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR IT WILL BE AS-SUMED THAT YOU DO NOT OBJECT TO THE RELIEF REQUESTED.

DIVORCE
SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK - COUNTY OF BRONX IN-DEX NO. 816342/2021E - DATE SUM-MONS FILED: NOVEMBER 30, 2021 - SUMMONS WITH NOTICE- PLAINTIFF DESIGNATES BRONX COUNTY AS THE PLACE OF TRIAL - THE BASIS OF VEN-UE IS PLAINTIFF'S RESIDENCE. AMA-RO P. BARBOSA, PLAINTIFF, -AGAINST- LIGIA AIDA CEVALLOS, DEFENDANT. --ACTION FOR DIVORCE-- TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO SERVE A NOTICE OF APPEARANCE ON THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEYS WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER THE SER-VICE OF THIS SUMMONS IS COM-PLETE AND IN CASE OF YOUR FAIL-URE TO APPEAR, JUDGMENT WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU BY DEFAULT FOR THE RELIEF DEMANDED IN THE NOTICE SET FORTH BELOW. DATED: NOVEMBER 30, 2021, KRYSTAL PAU-LINO CABANILLAS & ASSOCIATES, P.C., ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF, 120 BLOOMINGDALE ROAD, STE. 400, WHITE PLAINS NY 10605, 914-618-7408. NOTICE: THE NATURE OF THIS ACTION IS TO DISSOLVE THE MAR-RIAGE BETWEEN THE PARTIES, ON THE GROUNDS: DRL SECTION 170 SUBD. (7) - THE RELATIONSHIP BE-TWEEN THE PLAINTIFF AND DEFEN-DANT HAS BROKEN DOWN IRRE-TRIEVABLY FOR PERIOD OF AT LEAST SIX MONTHS. THE RELIEF SOUGHT IS A JUDGMENT OF ABSOLUTE DIVORCE IN FAVOR OF THE PLAINTIFF DISSOLV-ING THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN THE PARTIES IN THIS ACTION. NOTICE OF AUTOMATIC ORDERS. PURSUANT TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW SECTION 236 PART B, SEC. 2, THE PARTIES ARE BOUND BY CERTAIN AUTOMATIC OR-DERS WHICH SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT DURING THE PENDENCY OF THE ACTION. FOR FUR-THER DETAILS YOU SHOULD CON-TACT THE CLERK, SUPREME COURT, 851 GRAND CONCOURSE, BRONX NY 10451, TEL (718) 618-3340. DRL 255 NOTICE. PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT ONCE THE JUDGMENT OF DIVORCE IS SIGNED IN THIS ACTION, BOTH PAR-TIES MUST BE AWARE THAT HE OR SHE WILL NO LONGER BE COVERED BY THE OTHER PARTY'S HEALTH INSUR-ANCE PLAN AND THAT EACH PARTY SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OR HER OWN HEALTH INSURANCE COV-ERAGE, AND MAY BE ENTITLED TO PURCHASE HEALTH INSURANCE ON HIS OR HER OWN THROUGH A COBRA OPTION, IF AVAILABLE. NOTICE OF GUIDELINE MAINTENANCE. PURSU-ANT TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS LAW SECTION 236 PART B, SEC. 6, THERE IS AN OBLIGATION TO AWARD THE GUIDELINE AMOUNT OF MAINTE-NANCE ON INCOME UP TO \$203,000 TO BE PAID BY THE PARTY WITH THE HIGHER INCOME (THE MAINTENANCE PAYOR) TO THE PARTY WITH THE LOWER INCOME (THE MAINTENANCE PAYEE) ACCORDING TO A FORMULA, UNLESS THE PARTIES AGREE OTHER-WISE OR WAIVE THIS RIGHT.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs' lawyer says raids of the rapper's homes were 'excessive' use of military force



In this May 30, 2018, file photo, Sean "Diddy" Combs arrives at the LA Premiere of "The Four: Battle For Stardom" at the CBS Radford Studio Center in Los Angeles. Combs' lawyer said Tuesday, March 26, 2024, that the searches of his Los Angeles and Miami properties by federal authorities in a sex-trafficking investigation were "a gross use of military-level force" and that Combs is "innocent and will continue to fight" to clear his name.

(Photo by Willy Sanjuan/Invision/AP, File)

By Jonathan Landrum
Associated Press
Sean "Diddy" Combs' lawyer said Tuesday that the searches of the rapper's Los Angeles and Miami properties by federal authorities in a sex trafficking investigation were "a gross use of military-level force" and that Combs is "innocent and will continue to fight" to clear his name.
It's the first public state-ment from the music mogul's team since Monday's raids of his homes by Homeland Secu-rity Investigations agents.
"Yesterday, there was a gross overuse of military-level force as search warrants were executed at Mr. Combs' res-idences," said the statement from attorney Aaron Dyer.
"There is no excuse for the excessive show of force and hostility exhibited by authori-ties or the way his children and employees were treated."

The searches were part of an ongoing sex traffick-ing investigation by federal authorities in New York, two law enforcement officials told The Associated Press. The of-ficials were not authorized to publicly discuss details of the investigation and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.
Combs was not detained and spoke to authorities, and neither he nor any family members were arrested, nor has their travel been restricted, according to Dyer's statement.
Dyer said the "unprece-dented ambush" has led to a "premature rush to judgment of Mr. Combs and is nothing more than a witch hunt based on meritless accusations made in civil lawsuits."
"There has been no finding of criminal or civil liability with any of these allegations," Dyer said. "Mr. Combs is in-nocent and will continue to fight every single day to clear his name."
Combs' sons, Justin and Christian "King" Combs, were handcuffed during the raid at their father's residence in Los Angeles. King, 25, is a mu-sic artist whose song "Can't Stop Won't Stop" with Ko-

dak Black topped Billboard's Mainstream R&B Hip-Hop charts in 2022.
Law enforcement conduct-ed the raid Monday at Combs' multimillion-dollar mansion in the affluent Holmby Hills neighborhood in Los Ange-les and his Miami waterfront home. Along with a heavy presence of officers, command trucks were parked outside both properties.
The criminal investigation is a major escalation in the scrutiny of Combs, who has been the defendant in several sexual abuse lawsuits in recent months.

In a lawsuit Combs set-tled the day after it was filed in November, his former pro-tege and girlfriend, the R&B singer Cassie, sued him al-leging years of sexual abuse, including rape. The lawsuit said he forced her to have sex with male prostitutes while he filmed them.

In February, a music pro-ducer filed a lawsuit alleging Combs coerced him to solicit prostitutes and pressured him to have sex with them.
Another of Combs' accus-ers was a woman who said the rap producer raped her two decades ago when she was 17.
Combs and his attorneys have denied all of the lawsuits' allegations.

The AP does not typical-ly name people who say they have been sexually abused un-less they come forward public-ly as Cassie did.

It is not clear whether the search is related to any of the allegations raised in the law-suits.

Combs is among the most influential hip-hop producers and executives of the past three decades. Formerly known as Puff Daddy, he built one of hip-hop's biggest empires, blazing a trail with several entities at-tached to his famous name. He is the founder of Bad Boy Re-cords and a three-time Gram-my winner who has worked with a slew of top-tier artists including Notorious B.I.G., Mary J. Blige, Usher, Lil Kim, Faith Evans and 112.

2ND DEPARTMENT / New Business Formations

STELLAR ALLIANCE LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION: STELLAR ALLIANCE LLC ARTICLES OF ORGA-NIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 02/22/2024. OFFICE LOC: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY DESIGNATED FOR SERVICE OF PROCESS. SSNY SHALL MAIL COPIES OF ANY PROCESS SERVED AGAINST THE LLC TO 3808 UNION STREET, SUITE 2B, FLUSHING, NY 11354 PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE OR ACTIVITY

25-22 30TH AVENUE, LLC
25-22 30TH AVENUE, LLC, ARTS OF ORG. FILED WITH SEC. OF STATE OF NY (SSNY) 9/28/2023. CTY: QUEENS. SSNY DESIG. AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST MAY BE SERVED &

SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO LUCILLE A. ANZALONE PLLC, 213-37 39TH AVE, STE 247, BAYSIDE, NY 11361. GENER-AL PURPOSE

PAUL 4727 REALTY LLC
PAUL 4727 REALTY LLC ARTICLES OF ORG. FILED NY SEC. OF STATE (SSNY) 2/16/2024. OFFICE IN QUEENS CO. SSNY DESIG. AGENT OF LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL COPY OF PROCESS TO 47 MORRIS DRIVE, SYOSSET, NY 11791. PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL PUR-POSE.

BG HEMPSTEAD REALTY LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF BG HEMP-STEAD REALTY LLC ARTS. OF ORG. FILED WITH SECY. OF STATE OF NY

(SSNY) ON 03/13/24. OFFICE LOCA-TION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY DES-IGNATED AS AGENT OF LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO THE LLC, 33-02 SKILLMAN AVE., 5TH FL., C/O BOGOPA SERVICE CORP, LONG ISLAND CITY, NY 11101. PUR-POSE: ANY LAWFUL ACTIVITY.

227 BEACH 122 STREET LLC
227 BEACH 122 STREET LLC, ARTS OF ORG. FILED WITH SEC. OF STATE OF NY (SSNY) 2/6/2024. CTY: QUEENS. SSNY DESIG. AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST MAY BE SERVED & SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO 249 BEACH 119TH ST, ROCKAWAY PARK, NY 11694. GENERAL PURPOSE

41-52 70TH STREET, LLC
41-52 70TH STREET, LLC, ARTS OF ORG. FILED WITH SEC. OF STATE OF NY (SSNY) 10/3/2023. CTY: QUEENS. SSNY DESIG. AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST MAY BE SERVED & SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO 53-05 64TH ST, MASPETH, NY 11378. GENERAL PURPOSE



Our World In Pictures

Mayor Eric Adams met with a group of detainees on Rikers Island on Tuesday, March 26, 2024.
Photo by Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office



2ND DEPARTMENT / New Business Formations

11104 DM GLOBAL INNOVATIONS, LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: DM GLOBAL INNOVATIONS, LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 2/5/2024. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS DAVID A. MARTINEZ 45-36 39TH PLACE APT 4D, SUNNYSIDE, NY, 11104. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215398

11361 QUEEN BEE CREATIONS LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: QUEEN BEE CREATIONS LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 3/7/2024. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS DEBORAH D'ANGELO 41-27 CORPORAL KENNEDY STREET, BAYSIDE, NY, 11361. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215687

11365 EXPRESS HOME INSPECTIONS, LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: EXPRESS HOME INSPECTIONS, LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 8/28/2023. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS GEORGE OCONNOR, 5024 193RD STREET FRESH MEADOWS, NY, 11365. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215126

11375 LIUSQUARE LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: LIUSQUARE LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 2/6/2024. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS THE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, 11211 72ND AVENUE FOREST HILLS, NY, 11375. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215067

11377 CAFE CINEMA LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: CAFE CINEMA LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 10/6/2023. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS JANA ANDREA PLANAS 3930 62ND STREET, APARTMENT 202 WOODSIDE, NY, 11377. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215212

11378 PALM JAIMER LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: PALM JAIMER LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 2/18/2024. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS MEGHA MEHRA 5405 68TH STREET, MASPETH, NY, 11378. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215174

11385 HR GROUP NYC LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: HR GROUP NYC LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 2/6/2024. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS NURY ROBLES 1923 WOODBINE ST APT 2L, RIDGEWOOD, NY, 11385. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215239

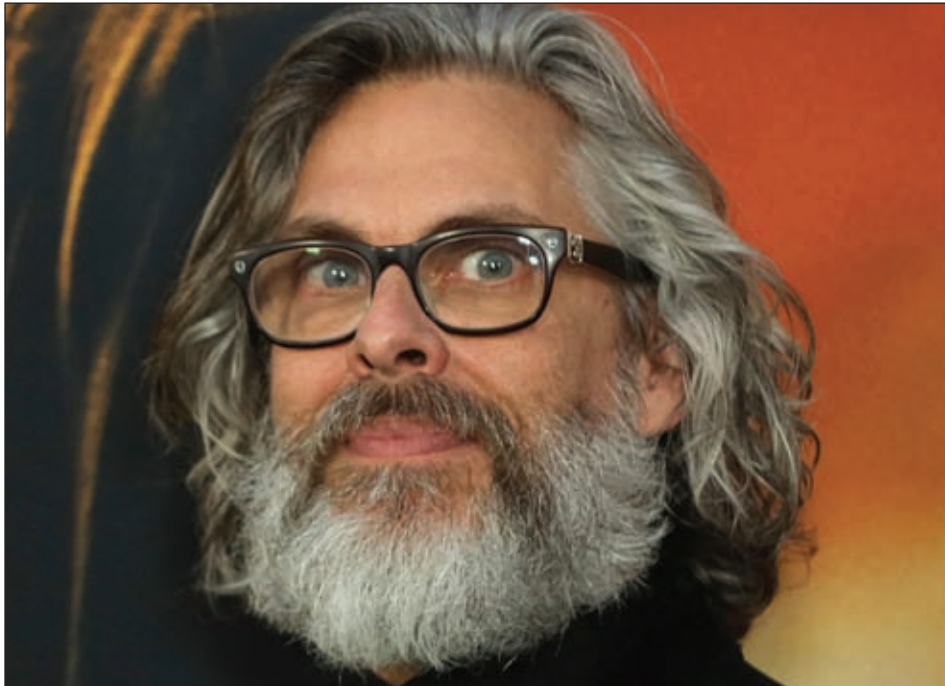
11412 TOP RANKING VENTURES LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: TOP RANKING VENTURES LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 5/15/2023. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS OUIDA NADINE CURTIS-JOHNSON 114-12 204TH STREET, SAINT ALBANS, NY, 11412. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #216212

11416 FEELING AND HEALING SERVICES LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: FEELING AND HEALING SERVICES LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 11/15/2023. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS THE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY 9425 97TH ST., OZONE PARK, NY, 11416. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215303

11433 LIFT N SHIFT TOWING & RECOVERY LLC
NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: LIFT N SHIFT TOWING & RECOVERY LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 12/21/2023. NY OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF THE LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. THE POST OFFICE ADDRESS TO WHICH THE SSNY SHALL MAIL A COPY OF ANY PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC SERVED UPON HIM/HER IS THE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, 180-09 93RD AVENUE JAMAICA, NY, 11433. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE. #215088

To Place a legal ad
contact Gina Osnovich
legal advertising manager
Legals@
queenspublicmedia.com

A Win for AI: Federal Judge Dismisses Parts Of Sarah Silverman’s Lawsuit vs. OpenAI



Michael Chabon attends the LA Premiere of “Star Trek: Picard” at the ArcLight Hollywood on Monday, Jan. 13, 2020, in Los Angeles. Chabon backed Sarah Silverman’s lawsuit against Open AI.

Photo by Willy Sanjuan/Invision/AP

By Ananyaa Bhowmilk
Wealth of Geeks via AP

Federal Judge Araceli Martinez-Olguin dismissed significant portions of Sarah Silverman and several other authors’ lawsuit against OpenAI — the creators of ChatGPT. On Feb. 12, U.S. District Judge Martinez-Olguin refused to allow certain claims that the authors had made in the complaint.

The federal judge’s decision echoes those made by another judge in California dealing with a similar case against Meta.

Martinez-Olguin dismissed one of the major claims that the authors had made: that all the answers ChatGPT generates are infringing work made of information obtained through copyright violation. Basically, everything ChatGPT creates violates the rights of the copyright holders of the works the company used to train its AI system.

The Details of the Case

Last year, Sarah Silverman, backed by authors like Michael Chabon and Ta-Nehisi Coates, sued Artificial Intelligence firm OpenAI. Last month, the presiding judge dismissed the claims of negligence, unjust enrichment, Digital Millennium Copyright Act violations, and vicarious copyright infringement. The authors were given until March 13 to amend their complaint and return to court. At the time of this writing, no public report has revealed whether or not they did so.

This is the second case of copyright infringement by writers against arti-

cial intelligence that courts have partially dismissed. Last November, Judge Vince Chhabria also dismissed portions of Sarah Silverman’s allegations against Meta.

Despite the authors’ claims, OpenAI states that results generated by ChatGPT are not similar enough to copyrighted materials to violate the holders’ rights. Judge Martinez-Olguin echoed a similar sentiment and stated the authors “fail to explain what the outputs entail or allege that any particular output is substantially similar — or similar at all — to their books.”

The courts have yet to state whether these companies’ unauthorized use of copyrighted material as training fodder violated copyright laws. The tech giants have refuted such claims and insist the fair use doctrine protects their usage. The companies also raised concerns about how such lawsuits may threaten the overall growth of the AI industry.

Larger Battle Against AI

Sarah Silverman and Paul Tremblay’s battles against AI are just the tip of the iceberg. Groups of creators, from visual artists to musicians and writers, launched a multipronged legal war against multiple major tech companies. These creators share the same concern — tech giants’ unauthorized use of their material to train their systems is copyright infringement on a massive scale.

Authors like George R.R. Martin, John Grisham and Jodi Picoult also joined the



Sarah Silverman arrives at the premiere of “History of the World, Part II” on Monday, Feb. 27, 2023, at Hollywood Legion Theater in Los Angeles.

Photo by Richard Shotwell/Invision/AP

fray last year with lawsuits of their own.

Microsoft Roped Into the Legal Battle

In November last year, nonfiction writer Julian Sancton filed suit against Microsoft in New York federal court. Like the other prolific lawsuits, Sancton claims that OpenAI engaged in “rampant theft” of copyrighted material to train its AI system.

Additionally, the claim alleges that Microsoft’s active and critical support enabled such violations of artists’ rights. It notes that Microsoft played a “key role” and provided “critical assistance,” addressing the utilization of tech like Microsoft Azure while knowing about OpenAI’s manipulation of licensed material to develop the system.

According to Sancton’s claims, Micro-

soft has been “deeply involved in the training, development, and commercialization” of these systems. They provided the developers with Azure — a specialized computing system that played a key role in the development of the model.

An Artist’s Right to Pursue Lawsuits

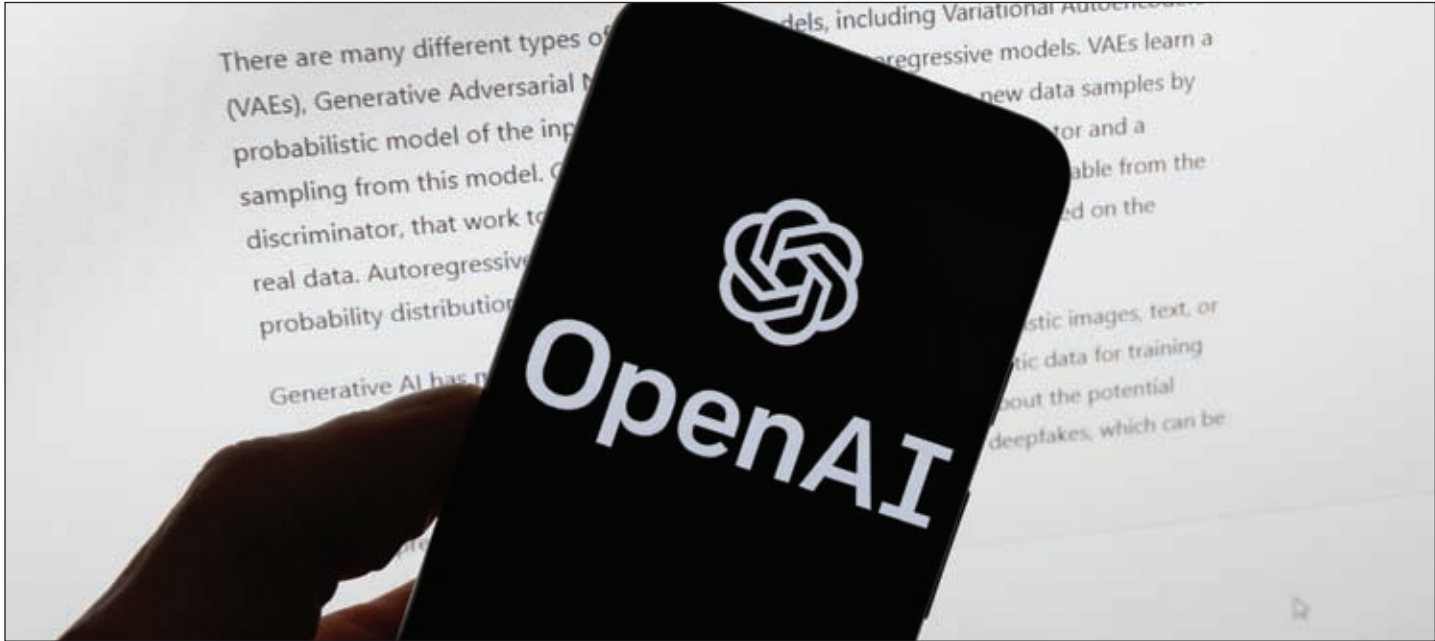
While the situation may seem grim for creatives, they have secured small victories. Last year, a group of visual artists filed a lawsuit against StabilityAI, Midjourney, and others, asserting that the companies had violated copyrights by using the artists’ works to train their AI without their knowledge or proper compensation.

The companies retaliated, saying that the suit targeted their right to free speech by hindering the creation of art. They asked for an early dismissal of the suit, claiming they were entitled to First Amendment defense under the California statute. Judge William Orrick dismissed their claims of being entitled to First Amendment protection. He said the case is in the public interest.

The Case of Books3

Last year, journalist Alex Reisner revealed the existence of Books3 — a once-searchable book data set. In his report for The Atlantic, he revealed this data set has over 170,000 books, including ones by Zadie Smith, Margaret Atwood, Stephen King, and Michael Pollan. Companies like Bloomberg and Meta used this data set to train their AI models.

Books3 echoes the spirit of past data sets, including ones OpenAI trained its model on, like Books1 and Books2. Though independent AI researcher Shawn Presser created Books3 for scientific purposes, the existence of this shadow library reveals the sheer breadth of the problem and shows how AI firms often ignore artists’ rights in favor of advancing generative AI.



The OpenAI logo is seen on a mobile phone in front of a computer screen displaying output from ChatGPT, March 21, 2023, in Boston.

AP Photo/Michael Dwyer, File

Sheldon Silver’s lonely last days reveal isolation of dying federal prisoners

By **Reuven Blau**
THE CITY

Sheldon Silver, who was for years one of the most powerful politicians in the state before he was taken down by a corruption conviction, spent his last days struggling to get out of his prison bed while his wife was barred from visiting him as he lay dying.

Silver lost nearly 60 pounds over the last six months of his life before he passed away from cardiac arrest inside Nashoba Valley Medical Center in Ayer, Massachusetts on Jan. 24, 2022, according to his Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) file THE CITY obtained via a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. He was 77 years old.

Prison medical staff transferred him from the Federal Medical Center Devens, also in Ayer, on Jan. 14, 2022 to Nashoba after he exhibited “altered mental status changes,” records show.

The move came after the former Lower East Side political powerbroker spent weeks confined to a bed while suffering debilitating back pain and severe diarrhea, the documents reveal.

Even a politically influential Jewish criminal reform advocacy group was unable to assist as he became so weak he relied on fellow prisoners who doubled as health aides while confined to a bed.

“What happened with Shelly Silver was absolutely tragic and wrong,” said Rabbi Moshe Margaretten, president of Tzedek Association, which was the lead advocate for multiple people who were granted clemency in the last days of the Trump administration.

“Whatever anyone will say about Shelly, it is indisputable that he did not deserve a death sentence,” he added.

Tzedek desperately tried to get him released to home confinement under the CARES Act, which was passed during the pandemic. The association raised money on his behalf and hired attorney James Loonam, a former federal prosecutor, to plead his case. They paid him \$150,000, according to Margaretten.

But Loonam was unable to convince the Manhattan U.S. Attorney’s office, which prosecuted Silver, according to Margaretten. Loonam declined to comment.

In the community hospital, doctors intubated Silver after his oxygen level dropped, the documents reveal.

But prison medical staff told Silver’s wife, Rosa, she couldn’t visit him there because the hospital at the time only allowed guests of patients in “end of life situations,” prison medical records show.

He died four days later.

‘It Doesn’t Need to Happen Like That’

While at the peak of his powers Silver was able to single handedly torpedo massive projects like the West Side stadium envisioned to help lure the Olympics.

But in the months before his death, he wasn’t able to convince federal prosecutors or the judge overseeing his case, Valerie Caproni, to temporarily let him out as part of a mass release during the pandemic.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Congress passed the CARES Act which permitted the BOP to transfer over 13,000 nonviolent offenders who were potentially vulnerable to COVID-19 to home confinement.

A year later, in May 2021, Silver, who was suffering from a host of medical ailments, was let out of prison for two days under that program. The decision was made after the warden of Otisville Correctional Facility, the minimum security prison where he was housed at the time, recommended that he be released based on his poor health.

Silver insisted on spending the first night at home “in his own bed” in Lower Manhattan according to a person familiar with his case.

But the next day he was driven to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in Washington Heights by friends and family.

“He was really, really sick,” Margaretten said.

Still, federal prosecutors opposed his release, according to the person involved in his behind-the-scenes appeal.

“He was released and returned because of po-

litical pressure,” Margaretten charged.

Lauren Scarff, a spokesperson for Manhattan U.S. Attorney Damien Williams, declined comment.

After two days out, he was moved directly from Columbia Presbyterian to FMC Devers, described online as an “administrative security federal medical center” — basically a prison hospital.

His medical condition steadily declined once back in custody, the FOIA records show.

Silver’s official prison file was heavily redacted with all the names of his doctors removed.

But it shows that before he was sent to Nashoba hospital, he was unable to get out of bed even to use the bathroom. His mobility was limited by a fractured back he apparently suffered because of severe osteoporosis, the documents state.

At one point, he listed his pain as “12” on a scale of one through 10, the records show.

The documents show Silver’s wife was periodically updated on his status, but was not allowed to visit him in his last days. She did not respond to requests for comment.

His family decided against seeking a formal compassionate release because that process typically drags on for at least a few months, Margaretten said.

Silver’s poor health should have made him an excellent candidate for compassionate release, according to one leading advocate.

“It doesn’t need to happen like that,” said Mary Price, general counsel with Families Against Mandatory Minimums, a nonprofit that works toward a “more fair and effective justice system.”

His sudden transfer back to prison after two days out also “raises a lot of questions,” she added, noting most prisoners under similar circumstances were allowed to stay out longer.

When a prisoner is near the end of their life or suffering from serious medical ailments, like Silver, the BOP is supposed to notify their defense attorney and immediate family, according to provisions in the First Step Act, prison reform legislation signed into law by former President Donald Trump in December 2018.

The BOP can also file a motion with the judge handling the case to ask for compassionate release, according to the federal law.

But that rarely happens, according to Price.

“The BOP hasn’t had a good track record of doing those things,” she said.

During the pandemic, some 4,500 people were granted compassionate release by the courts. But only 1% of those were because of motions filed by the BOP, Price said, noting the majority were filed by prisoners themselves.

Also, the overwhelming majority of compassionate release requests from people in federal prisons are denied, according to federal data. The rejection rate is typically at least 80% since September, the data posted online shows.

As for Silver, he clung to his faith as an Orthodox Jew while locked up, the documents reveal.



Former State Assembly speaker Sheldon Silver left Federal Court while he faced corruption charges.
Credit: DNAinfo/Lisha Arino

He regularly attended religious services and at one point refused to be showered on Saturday, the Jewish day of rest. In one case, exasperated medical staff looked up the laws of sabbath and insisted that allowing them to clean him up would not violate the stringent rules because it was a health matter.

In another example, Silver refused to complete a written section of a mental health evaluation because it was the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, records show.

As for his last day, doctors in Nashoba hospital removed his breathing tube after his condition appeared to improve, documents reveal.

But Silver went into cardiac arrest several hours later and doctors were unable to revive him, the medical file states.

A BOP spokesperson denied Silver’s wife was barred from visiting — and simultaneously blamed the Nashoba facility.

THE CITY shared the agency’s internal document stating that Rosa Silver could not visit her husband at the hospital.

In response, BOP spokesperson Donald Murphy stated: “There is no evidence to suggest” that she was blocked.

“The information you provided demonstrates FMC Devens’ visiting procedures were communicated to the appropriate individuals while he was at an outside hospital,” he added.

Silver’s final days are not uncommon, according to prison activists and experts, who have long decried an aging population.

In 2015, the BOP issued a report “examining the impact” of people in its custody 50 and older.

The report found that so-called “aging images” cost an average of \$24,538 to incarcerate, 8% more than the average cost of \$22,676 to incarcerate younger people.

Additionally, the review concluded that BOP facilities don’t have “appropriate staffing levels to address the needs of aging inmates, and they provide limited training for this purpose.”

Some facilities, like Devers where Silver was

housed, rely on healthy incarcerated people to work as de facto health aides, the report noted.

At the time, the BOP only employed 36 social workers for nearly 165,000 sentenced people.

The prison population over the age of 55, nationally, has grown by 280% between 1999 and 2016, according to a Pew report.

“There are a large number of people dying behind bars who don’t need to,” said Nishi Kumar, head of Medical-Legal Projects at the Medical Justice Alliance, a nonprofit which assists incarcerated people across the country apply for compassionate release or medical parole.

The BOP doesn’t list online how many people die in its custody each year, according to academics who specialize in the issue and prisoner-rights groups.

“There’s very little visibility,” Kumar said.

Patients like Silver and their family members aren’t typically able to view their own medical records, she added.

“That’s a huge problem,” she said, “it’s very hard to monitor diagnoses and treatment plans or advocate for yourself or a loved one.”

Ups and Downs

Silver’s death was the end to a years-long court battle over his case and push for an early release and presidential pardon.

In January 2015, Silver, who was first elected to the New York State Assembly in 1976, was arrested and charged with taking close to \$4 million in payments in exchange for political favors on behalf of Dr. Robert N. Taub, a cancer researcher, and two real-estate developers.

Silver, who’d gone from being the son of a hardware store owner to one of the most feared politicians in New York, was convicted on all seven counts against him eight months later.

Caproni, the judge in his case, initially sentenced him to 12 years in prison.

But the case was overturned on appeal after the Supreme Court limited the legal definition of corruption in a separate Virginia case.

He was retried in 2018 and convicted again — and sentenced to seven years in prison. In 2019, he once again successfully appealed one portion of his conviction, which slightly reduced his prison sentence.

But he begged the judge to keep him out, citing his poor health.

“Your honor, I do not want to die in prison,” Silver wrote to Caproni.

She cited his corruption conviction and ruled that a non-jail sentence would not be “appropriate.”

Earlier this week, Kevin Ring, who directs state and federal criminal justice advocacy for Arnold Ventures (which is also a funder of THE CITY), said it was particularly galling that Silver’s wife was unable to visit him at the end.

“What’s happening here? What’s the public safety component of this?” asked Ring, who did time himself in federal prison for his role in the Jack Abramoff corruption case.

“What would be the harm to the public?” he added. “This seems unnecessarily cruel and not connected at all to public safety.”

THE CITY is an independent, nonprofit news outlet dedicated to hard-hitting reporting that serves the people of New York.

Bureau of Prisons Health Services Clinical Encounter - Administrative Note			
Inmate Name:	SILVER, SHELDON	Reg #:	71915-054
Date of Birth:	02/13/1944	Sex:	M
Note Date:	01/18/2022 12:37	Provider:	[REDACTED] RN/UR
Admin Note - Family contact encounter performed at Health Services.			
Administrative Notes:			
ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE 1		Provider: [REDACTED] RN/UR	
I spoke with patient's wife, Mrs. [REDACTED] on the telephone. We discussed his current medical status at the outside hospital. She stated that she has been in contact the doctors at Nashoba Hospital ICU over the weekend and today. She asked about possible in-person visitation. I explained the authorization process here at Devers.			
After speaking with Nashoba ICU staff, I talked to Mrs. [REDACTED] again and explained that Nashoba is currently only allowing patient visitation during end of life situations. She stated that she understood and was glad Mr. Silver is not in that situation now.			
Coplay Required: No		Cosign Required: Yes	
Telephone/Verbal Order: No			
Completed by [REDACTED] RN/UR on 01/18/2022 12:45			
Requested to be cosigned by [REDACTED] (MAT) MD.			
Cosign documentation will be displayed on the following page.			

Sheldon Silver’s wife, Rosa, was blocked from visiting him at a private hospital four days before he passed away, according to an internal memo from the Bureau of Prisons.

Credit: Obtained via Freedom of Information Request

Cop killed during traffic stop in Queens

Continued from page 1

day, Adams blamed the shooting on what he called a "recidivist problem."

"We've been talking about the severe recidivism of dangerous people over and over again, on how do we stop them from coming into our streets – there's a total disregard," said Adams. "These are bad people who are doing bad things to good people. This is the good guys against the bad guys."

Adams has long argued that recidivism is one of the main drivers of crime in the city, which he reiterated on Tuesday.

"A focus must be this recidivism, severe mental health illness, random acts of violence," he said. "That is the mission, and those are the policies this administration has put in place."

In addressing those concerns, Adams said it wasn't a one item issue.

"The term bail has become a popular term but is more than just bail," he said. "We have to properly fund discovery rules. District attorneys are saying that many people are not realizing that there are a large number of cases that are being dropped and dismissed, that's the analysis we need to look at, because they cannot turn up with the discovery fast enough, and so there's some serious cases that they're not prosecuted."

In the hours following Diller's death, Queens officials and community members expressed heartbreak for his young family.

"It takes unimaginable courage to protect and serve New York City, knowing there's a chance you might not make it home to your family at the end of the day," said Borough President Donovan Richards. "NYPD Officer Jonathan Diller was the personification of that courage, and his heroism in making the ultimate



Mayor Eric Adams and NYPD officials announced NYPD Officer Jonathan Diller's death at Jamaica Hospital in Queens on Monday night. Screenshot via NYPD News

sacrifice in the name of public safety will never be forgotten. My heart breaks for his family, friends, colleagues and the entire NYPD. May Officer Diller's memory and legacy of selflessness in service of Far Rockaway families, and our entire city, be eternal."

The shooting occurred just two blocks from the 101st Precinct, and feet from 19-31 Mott

Ave., which is home to the office of several Rockaway elected officials including Councilmember Selvena Brooks-Powers.

"My heart hurts for the young widow and family that lost their loved one tonight," she said in a statement on Monday night.

"Police Officer Jonathan Diller woke up today and left home with intentions to protect and serve, but most of all an intention to return home," she continued. "Unfortunately, due to one single horrific act, his life was cut short. As I spoke to some of the officers, I learned of his courage in the moments after being shot. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones and members of our community who witnessed this cowardly act. Illegal guns have no place on our streets."



The gun found at the scene in the shooting death of NYPD officer Jonathan Diller in Far Rockaway. NYPD News

Opinion: Landmark decision on rideshare vehicles and required insurance coverage

DAVIDOFF LAW

WE ARE YOUR LAWYERS

By Jenny Kiesewetter
Special to the Eagle

In a landmark decision on March 7, 2024, Judge Leverett of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, County of Queens, determined that rideshare vehicles originating within New York City's five boroughs are "transportation network companies" (TNC) covered vehicles for purposes of supplementary uninsured/underinsured motorist (SUM) insurance coverage.

On August 21, 2021, Shante D. Service requested a Lyft ride from Queens to Manhattan for her and two family members. After picking up the three passengers, Lyft driver Artur Nazaryan's car was rear-ended by an unidentified vehicle on the Van Wyck expressway in Queens.

Nazaryan had NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) insurance with Hereford Insurance Company and TNC insurance with Progressive, covering Lyft vehicles. Ms. Service made an uninsured motorist (UM) claim under the Hereford TLC insurance policy and a SUM claim under the Progressive policy.

On July 23, 2023, Hereford tendered its available UM policy to Ms. Service. However, Progressive argued that because the rideshare trip originated within New York City and the accident occurred in New York City, that the TLC – and not TNC – governed Ms. Service's trip.

Specifically, Progressive argued that its

TNC policy for Lyft did not apply as Ms. Service was traveling in a for-hire vehicle – not a TNC vehicle. As such, Progressive asserted that Hereford's for-hire TLC automobile policy was the only available coverage for Ms. Service's losses.

In New York City, a rideshare driver must be authorized by both New York State's TNC regulations as well as New York City's TLC rules. Because of this, NYC rideshare drivers must maintain the state's minimum insurance coverage on their vehicle, which includes at least \$25,000 for uninsured motorist (UM) coverage. If the Lyft driver has picked up a passenger, then these limits increase to include a minimum of at least \$1.25 million in SUM coverage.

In Progressive Insurance Company v. Shante Service et al., filed under Supreme Court, Queens County Index No.: 714418/2023, the court held that the Lyft driver's TNC vehicle was not being used as a "for-hire" TLC automobile within New York City at the time of the accident and denied Progressive's argument that the vehicle was precluded from being afforded the additional SUM coverage. As such, based on the court's decision, Ms. Service is now able to access LYFT's \$1.25 million SUM policy, a big win protecting unsuspecting passengers involved in accidents while in rideshare vehicles from being denied SUM coverage simply because their ride originated and ended within the five boroughs.

Justice Christine Clark named judicial co-chair of Attorney Emeritus Program Advisory Council

By Robert Abruzzese
Queens Daily Eagle

Chief Judge Rowan Wilson announced on Friday the appointment of Hon. Christine Clark as the judicial co-chair of the New York State Attorney Emeritus Program Advisory Council, a role in which she will co-lead alongside attorney and law professor John Feerick.

The AEP, a collaborative initiative between Fordham Law School's Feerick Center for Social Justice and the Office for Justice Initiatives, focuses on recruiting experienced attorneys aged 55 and older to volunteer in pro bono programs. The programs are essential for providing legal services in critical areas such as housing and consumer debt, impacting the lives and well-being of vulnerable New Yorkers, according to court officials.

"Justice Clark is a highly regarded member of New York's bench who has gained wide recognition for her active and enthusiastic support of pro bono programs and other initiatives to help narrow the state's justice gap," said Wilson.

"Her innovative spirit and collaborative approach, combined with her deep understanding of the difficult issues impacting access to justice, will be an asset to the Council's esteemed chair, Mr. Feerick, to the group's distinguished members, to the Attorney Emeritus Program, and, ultimately, to the many struggling New Yorkers who rely on pro bono legal representation in housing, consumer debt and other mat-

ters that profoundly affect their lives and livelihoods," Wilson continued.

Chief Administrative Judge Joseph Zayas commended the appointment and said that Clark's broad experience and leadership qualities were vital to the council's mission. First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George and Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives Edwina Richardson-Mendelson also voiced their support and optimism for the program's future under Clark's co-leadership.

"I have no doubt that Justice Clark, with her many talents and unwavering commitment to equal justice, is up to the task. I am eager to work with her toward that end," said Richardson-Mendelson.

Clark studied at Columbia University and Albany Law School. Her career in law began at Dreyer Boyajian LLP, followed by roles in the Schenectady County district attorney's office, where she worked on DWI cases, sex crimes and child abuse, eventually leading the Special Victims Unit.

Clark's judicial career kicked off in 2005 on the Schenectady City Court bench, before becoming an acting County Court judge, an acting Family Court judge, and then a Schenectady County Family Court judge in 2010. By 2012, she was elected to the State Supreme Court in the Fourth Judicial District, marking her as the second woman to hold that position.

Clark's appointment is effective immediately.