

QUEENS TODAY

JUNE 7, 2024

POLICE ARE ON THE HUNT FOR A gunman they claim tried to rob a 7 train rider in Woodside in May, the Queens Post reported. Cops say that the incident began when a 45-year-old man was changing cars on a moving train as it approached the 69th Street station. Suddenly, he noticed he was being followed by another man in a gray hooded sweatshirt. By the time the victim reached the last car, the unidentified robber walked up to him, pulled out a gun and told him to hand over his backpack. The 45-year-old refused and got off the train at the next stop. The attempted thief stayed on. No one was injured and no arrests have been made.

THE CITY HAS BACKTRACKED ON a plan to install protected bike lanes along a stretch in Northeast Queens after a group of residents living along the first phase of the two-year-old installation plan expressed opposition to the project, Streetsblog reported. Instead, the city will build unprotected lanes and shared lanes along 46th Avenue between Oceania Street and Cloverdale Boulevard after several home owners put up red signs reading "NO BIKE LANES." Transit advocates expressed disappointment in the reversal. "I expected [the Department of Transportation] to follow through on what they committed to," said Laura Shepard, a Queens resident and organizer with Transportation Alternatives. "They're falling behind on their Streets Plan [bike lane construction] targets so I would expect them to want to install every bit of protected bike lane they had already committed to. It's a problem because those lanes were really going to create a seamless spine from the Eastern Queens Greenway to Northern Boulevard, connecting two schools and becoming the east/west spine of this network."

THE NEW YORK METS HAVE ARRIVED in London and are preparing to play a two game set against the Philadelphia Phillies on Saturday and Sunday. The first game kicks off a little after 1 p.m. and the Sunday game will give early risers a rare treat – a 10:10 a.m. start time.

THE MAIN STREET SUBWAY STATION in Flushing is always crowded, but that was especially true after a swarm of bees covered a portion of the station's entrance on Wednesday, ABC7 reported. The swarm had congregated on the top railing of one of the station's four entrances and was spotted buzzing around as commuters made their way through. Though the swarm looked intimidating, most people reportedly kept their distance and no stinging incidents were reported.



City asks judge to halt solitary ban

The Adams administration this week asked a judge to pause the coming implementation of a law banning solitary confinement in the city's jails. AP file photo by Bebetto Matthews

By Jacob Kaye
Queens Daily Eagle

The Adams administration said this week that it plans to mount a legal challenge to a law banning solitary confinement in New York City's jails, around two months before it is supposed to go into effect.

In a filing in federal court late Wednesday, attorneys for City Hall said that they planned to challenge the city's solitary confinement ban, which was vetoed by Mayor Eric Adams but passed into law after the City Council overrode his veto in January.

The Adams administration argued in its filing that implementing the ban on solitary confinement as outlined in the Council's law would

violate the consent judgment in the ongoing civil rights case known as Nunez v. the City of New York.

The city's attorneys called on federal Judge Laura Swain, who oversees the case, to suspend the law until the federal monitor Swain appointed to track the Department of Correction's compliance with the consent judgment has had time to approve its implementation.

The monitor, Steve J. Martin, has previously called into question the DOC's ability to safely implement the law, while also voicing support for its intention.

A spokesperson for the mayor's office pointed to Martin's assessment when asked for comment on the filing.

"As Mayor Adams and the federal monitor have stated, [the ban on solitary confinement] could endanger both our Department of Correction staff and those in our care," the spokesperson said. "The monitor has previously stated that this bill could impede our ability to comply with the Nunez court orders, which is why we are requesting further evaluation from the judge."

During an unrelated interview with DOC Commissioner Lynelle Maginley-Liddie on Wednesday just prior to the city's filing, the commissioner told the Eagle that the agency was "working with the Law Department on [the law's] implementation."

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Queens airport workers call for higher wages as contract deadline approaches

By Ryan Schwach
Queens Daily Eagle

Over 1,000 airport workers between Queens' two airports rallied on Thursday to call for higher pay and increased benefits just weeks before their labor contract runs out at the end of the month.

Workers from both John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports rallied at the South Queens airport arguing that their bosses at the Port Authority should increase their wages and benefits on par with their New Jersey counterparts as the working class employees manage increased costs of living in the city.

The employees are specifically pushing for an increase from their \$19 an hour minimum wage up to \$25 per hour, as well as paid vacations and health benefits that are currently available for New Jersey airport workers at Newark, but not JFK or LGA workers.

They want to see the benefits included in their next contract – the current contract expires on June 30.

"Our jobs are important. They're essential for keeping this massive transit hub like JFK, See story on page 2

Over 1,000 airport workers rallied at JFK Airport on Thursday to call for increased wages and benefits a few weeks before their labor contract expires. Eagle photo by Ryan Schwach

JFK, LGA workers rally for better wages and benefits

Continued from page 1

LaGuardia and Newark running,” said Vladimir Clairjeune, a JFK wheelchair attendant and Hillside resident. “Now it’s time for workers to get a wage that reflects the role that we play.”

Represented chiefly by the union 32BJ SEIU, the workers who do everything at the airports from cabin cleaning to gate maintenance, believe that with all the money coming into the major hubs, they deserve a piece of the pie.

“We talked about how the airlines are making record profits, we went back from the brink of the pandemic, where you guys are on the front line, dealing with passengers, dealing with an unknown global catastrophe, and sacrificing everything, including some of your loved ones and your coworkers,” said Rob Hill, the union’s executive vice president. “We’ve come out of that where these guys are now making record profits, and did any of them ever say thank you? Do they offer you a raise? They offer you a share in that profit?”

“Every step of the way...they have refused to acknowledge that you even exist,” Hill said.

On top of profits, workers and supporters pointed to the billions of dollars that have gone to renovating both airports over the last several years, that they say came without any real benefits for them.

“It’s not just about investing in infrastructure,” said Borough President Donovan Richards at the rally, highlighting specifically \$20 billion in investments for the JFK redevelopment. “We need to invest in human infrastructure at this airport as well... We need to make sure our workers have the dignity and respect that they deserve and are treated that way as well.”

Richards, the only elected official who spoke on Thursday but one of many local officials to back the union workers, said he will continue to support them in contract negotiations.

“I want you to know we will forever stand with the workers of this airport – our airports would not run if it were not for the workers,” he said.



Airport workers, like Queens resident Vladimir Clairjeune, called for a \$25 per hour wage, and benefits like PTO and healthcare equal to workers across the river at Newark Airport. Eagle photo by Ryan Schwach

For the individual workers however, many of them immigrants and people of color, the wages and benefits are less about political sentiment, and more about keeping their head above water.

“My rent is \$2,600 a month, I have a family to take care of, gas is expensive, and the cost of living is out of this world,” said Clairjeune, the wheelchair attendant. “There’s so much money being invested into the airport redesign workers deserve a piece.”

Clairjeune says he sees other coworkers take second jobs or more hours to try and fill the gaps when it comes to paying rent, healthcare or affording time off.

“I think people try to supplement the money that they’re not making because of the wages, because the wages aren’t enough,” he said. “People try to supplement the gaps with the

second job or even third job sometimes, and it’s really taxing on our bodies. Sometimes we’re kind of forced to work overtime. You don’t want to come in and work a sixth day.”

Robert Pizarro, an airplane cabin cleaner, struggles to pay for his medication as a pre-diabetic.

“I am not going to accept that I can’t afford medication without coverage, and I definitely can’t afford to go further beyond pre-diabetic,” he said, also pointing to the importance of his role at the airport.

“I work with a team to ensure that every plane is safe, clean and ready for takeoff,” he added. “We have to do a thorough check on every plane for security concerns, and we have to do that on a tight schedule. We are the reason these flights take off.”

Esteben Ramirez, another worker at LGA

said through a translator that although many of the workers have families overseas, they can seldom afford to visit them without any paid time off.

“[We want] to take our vacations, see our families, enjoy ourselves and relax knowing that when we get back to the United States, we won’t have a bill waiting for us that we can’t pay,” he said. “We are here because we’re fighting for paid vacation, we don’t want to take unpaid vacation anymore.”

At the beginning of May, workers were beginning to prepare for more rallies ahead of the contract expiration date, alongside support from other local officials.

“A lot of these workers live in my district, so as someone who cares about worker justice writ large, I definitely care about the workers in my district in particular,” State Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas told the Eagle at LaGuardia in May. “I know many of them are also immigrant workers and workers of color, who are always disproportionately impacted by the wages. I’m here to fight with them. Every worker is important.”

González-Rojas called it “frustrating” that New York, and more specifically Queens airport workers, are not seeing the same benefits as those in Jersey.

“This is the hub of economic activity in this country...LaGuardia and JFK are in the World’s Borough, and we want to make sure the folks that are greeting our newcomers and passengers are upwardly paid for the work that they do every day,” she said. “We are the best state in this country...and New York has a higher cost of living. So, these workers really deserve these equitable wages and to meet, if not exceed, New Jersey standards.”

The Port Authority, which operates the airports, said in response to the rally in May that its workers are among the highest paid in the U.S.

“The Port Authority has taken a leadership role in ensuring that airport workers at JFK International, LaGuardia and Newark Liberty International airports are among the highest paid in the nation,” a spokesperson said. “The Port Authority’s action to expand the minimum wage policy in 2018 has culminated in a \$19/hour wage for tens of thousands of airport workers beginning in September 2023.”

CUNY Law receives \$1.5 million for major renovation of community and educational hub

By Robert Abruzzese
Queens Daily Eagle

The City University of New York School of Law has been awarded \$1.5 million for a renovation project aimed at transforming a decommissioned kitchen into a Worker Education and Development Center.

The new 3,800-square-foot multi-use space will be designed for classes, events, and community engagement.

The funds to pay for the new center came from two local electeds.

“I am thrilled to provide \$1.5 million in funding for CUNY School of Law for a critical renovation project that will provide much-needed flexible space for learning, gathering and community engagement,” said Councilmember Julie Won. “This funding will support CUNY Law’s longstanding mission of making an affordable legal education accessible to New Yorkers while also connecting people with resources and events that advance social justice advocacy here in Queens and beyond.”

The renovation project began with the dismantling of the disused commercial kitchen, made possible by funding from the New York City Council through Councilmember Won. Additionally, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards contributed \$1 million in capital funding.

CUNY Law has donated much of the old kitchen equipment to LaGuardia Community College and Queensborough Community College.

“We are grateful for Councilmember Won’s support and the ongoing support of the entire Queens Delegation of the City Council and Queens Borough Hall,” said Sudha Setty,



CUNY School of Law has received \$1.5 million to transform a decommissioned kitchen into a multi-use Worker Education and Development Center, enhancing its community and educational facilities. Wiki Commons photo by Evulaj90

dean of CUNY School of Law. “This investment will greatly enhance our ability to serve our students and the Queens community more broadly.”

The funding will also cover network and audiovisual system updates across the campus, building on previous investments from the City Council and Queens borough president.

“I’m proud to partner with Councilmember Won to bring much-needed renovations to the CUNY School of Law, on behalf of the students and staff of this great institution,” said Richards. “The students and staff of CUNY School of Law deserve nothing but the highest quality spaces to learn and work, and these renovations will help them gain just that.”

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New York parents, lawmakers call for bill to end early voting in schools

By Julian Shen-Berro
Chalkbeat

As the end of the legislative session draws near, some New York parents and lawmakers are pushing to eliminate public schools as an option for early voting sites.

It's an issue that has prompted concerns among some parents and educators — with schools that are used as polling sites losing access to school facilities for notable portions of the year. And as the city's public schools have moved to adopt more stringent security measures over the past year, the continued use of school buildings for elections has left some confused.

"With all of the security measures that are in place, why would you then open the backdoor and let anyone walk in?" said Kindra Hall, a Manhattan mom. "It doesn't make any sense."

In Albany, the bill has stalled in the Assembly, with just two days left until the session ends. Sen. Liz Krueger, a sponsor of the bill, noted that early voting has improved voting access for New Yorkers, but added that schools should not be used as poll sites.

"Unfortunately we have seen considerable disruption caused when public schools are used as early voting sites, which is a particular problem in New York City," she said in a statement. "I've heard from many of my constituents and school leaders, for several years now, about students losing access to critical facilities in their schools, such as the cafeteria or the gym, for weeks at a time. There are other options available, and this bill requires certain publicly-supported institutions to make themselves available if needed."

Currently, four of the five boroughs use schools as early voting sites, with Queens as the exception. In January, the city's teachers union passed a resolution calling for an end to the practice, noting 33 out of 140 early voting sites were located in public schools in 2023.

City officials said police officers are stationed at every polling site, including at schools. Jenna



In the final days of the legislative session in Albany, some want to pass a law eliminating public schools as early polling sites. Here, voters cast midterm ballots on Nov. 8, 2022 at New York City's Alfred E. Smith Public School. Timothy A. Clary / AFP via Getty Images

Lyle, a spokesperson for the city's Education Department, said the department will continue to prioritize the safety of school communities.

"We work closely with leadership at schools hosting early voting to address any concerns, minimize disruptions, and ensure schools are able to effectively perform their primary function of educating students," she said in a statement. "We are required by state law to comply with decisions made by the Board of Elections regarding polling sites, and we appreciate each school's flexibility making early voting successful."

Hall said her two kids at Wagner Middle School on the Upper East Side missed out on more than 30 days of gym access to accommodate

early voting this year. During New York's presidential primary in March, her daughter attended gym class in the school's auditorium, where she sat and "did nothing," Hall said.

Meanwhile, after-school sports that relied on the gym, like basketball, volleyball, and others, were disrupted.

Assemblymember Alex Bores, a sponsor of the bill, said despite widespread support, passing the legislation before the end of the session on Thursday will be "an uphill climb."

"We want to make sure that we do this right, not just for this election, but for the future as well," he said. "So I'm hoping it gets done in the next few days, but I want to make sure that we get it

right regardless."

For Hall, though, the urgency feels more immediate. While recent elections have seen relatively low turnout, she remembers voting at Wagner in the 2020 presidential election and waiting for hours as the line wrapped around the block. She worries about thousands of voters entering her kids' school as they cast their ballots for president in the fall.

"I have my eye on November," she said. "If we don't get it signed, if it's not all the way through by Thursday, then that process starts all over again in January, which is too late."

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

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All Cities Contain Pockets of Nature; Some Species Adapt Best to Urbanization

By Joseph Curti and Morgan Tingley
The Conversation

The Earth is losing animals, plants and other living things so fast that some scientists believe the planet is entering its sixth mass extinction. But there's some surprising good news: Urban areas may be key to slowing down or even reversing this crisis.

This idea may seem counterintuitive, since studies show that urbanization is a big driver of biodiversity loss. Cities alter the environment with artificial lighting and noise pollution, which affect many species. And urban land cover is expected to increase by 2.5% globally between 2000 and 2030 as more people move to cities.

As one measure of urbanization, half of the continent of Europe is less than 1 mile (1.5 kilometers) from a roadway or railway line. No location on the continent is more than 6 miles (10 kilometers) from these features.

But there are ways for cities to use nature-based solutions to slow species loss within their borders. At a major international conference on biodiversity loss in 2022, global leaders agreed to ambitious goals for restoring natural ecosystems across the planet, including targets aimed at "ensur[ing] biodiversity-inclusive urban planning".

We are conservation and ecology researchers who work in Southern California and other settings. In our new study, we worked with colleagues to identify pockets within Los Angeles that host diverse native species communities. We even found that some groups of organisms seem to benefit from increased levels of urban development. And we developed a new metric for measuring how different species respond

to urbanization, which city managers can use to develop local conservation strategies.

Wild Urban Areas

Los Angeles is a city of nearly 3.9 million people, with a heavily urbanized landscape that's epitomized by its vast network of freeways and a mostly tame and channeled Los Angeles River. In the mid-20th century, car exhaust and industrial emissions produced thick smog that made going outside a health hazard and eventually spurred enactment of the 1970 Clean Air Act.

While smog does still regularly cloud the city's skies, Los Angeles's air is cleaner now than at any point in the past 50 years. And city leaders are setting ambitious targets for preserving nature across the metro area.

In the 2019 "Sustainable City pLAN," then-Mayor Eric Garcetti set a goal of achieving no net loss of biodiversity by 2050 — in other words, preventing losses of living species or offsetting losses by adding new species. To track its progress, the city created a custom index to measure and assess biodiversity throughout Los Angeles. We helped to calculate a component of this index that measures the association of native species in Los Angeles with urbanization.

Los Angeles sits within the California Floristic Province, a global biodiversity hotspot. It's one of 36 designated areas in the world containing high amounts of endemic plants — species found nowhere else in the world — and that have experienced significant losses of their original plant communities.



In this 2017 photo, mute swans swim in the Lullwater, covered by duckweed, in Brooklyn's Prospect Park. Biologists cite the non-native species' damage to aquatic habitat and native waterfowl. But animal welfare groups and people who love to watch the snow-white birds glide across local waters were fighting plans to reduce the population.

AP Photo/Kathy Willens



A red-shouldered hawk was seen at the Marine Park Golf Course.

Eagle file photo by Heather Wolf



Raccoons have been getting bolder, and are more common, in Brooklyn areas like Park Slope, Windsor Terrace, Greenwood Heights and Sunset Park.

Eagle file photo

Even in the most urbanized parts of the city, Angelinos share the streets with bats, thousands of birds, and even large predators like mountain lions. But scientists don't know yet exactly how levels of urbanization affect the wide variety of native animal species that call Los Angeles home.

Slugs and snails lead the pack

To support the city's efforts to assess biodiversity and slow regional species loss, we collected data from iNaturalist, a free, publicly available app that anyone can use to identify and document observations of animals, plants and other living species. The app has amassed over 189 million records, and its data bank continues to grow.

We filtered this crowd-sourced data on species occurrence to control for the potential effect of observer bias — effects of how individuals choose to collect observations, which can show up in the data. For example, several people might upload observations of a single animal, making it seem as though multiple animals had been sighted. Or people might only upload observations from areas near roads, making it appear that wildlife was more abundant there, without looking for animals in more remote locations.

Our filtered dataset included over 500,000 observations recorded by 71,000 community scientists. This yielded occur-

rence records for 967 native species within about 93 miles (150 kilometers) of the city of Los Angeles. We modeled species responses to measures of urbanization and summarized the average response of all native species across the city.

Overall, we found that most native species were more likely to be observed in natural areas around Los Angeles than in urban parts of the city. One surprising exception was slugs and snails, which, on average, were more often found in urbanized zones than in natural areas. This finding mirrors a 2018 study in Tennessee, which also showed that native snail species can persist in highly urbanized environments — perhaps because people add water to parks and gardens for landscaping.

Across all native species in the study, butterflies and moths, as well as mammals, were least likely to be found in heavily developed areas. The absence of key host plants for particular butterfly species may explain why butterflies are relatively rare in highly urbanized areas.

For mammals, our findings are similar to a 2023 study conducted across the United States, which found that mammals, and especially large-bodied mammals, avoided extremely urban areas.

Joseph Curti is a Ph.D candidate in ecology and evolutionary biology at UCLA. Morgan Tingley is an associate professor of zoology and evolutionary biology at UCLA.

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Liberty Went For Fifth Straight in Atlanta

Streaking Commissioner's Cup champions visited Dream

By John Torenli, Sports Editor
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

The New York Liberty are off to a scintillating start in their pursuit of a second straight Commissioner's Cup championship.

Though they admittedly have higher aspirations in 2024.

On Thursday, however, New York's immediate goal was to post a season-high fifth consecutive win when it visited the Atlanta Dream at the Gateway Center.

"The win (is) the most important thing. We have to get to Atlanta and get another one," Liberty coach Sandy Brondello insisted following Tuesday night's 88-75 triumph in Chicago in the opener of this three-game road trip.

New York (8-2) has already matched the best 10-game start in franchise history, equaling the mark it established during the WNBA's inaugural 1997 campaign.

By winning their first two games of June's five-game Commissioner's Cup schedule, the Liberty stand alone atop the Eastern Conference with a 2-0 mark and a league-leading plus-49 point differential in those contests.

"We're not too high, too low. We just trust each other," revealed reigning WNBA Most Valuable Player Breanna Stewart when assessing her team's hot start.

Though they have an epic showdown looming against league-leading and still-unbeaten Connecticut (9-0) Saturday, the Liberty have thrived on worrying about the opponent in front of them game after game.

On Tuesday, they trailed the Sky by one point entering the final period of a rugged game that featured 39 personal fouls, and



Liberty coach Sandy Brondello had her team atop the Commissioner's Cup standings and riding a four-game winning streak into Atlanta Thursday.
Photo by Brandon Todd/New York Liberty

the eventual ejection of Chicago rookie sensation Angel Reese.

Rather than bow to the pressure of three grueling quarters on the road, New York instead burst out of the fourth-quarter gate with a 15-2 run that settled matters.

Stewart posted season highs of 33 points and 14 rebounds and fellow All-Star Sabrina Ionescu added 24 points and seven boards as the Liberty outscored the Sky, 23-9, in the final period.

"Our zone really helped us (in the fourth quarter)," Brondello said. "We contained (the posts) well when we changed the defense. And when we can score, we can help the defense get set."

The dynamic duo of Stewart and Ionescu combined for 12 points during the last 10 minutes.

"I've always prided myself on being able to get in there and rebound," noted Ionescu. "We were playing against a really good rebounding team, and so I knew my

opportunity was going to be to go in there and help us out."

She did much more than just hit the glass.

Ionescu drilled four of New York's 10 3-pointers, giving her at least one made shot from beyond the arc in a franchise record-tying 35 consecutive games.

Power forward Jonquel Jones was held to only five points Tuesday, but she did rack up 12 rebounds and handed out four assists for the second straight contest despite foul trouble throughout the evening.

The Dream (4-3) were coming off a 69-50 home loss to the Sun, who outscored Atlanta 22-10 in the second quarter to pull away for good.

Tina Charles amassed 12 points and 13 boards for the Dream, who shot a season-worst 28% from the floor, including a dismal 3-of-16 effort from 3-point range.

"I feel like we're a much better team than what we showed," said Atlanta coach

Tanisha Wright.

"I think we let our offense dictate our defense at times and I thought it killed our confidence. ... We missed some easy shots. We were getting great looks."

The Liberty took three of four meetings from Atlanta last year, including a 95-84 win at Downtown's Barclays Center in the final encounter on July 27.

Stewart led the way for New York that night with 33 points and 12 rebounds. She also tied the franchise record with 16 free-throw attempts.

GIVE ME LIBERTY: Shameka Christon is the only other player in franchise history to hit at least one 3-pointer in 35 consecutive games. ... Reserve forward Nyara Sabally missed her third straight game Thursday with a back injury. ... After closing out this trip in Connecticut on Saturday, the Liberty will have a quick ride back to Brooklyn for Sunday's game against winless Washington (0-9).



With one made 3-pointer Thursday in Atlanta, Liberty guard Sabrina Ionescu was expected to drain at least one shot from beyond the arc in a franchise-record 36 straight games.
AP Photo by Frank Franklin II



Liberty reserve forward Nyara Sabally missed her third game in a row Thursday with a back injury.
AP Photo by Michael Conroy

Man charged in Gilgo Beach serial killings kept document used to ‘blueprint’ crimes, prosecutors say

By Philip Marcelo
Associated Press

The New York architect previously accused of killing four women and leaving their corpses scattered along a coastal highway was charged Thursday in the deaths of two more, after prosecutors said they gathered new DNA evidence and found a planning document he had used to “blueprint” his crimes.

Rex Heuermann, 60, appeared before a judge on the eastern end of Long Island to face charges that he killed Jessica Taylor and Sandra Costilla, two young women who were long suspected of being the victims of men preying on sex workers.

Taylor disappeared in 2003. Costilla was killed in 1993. The new charges came just days after police finished extensive searches of Heuermann’s Massapequa Park home and a wooded area on Long Island tied to the investigation of a string of deaths known as the Gilgo Beach serial killings.

In a court filing, prosecutors said they were able to use new forensic testing methods to match hairs found on or near the vicinity of both victims to a DNA profile that is a likely match to Heuermann. Additionally, prosecutors say they recovered a “planning document” on a hard drive in his basement used to “methodically blueprint” his killings.

The all-caps document features a series of checklists with tasks to complete before, during and after the killings, as well as practical lessons for “next time.” Among the dozens of entries written are reminders to clean the bodies and destroy evidence, to “get sleep before hunt” and to “have story set.”

One section, titled “things to remember,” appears to highlight lessons from previous killings, prosecutors said, such as using heavier rope and limiting noise in order to maximize “play time.” A “body prep” checklist includes, among other items, a note to “remove head and hands.”

Prosecutors believe that entry may connect Heuermann to yet another victim, Valerie Mack, whose partial skeletal remains were discovered near the body of Taylor after her disappearance in 2000.

Heuermann has not been charged in the death of Mack. But asked during a news conference after Thursday’s hearing if he was a suspect, District Attorney Ray Tierney replied, “That’s fair to say.”

He added that investigators are still working the case, noting that the “method of the crime scene” in Mack’s killing was consistent with those of the other victims.

Heuermann pleaded not guilty to killing Taylor and Costilla during the hearing and was ordered held without bail.



Rex Heuermann, center, charged in the Gilgo Beach serial killings on Long Island, appears for a hearing at Suffolk County Court in Riverhead, N.Y., Thursday, June 6, 2024. Heuermann was charged Thursday in the deaths of two more, after prosecutors said they gathered new DNA evidence and found a computer document he had used to “blueprint” his crimes. James Carbone/Newsday via AP, Pool

Afterward, Tierney said the new charges provide “some small measure of closure” for the victims’ families.

The charges involving Costilla, who was killed 30 years ago, indicate that prosecutors believe Heuermann was killing victims for much longer longer than previously thought. Unlike the other victims, Costilla’s remains were not among those discovered at Gilgo Beach, but were found in a wooded area in Southampton, Long Island.

Since late 2010, police have been investigating the deaths of at least 10 people — mostly female sex workers — whose remains were discovered along an isolated highway not far from Gilgo Beach on Long Island’s south shore.

The victims had disappeared over a span of at least 14 years. Vexed police officers made only halting progress in identifying possible suspects. Investigators long said it was likely that not all of the deaths were the work of the same killer. Some of the victims disappeared in the mid-1990s. Investigators concluded that an 11th person who dis-

appeared in 2010 from the barrier island community of Oak Beach had accidentally drowned.

Heuermann, who lived across a bay from where the bodies were found, was arrested last July. Prosecutors said a new investigative task force used mobile phone location data and DNA samples to link the architect to some of the victims. He was charged with killing four of the women: Megan Waterman, Melissa Barthelmy, Amber Lynn Costello and Maureen Brainard-Barnes.

Investigators who had searched Heuermann’s home extensively and dug up his yard last summer returned to the house again last month and spent nearly a week searching it again. They focused their efforts mostly in the basement, according to a lawyer for Heuermann’s wife.

That followed a search in April of a wooded area in Manorville, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) east of Heuermann’s home, linked to another Gilgo Beach victim.

Tierney said the planning document was recovered in March of this year, providing the impetus for the recent searches at the suspect’s home and in Manorville.

Prosecutors also said they found a book in Heuermann’s possession by the retired FBI agent John Douglas, “The Cases That Haunt Us.” They say the planning document referenced specific pages in another work by Douglas, “Mind Hunter,” that allude to the personality types of serial killers and profiles of those who use mutilation and sexual violence.

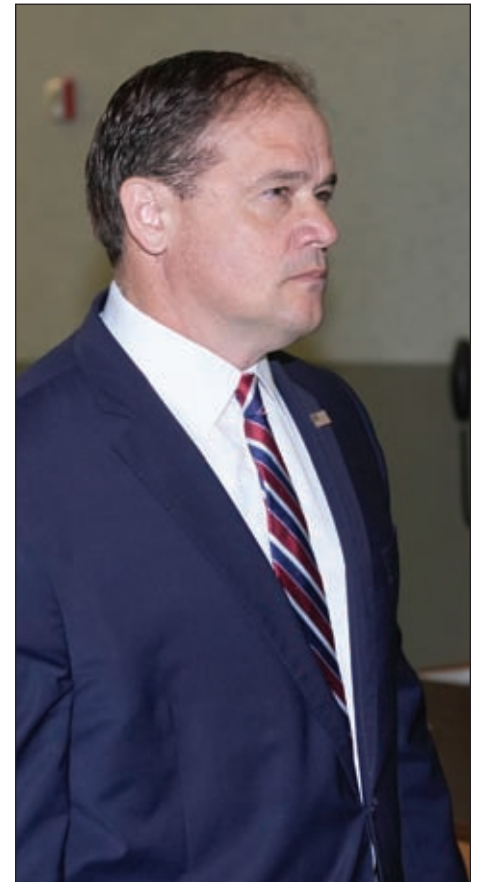
Jessica Taylor, 20, vanished in 2003 while working as an escort in New York City. Some of her remains were discovered in Manorville that year. Other remains were found in a 2011 search of the beach scrub by the side of Ocean Parkway, the road where the other Gilgo Beach victims were found.

Valerie Mack, 24, who had been working as an escort in Philadelphia, disappeared in 2000 and was last seen by her family in Port Republic, New Jersey, near Atlantic City. Some of her skeletal remains were discovered that same year in the Manorville woods. More of her remains were found in 2011 in the search around Gilgo Beach.

Initially known as “Jane Doe No. 6,” Mack’s remains had been unidentified for years until genetic testing revealed her identity in 2020.

Investigators in April also spent days searching a property in the eastern Long Island hamlet of North Sea, where Costilla’s body was discovered in 1993. Costilla was 28 when she was killed and had lived in New York City.

A decade ago, Suffolk County prosecutors



Suffolk County District Attorney Ray Tierney arrives to the courthouse in Riverhead, N.Y., Thursday, June 6, 2024. Rex Heuermann, the New York architect accused of killing four women and leaving their bodies near Long Island’s Gilgo Beach, has been accused in the deaths of two more women. AP Photo/Seth Wenig

said publicly that they believed Costilla had been killed by a carpenter who lived in the area, John Bittrolff, who was convicted of murdering two other women whose bodies had been found on the same part of Long Island. But Bittrolff was never charged with Costilla’s death due to lack of evidence. He insists he is innocent of any murders.

Heuermann’s lawyer and the lawyers separately representing his wife and two adult children declined to comment.

Heuermann, who has been in custody since his arrest, has pleaded not guilty. He had been set to return to court on July 30 for a status hearing. No trial date has been set.



This photo provided by John Ray Law on July 14, 2023, shows Jessica Taylor, whose remains were found decades ago along on a highway along Gilgo Beach, on New York’s Long Island. Rex Heuermann, previously accused of killing four women and leaving their corpses scattered along a coastal highway, was charged Thursday, June 6, 2024, in the deaths of two more, Taylor and Sandra Costil, after prosecutors said they gathered new DNA evidence and found a computer document he had used to “blueprint” his crimes. John Ray Law via AP, File

Trump ally Steve Bannon must surrender to prison by July 1 to start contempt sentence, judge says

By Alanna Durkin Richer
Associated Press

Steve Bannon, a longtime ally of former President Donald Trump, must report to prison by July 1 to serve his four-month sentence for defying a subpoena from the House committee that investigated the attack on the U.S. Capitol, a federal judge ruled Thursday.

U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols in Washington granted prosecutors' request to make Bannon begin serving his prison term after a three-judge panel of a federal appeals court last month upheld his contempt of Congress conviction. But Nichols also made clear on Thursday in his ruling that Bannon could seek a stay of his order, which could delay his surrender date.

Nichols, who was nominated to the bench by Trump, a Republican, had initially allowed Bannon to remain free while he fought his conviction. But the panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit said all of Bannon's challenges lack merit.

Bannon was convicted in 2022 of two counts of contempt of Congress: one for refusing to sit for a deposition with the Jan. 6 House Committee and the other for refusing to provide documents related to his involvement in Trump's efforts to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

Bannon's lawyer at trial argued the charges were politically motivated and that the former adviser didn't ignore the subpoena but was still engaged in good-faith negotiations with the congressional committee when he was charged.

The defense has said Bannon had been acting on the advice of his attorney at the time, who told him that the subpoena was invalid because the committee would not allow a Trump lawyer in the room, and that Bannon could not determine what documents or testimony he could provide because Trump has asserted executive privilege.

Defense lawyer David Schoen told the judge they had planned to ask the full U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, if necessary, to review the matter. Schoen said it would be unfair to send Bannon to prison now because he would have already completed his sentence before those rulings could be handed down.



Steve Bannon appears in court in New York, Jan. 12, 2023. A federal appeals court has upheld the criminal conviction of Donald Trump's longtime ally for defying a subpoena from the House committee investigating the attack on the U.S. Capitol. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit on Friday, May 10, 2024, rejected Bannon's challenges to his contempt of Congress conviction.

Steven Hirsch/New York Post via AP, Pool, File

"That might serve a political agenda; but it would be a grave injustice," Schoen wrote in court papers.

A second Trump aide, trade advisor Peter Na-

varro, was also convicted of contempt of Congress and reported to prison in March to serve his four-month sentence.

Navarro had maintained that he couldn't co-

operate with the committee because Trump had invoked executive privilege. But courts have rejected that argument, finding Navarro couldn't prove Trump had actually invoked it.

Supreme Court sides with Native American tribes in health care funding dispute with government

By Lindsay Whitehurst
Associated Press

The Supreme Court sided with Native American tribes Thursday in a dispute with the federal government over the cost of health care when tribes run programs in their own communities.

The 5-4 decision means the government will cover millions in overhead costs that two tribes faced when they took over running their health care programs under a law meant to give Native Americans more local control.

Covering those costs is "necessary to prevent a funding gap," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the majority opinion. Not reimbursing them forces tribes to "pay a penalty for pursuing self-determination."

The Department of Health and Human Services had argued it isn't responsible for the overhead costs associated with billing insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid.

Paying those costs for all tribes that run their own health care programs could total between \$800 million and \$2 billion per year, the agency said.

"The extra federal money that the Court today green-lights does not come free," Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote in the dissent, which was joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Amy Coney Barrett. "In my view, the court should leave those difficult appropriations decisions and tradeoffs to Congress."

The federal Indian Health Service has provided tribal health care since the 1800s under treaty obligations, but the facilities are often inadequate and understaffed, the San Carlos Apache Tribe in Arizona said in court documents.



The U.S. Supreme Court is seen, April 25, 2024, in Washington. AP Photo/Mariam Zuhaib, File

Health care spending per person by the IHS is just one-third of federal spending in the rest of the country, the Northern Arapaho Tribe in Wyoming said in court documents. Native American tribal populations have an average life expectancy of about 65 years, nearly 11 years less than the U.S. as a whole.

Attorney Adam Unikowsky, who represented the Northern Arapaho Tribe, said the decision puts tribes on equal footing with IHS on health care and will "promote tribal sovereignty and provide resources for health care in under-served communities."

The tribes contracted with IHS to run their own programs ranging from emergency services to substance-abuse treatment. The agency paid the tribes the money it would have spent to run those services, but the contract didn't include the overhead costs for billing insurance companies or Medicare and Medicaid, since other agencies handle it when the government is running the program.

The tribes, though, had to do the billing themselves. That cost the San Carlos Apache Tribe nearly \$3 million in overhead over three years and the Northern Arapaho Tribe \$1.5 million over a two-year period, they said. Two lower courts agreed with the tribes.

The Department of Health and Human Services appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that that tribes do get some money for overhead costs but the government isn't responsible for costs associated with third-party income.

The majority of federally recognized tribes now contract with IHS to run at least part of their own health care programming.

How one Brooklyn high school became a Minecraft powerhouse

By Alex Zimmerman
Chalkbeat

John Dewey High School senior Jayla Mallette had an unusual request for her teacher after 9 p.m. a few months back. She was so excited about a project that she wanted permission to work on it through the night.

Jayla and her peers at the Brooklyn school were collaborating on a design to repurpose the Kingsbridge Armory, a hulking landmark in the Bronx that has fallen into disrepair. But the online platform — Minecraft Education — requires permission to log on outside of approved hours.

Their teacher, Mashfiq Ahmed, signed off right away. “I would leave it on overnight,” he said. “Sometimes I would wake up in the morning and would see them still in the server.”

The project the students were so excited about that they could hardly sleep? Their submission to the city’s annual Minecraft competition.

Four years ago, New York City officials created a citywide tournament called Battle of the Boroughs that allows public school students to compete in an annual Minecraft challenge. Students typically must submit projects — or “builds” in Minecraft parlance — following specific prompts that are supposed to get students thinking about principles of urban planning, sustainability, and community development to improve the city.

As interest in the competition has grown, with about 500 submissions this year, the team at John Dewey has become a powerhouse. They’ve won multiple titles, including last year’s citywide championship. They’re the subject of a short documentary released by Minecraft Education. Later this month, they’re headed to a national competition in Denver — the first New York City public school Minecraft team to win the honor, according to city officials.

And they’ve worked to spread Minecraft to teachers from Dewey and across the city, explaining how they can use the game in their lessons. Those efforts prompted two Dewey English teachers to guide their students to use Minecraft to build a dystopian society.

“It’s a sandbox game — you can do anything,” explains Jayla, the president of Dewey’s Minecraft club. “It just captured my mind. You can show your creativity.”

Unlike many other video games, Minecraft generally does not have set rules or goals. Any player can use it to tinker, write code, build a world, or even create their own mini-games. Experts often compare it to open-ended toys like Legos that allow nearly infinite permutations. It has grown to become one of the most popular video games of all time.

From a Minecraft competition to career planning

Jayla first got into Minecraft when she was about eight, but didn’t play it much until COVID forced school buildings to shutter.

“School got easier so I was talking to my

friends more and playing Minecraft throughout the school day,” Jayla said. “It’s just really easy to connect people.”

That’s also when John Dewey’s Minecraft club began. Ahmed, who teaches chemistry in addition to coaching the Minecraft team, saw it as a way for students to “de-stress” and build social connections during the pandemic.

But the club has morphed into much more than that to Jayla and her classmates. For a few of them, it’s helped guide their planning for college and beyond.

“Seeing how you can fix things in the community just hits a spot in my brain,” Jayla says. She estimates she spent about 72 hours on the build submission for this year’s tournament over about three months. “Without this club, I don’t think I would have ever realized I wanted to go into city planning.” She plans to study the subject at the Borough of Manhattan Community College in the fall.

As the team prepares to defend its citywide title against other high schools this Saturday at the Brooklyn Public Library, Jayla has been reading on her own about what makes a “walkable” neighborhood. The five students on the official team will only learn the prompt just before they start building — with about 45 minutes to conduct research and roughly 30 minutes to complete their design followed by an oral presentation of their project — but Jayla figures the reading might come in handy.

Earlier this week, Dewey senior Rayden White and the rest of the Minecraft club, were preparing for the championship and showing off the team’s initial Kingsbridge Armory submission to a gaggle of television reporters.

Perched on one of the special gaming swivel chairs the team won as a prize in last year’s city championship, Rayden navigated through cavernous rooms that included a library, market, art gallery, and other amenities like a roller skating rink. After conducting research about the surrounding Bronx neighborhood, including its poverty rates, Rayden and his classmates opted to include a food pantry and clothes donation site.

The process made him begin to notice food access issues in other areas of the city. “I didn’t really take into account how much that might be needed in a community,” he said.

Each student often takes a slightly different role in the builds. Jayla, whose teammates refer to her as the “ideas person,” used her apprenticeship experience at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden to design a greenspace. Rayden is especially adept at using “redstone,” essentially the game’s internal circuitry. He used that expertise to electrify a digital sign outside an arcade the team built in the armory, with each letter repetitively lighting up in sequence.

He grew up taking apart his family’s old computers but he said Minecraft has turbocharged his interest in technology. “It started with Minecraft,” he said. “I learned how it worked and that’s how I



Minecraft club president, Jayla Mallette, poses for a portrait at her computer June 3, 2024 in Brooklyn.
Alex Zimmerman / Chalkbeat



High school senior Rayden White reviews the build they submitted to get into the Minecraft competition on Monday, June 3, 2024, in Brooklyn.
Alex Zimmerman / Chalkbeat

got into coding.” He plans to study computer science next year at the New York City College of Technology.

Dewey’s reputation rises after Minecraft club’s wins

Dewey administrators said the Minecraft club has helped bring welcome attention to the school, which narrowly avoided closure more than a decade ago due to poor performance and whose former principal was implicated in an illicit credit recovery program. In recent years, the school has rebuilt its reputation as a leader in career education, scoring a visit from schools Chancellor David Banks.

Assistant Principal Nancy Woods said the attention around the Minecraft club has helped displace old stories about the school, including one about a student who was allegedly seen with a gun in a classroom in 2008.

“When you Googled our school, that’s what you saw,” Woods said. “These great stories are now creating our new digital footprint where we’re on the map. Kids want to go to school here.”

The students in Dewey’s Minecraft club are mostly happy to be bringing attention to their school. But as reporters peppered them with questions on Monday, they felt the pressure ratchet up.

“I’m spewing confidence out my pores — it’ll be so embarrassing if we don’t win,” Jayla said after the television crews left. “Now we have to defend our title.”

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



The Minecraft team from John Dewey High School in Brooklyn -- they are the defending champions of NYC’s citywide Minecraft esports competition called “Battle of the Boroughs.”
Alex Zimmerman / Chalkbeat



Our World In Pictures

Attorney Gloria Allred holds up a picture of Jessica Taylor during a news conference in Riverhead, N.Y., Thursday, June 6, 2024. Rex Heuermann, previously accused of killing four women and leaving their corpses scattered along a coastal highway, was charged Thursday, in the deaths of two more, Taylor and Sandra Costil, after prosecutors said they gathered new DNA evidence and found a computer document he had used to “blue-print” his crimes.

AP Photo/Seth Wenig

2ND DEPARTMENT / NEW BUSINESS FORMATIONS

HIGHBRIDGE II MASTER TENANT LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF HIGHBRIDGE II MASTER TENANT LLC. ARTS. OF ORG. FILED WITH SECY. OF STATE (SSNY) ON 5/3/24. OFFICE LOCATION: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY DESIGNATED AS AGENT OF LLC UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO: C/O SAMARITAN DAYTOP FOUNDATION, INC., 138-02 QUEENS BLVD, BRIARWOOD, NY 11435. PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL ACTIVITY.

#217580

GINSBURG & MISK LLP

GINSBURG & MISK LLP CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION SEC. OF STATE OF NY 2/6/2014. OFF. LOC.: QUEENS CO. SSNY DESIGNATED AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST IT MAY BE SERVED. SSNY TO MAIL COPY OF PROCESS TO THE PARTNERSHIP, 215-48 JAMAICA AVENUE, QUEENS VILLAGE, NY 11428. PURPOSE: PRACTICE OF LAW.

#217749

58-58 CATALPA AVE., LLC

58-58 CATALPA AVE., LLC, ARTS OF ORG. FILED WITH SEC. OF STATE OF NY (SSNY) 5/8/2024. CTY: QUEENS. SSNY DESIG. AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST MAY BE SERVED

& SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO KIM RYAN-FLORES, 58-58 CATALPA AVE, RIDGEWOOD, NY 11385. GENERAL PURPOSE

#218006

ALLISON ZHENG LLC

ALLISON ZHENG LLC, ARTS OF ORG. FILED WITH SEC. OF STATE OF NY (SSNY) 5/17/2024. CTY: QUEENS. SSNY DESIG. AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST MAY BE SERVED & SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO REGISTERED AGENT SOLUTIONS, INC., 99 WASHINGTON AVE, STE 700, ALBANY, NY 12260. GENERAL PURPOSE

#218007

SKYLINE XLB LLC

SKYLINE XLB LLC, ARTS. OF ORG. FILED WITH THE SSNY ON 05/21/2024. OFFICE LOC: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO: THE LLC, 112-15 NORTHERN BLVD, CF-2, CORONA, NY 11368. PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#218013

CZ JADE HOUSING, LLC

CZ JADE HOUSING, LLC, ARTS. OF ORG. FILED WITH THE SSNY ON 03/07/2024. OFFICE LOC: QUEENS

COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO: THE LLC, 245-44 148TH DRIVE, ROSEDALE, NY 11422. PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#218119

3450 LUCC LLC

3450 LUCC LLC, ARTS. OF ORG. FILED WITH THE SSNY ON 01/03/2024. OFFICE LOC: QUEENS COUNTY. SSNY HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS AGENT UPON WHOM PROCESS AGAINST THE LLC MAY BE SERVED. SSNY SHALL MAIL PROCESS TO: THE LLC, 18-33 41ST STREET, ASTORIA, NY 11105. PURPOSE: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#218348

11106 RESOLVE PRODUCTIONS LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: RESOLVE PRODUCTIONS LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 5/7/2024. 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 CRAIG MACARTHUR DOLEZEL 3168 CRESCENT STREET, ASTORIA, NY, 11106. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#217583

11369 WISDOM OF NATURE LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: WISDOM OF NATURE LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 1/27/2024. 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 JENNIFER CASTANEDA 24-27 95TH STREET, EAST ELMHURST, NY, 11369. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#218287

11378 LEZAJSK LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: LEZAJSK LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGA-

NIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 3/13/2024. 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, 5728 57TH DRIVE MASPETH, NY, 11378. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#217743

11420 LUNAR LOTUS WELLNESS LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: LUNAR LOTUS WELLNESS LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 3/8/2024. 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 LILLIAN LUU-VALDEZ 11132 126TH ST, PD SOUTH OZONE

PARK, NY, 11420. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#216792

11429 BAJEE TECH AND MULTISERVICES, LLC

NOTICE OF FORMATION OF LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC). NAME: BAJEE TECH AND MULTISERVICES, LLC. ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE OF NEW YORK (SSNY) ON 4/24/2024. 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 JACKINSTON JEAN 215-22 MURDOCH AVE, QUEENS VILLAGE, NY, 11429. PURPOSE/CHARACTER OF LLC: ANY LAWFUL PURPOSE.

#217382

BEHIND THE BENCH

The *Eagle* will devote even more coverage to the court officers, law clerks and other workers who make our courts run.

Have someone in mind who deserves a profile? Let us know who we should be covering.

Contact managing editor Jacob Kaye at JacobK@queenspublicmedia.com

IT'S IN QUEENS

This is truly a week with something for every taste. Polish film, a wacky circus, Pride fun, Guinean music, history, cricket, Muppets, and nature are a few of the options.

Agnieszka Holland Retrospective **June 7**

Coinciding with the U.S. release of her latest film *Green Border*, this retrospective honors Polish director Agnieszka Holland with a diverse selection of her greatest work, including rarely screened gems that show her ability to depict historical trauma and human struggle with sensitivity and compassion.

Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria's Kaufman Arts District

Circus Amok **June 7, 6 p.m.**

This NYC-based company provides free performances that address issues of social justice. Expect dance, improv, music, performance art, and puppetry.

Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-10 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City

Taking PRIDE in the Community **June 7, 7 p.m.**

Six films amplifying LGBTQ voices, followed by a reception and panel with the filmmakers.

Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Blvd.

Guinean Environmental Stewardship Traditions

June 7, 6 p.m.

NEA Heritage Fellow Sidiki Conde and his Tokounou Ensemble present Guinean drumming and dancing. Conde is a spiritual authority called a "Sundousou" in his ancestral West African village. Enter at 56th Avenue and Center Boulevard to meet at Hunter's Point South Park's Overhang, Long Island City.

Queens Night Market **June 8, 4 p.m.**

Six hours of music and dance with Vivarta Arts Dance Company, DJ Tommy "T" NYC, Alea, and Island Interlude Band.

Behind the New York Hall of Science in Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Jackson Heights Historic Weekend **June 8, June 9**

The first day includes an exhibition (10 am to 2 pm), lectures (10:45 am to 12:15 pm), and a self-guided tour (noon to 4 pm). The second day features an expert-guided tour at noon.

Community Church, 81-10 35th Ave., Jackson Heights

Astoria Artists Theater Variety Show **June 8, 6 p.m.**

A night of music, dance, comedy, and more. Audience votes for favorite act along with a panel of local celebrity judges.

Hellenic Cultural Center, 27-09 Crescent St., Astoria

Jamaica Dance Festival **June 8, 7 p.m.**

Free performances by Michela Marino Lerman and Pedro Giraud Tango Company.



Watch India take on Pakistan during the Cricket World Cup at Citi Field.

Photo via QEDC

Rufus King Park, vicinity of Jamaica Avenue, 89th Avenue, 150th Street and 153rd Street

Summer Jazz Fest **June 8, 4 p.m.**

Live music followed by a reception.

Maple Grove Cemetery, 127-15 Kew Gardens Rd.

Henson Music in the Courtyard **June 8, 3 p.m.**

The John Koozin Trio pays homage to the creativity and joy that Jim Henson's work has brought to the world.

Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria's Kaufman Arts District

World Premiere of Carlo Nicolau's Journey of Hope

June 8, 2:30 p.m.

Queens-based ensemble Percussia presents Jackson Heights-based, Mexican-American composer Carlo Nicolau's new work.

Jackson Heights Library, 35-51 81st St.

Coca-Cola Cricket Watch Party **June 9, 10:30 p.m.**

The Indian national cricket team plays its Pakistani counterpart as part of a world championship. Watch the match on the biggest video board in Major League Baseball. Food stands will be open.

Citi Field

Shireinu Choir of Long Island **June 9, 3 p.m.**

This Jewish, mixed-voice choir sings in English, Hebrew, and Yiddish. The repertoire showcases a variety of musical genres.



NEA Heritage Fellow Sidiki Conde and his ensemble present Guinean drumming and dancing in Long Island City.

Photo via QEDC

Queens College's LeFrak Concert Hall, 153-49 Reeves Ave., Flushing

Bang on a Can Music Series **June 9, 3:30 p.m.**

Guitarists Wendy Eisenberg and David Grubbs go head-to-head.

The Noguchi Museum, 09-01 33rd St., Long Island City

Season Highlights Tour

June 9, 11 a.m.

Explore the flora and fauna of the changing season with knowledgeable staffers.

Queens Botanical Garden, 43-50 Main St., Flushing

Mexican Music & Dance

June 9, 1 p.m.

Yloy Ybarra demonstrates his talent.

Thalia Spanish Theatre, 41-17 Greenpoint Ave., Sunnyside

Rooftop Films: One Hand Don't Clap

June 11, 7:30 p.m.

Watch this film about Calypso and Soca through the eyes of musicians Lord Kitchener and Calypso Rose.

Louis Armstrong House Museum, 34-56 107th St., Corona

NY Phil Concerts in the Parks

June 13, 8 p.m.

Thomas Wilkins conducts NY Phil in a program that ranges from Beethoven to Mendelssohn.

Cunningham Park, vicinity of Union Turnpike and 193rd Street, Fresh Meadows



The Shireinu Choir of Long Island comes to perform at Queens College.

Photo via QEDC

City Hall asks judge to pause roll out of solitary confinement ban

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When asked specifically if that meant the city would be challenging the law in court, Maginley-Liddie said, "We've just been working with the Law Department on next steps."

Maginley-Liddie took office just as the Council was preparing to pass the ban on solitary confinement bill in December and has consistently expressed her opposition to the bill.

Like Adams, Maginley-Liddie and her predecessor, Louis Molina, claim that the DOC no longer uses solitary confinement – advocates, public defense attorneys, lawmakers and formerly incarcerated New Yorkers say that solitary has effectively continued in a different name.

Nonetheless, the Adams administration has expressed staunch opposition to the bill both before and after its passage.

The fight over the bill was a contentious one. After being passed by the Council with a 39-7 vote at the final meeting of the 2023 legislative session, the bill was quickly vetoed by the mayor.

Almost a month after originally passing the bill, the Council overrode the mayoral veto, voting 42-9 in support of the legislation.

Now, with the city's filing in federal court, the fight over the bill continues.

In a statement to the Eagle, a City Council spokesperson defended the bill and questioned City Hall's motivation for attempting to block it from being implemented.

"Solitary confinement has been internationally recognized as torture and has led to the deaths of people subjected to it in New York City, while leaving others with severe mental and physical harm," the spokesperson said. "With over two dozen deaths of people in our jail system since 2022 and the ongoing risk to the health and safety of staff and people detained on Rikers every day, it is puzzling that this administration would continue fighting endlessly to block a duly enacted law that prohibits solitary confinement."

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, who sponsored the legislation, was more scathing in his rebuke of the city's court filing on Thursday.

"The administration clearly has the resources to implement the law," Williams said in a statement to the Eagle. "Instead, they're using those resources to try to continue the capability of prolonged isolation and preserve the status quo on Rikers."



Mayor Eric Adams has long been opposed to a law banning solitary confinement. This week, his administration asked a federal judge to delay the implementation of the law, which is supposed to go into effect next month.

File photo by Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

"I had hoped that when the Council overrode the mayor's veto by more votes than the bill was originally passed, the mayor would work faithfully to implement the law and improve conditions on Rikers — I'm disappointed that he's instead decided to waste time and resources while this irreversible harm continues in city jails," Williams added.

The Legal Aid Society, which represents the plaintiffs in *Nunez v. the City of New York*, did not respond to a request for comment before print time.

Last month, the Board of Correction, which sets the minimum standards for detention in the city's jails, released its proposed rules for the solitary confinement ban's implementation ahead of its July 28 start date.

The rules, which will be discussed at a BOC meeting on June 17, detail what the DOC can and can't do while placing a detainee who is alleged to have committed an offense into restrictive housing.

Under the rules, incarcerated individuals would be prevented from being held in an isolated cell for more than two hours per day within a 24-hour period and for more than eight hours at night directly after an alleged offense occurred – the confinement would be referred to as a "de-escalation" period. Should corrections officials determine that further confinement is required to de-escalate a situation, an incarcerated person could be held for up to four hours total in a 24-hour period.

The law would also allow for people in custody being placed in restrictive housing to have a hearing on whether or not their placement in restrictive housing is necessary. During that hearing, they would be allowed to be represented by an advocate, be it a lawyer, law student, paralegal or another incarcerated person.

The city's request to Swain to delay the law's implementation comes as she is considering whether or not to strip the city of its control of Rikers Island and hand it over to a court-ap-

pointed authority known as a federal receiver.

Last week, the Legal Aid Society submitted its final arguments in support of receivership in the case. They argue that in the eight years since the start of the consent judgment, the agency has been unable to meaningfully reduce violent conditions at Rikers Island and that an outside authority with powers that extend beyond those currently given to the DOC should be given the chance to take the reins at the notoriously dangerous jail.

The city has argued that it not only has proven itself capable of managing the jail complex, but that it should be given more time to continue to correct conditions there.

In the coming weeks, the public defense firm, federal prosecutors and the monitor will meet with the city and together craft a joint status report detailing where they all stand on receivership.

They'll next all appear before Swain in court on July 9.

BEHIND THE BENCH



Court Clerk Clifford Medina does his part in Civil Court

By **Ryan Schwach**
Queens Daily Eagle

Queens County Civil Court Senior Clerk Clifford Medina may work as a public servant, but he says he's just doing his part.

An immigrant from the Philippines, Medina came to Queens in 1984 and has lived in the borough ever since.

In 2014, Medina had only known the world of construction and roofing, and didn't know much of the court system when his mother-in-law suggested he take the exam to become a court officer.

"I knew absolutely nothing," he said.

However, looking for a career change, he took the test. Four years

later, he wound up in the academy to become a court officer.

"It was just an opportunity," he said.

After graduation, Medina wound up at the Harlem Justice Community Center and then at a Brooklyn courthouse. Once he became a court clerk, he requested a transfer back to his home borough.

No stranger to a career transition, Medina quickly adapted to his new job.

"Being a court officer was a great job, and I was as good a court officer as I could be, so it was a transition," he said. "Slowly but surely I felt I transitioned to more of a clerk role."

Now with a few years on, Medina believes he is just doing his part,

a member of a much larger and more important institution.

"I'm doing my part," he said. "It feels good that I'm doing my part in the judicial system of government."

"I'm fulfilling the role of my part in society, I'm still a humble enough guy to be like, 'You know what, I'm just doing my part,'" he added.

That doesn't mean he is complacent however – he says he works harder to improve himself as a clerk every day.

"I am fortunate enough now to have this good government job now, I just appreciate what I have and what I've been given," he said. "Ultimately, that's the thing I'm most grateful for and I'm just doing what I can to show my gratitude."



Queens Civil Court Senior Clerk Clifford Medina does his part in keeping the courts working. Courtesy of Medina