THE QUEENS DAILY EAGLE WISHES all mothers in the borough a happy Mother’s Day!

THE MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE has received a $598,238 three-year grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to support its Sloan Science & Film initiative, providing opportunities for celebrating and amplifying scientific-themed films. “While the Foundation’s support dates back to 2009, in recent years the Sloan Science & Film initiative has become a robust, thriving program that provides a unique resource and community hub to explore both physically and digitally the intersection of science and film,” said MoMI Associate Curator of Science and Film Sonia Epstein. “This year marks the first year that the initiative will have a presence in the Museum’s galleries, and the first year-long thematic Science on Screen film series, Extinction and Otherwise.”

A DECEMBER FIRE IN A QUEENS-bridge Houses apartment that killed one was deemed a homicide last week, the Queens Post reported. Firefighters arrived at the Thursday, Dec. 9 blaze on the second floor of 40-12 12th St., to find Lavina Nolley dead. An investiga-
tion found she had lacerations on her body and had died of smoke inhalation. She lived in a nearby building. The fire is believed to have been intentionally set. No arrests have been made and the investigation is ongoing.

THE NEW YORK METS’ FRIDAY night game against the Philadelphia Phillies was rained out and rescheduled for August, giving the Phillies an extra day to work off the hangover brought on by the Mets spectacular, record-setting 7-run comeback in the 9th in-
nning of Thursday night’s game in the City of Brotherly Love.

TWO PEOPLE WERE INJURED DURING a Friday morning fire in Corona. ABC7 report-
ed. The fire in the single-family home on 109th Street broke out around 9:30 a.m. Though the cause of the fire is still under investigation, lithium batteries were found at the scene and could have been the culprit, according to the authorities.

QUEENS RESIDENTS AND ELECTED officials rallied Friday to call for bus rapid transit on Northern Boulevard. “My vision for a GreenNewNorthern includes one with faster commutes, cleaner air and safer streets. BRT helps get us there,” Assemblymember Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas tweeted. “Queens is indeed the future.”

Adam Orlow (right) is sworn in as the Queens County Bar Association’s next president by his cousin and Queens Supreme Court Justice Jodi Orlow Mackoff.

By Jacob Kaye Queens Daily Eagle

It was a return to form for the Queens County Bar Association Thursday night.

Though it wasn’t the first time the organization was able to celebrate the legal community in-person since pandemic restrictions began to ease, Thursday marked the in-person return of the QCBA’s biggest night – its annual dinner.

Held at Terrace on the Park in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, the QCBA’s Annual Dinner and Installation of Officers and Managers was a celebration of those who had served the organization and those gearing up to serve it in the coming year.

Though he won’t begin his tenure until next month, Adam Orlow, of the Orlow Firm, was sworn in as the QCBA’s president, taking over duties from Frank Bruno, who served the past year as the head of the legal organization.

Orlow said that one of his main goals for the coming year was to pick up on an initiative championed by his soon-to-be predecessor: diversifying the bar.

He said that during his early years with the organization, former QCBA Executive Director Arthur Terranova went out of his way to make Orlow feel included. Orlow said the gesture sparked his involvement in Queens’ legal community and that he wants to be able to do the same for others.

“I want everyone in this association to feel... Continued on page 2

By Rachel Vick Queens Daily Eagle

Merle Hoffman founded Queens-based reproductive health clinic Choices in 1971 — one of the first in the country — as she pursued the right of a pregnant person to make their own choice when it comes to abortion. She has moved the clinic six times in the 50 years since its inception and last week, she took to the steps of Queens Borough Hall to speak out.

Hoffman’s first patient crossed the border from New Jersey, and the week before the rally she saw three women from Texas. She herself had an abortion in her 30s, with support and while she was married, because she wasn’t in a place to be a mother.

“My decision is enough,” the Queens College graduate said.

“If you cannot decide when or whether to be a mother and you don’t have that fundamental moral agency, all other rights stand on very brittle glass,” she added. “Now we have to fight. I want women to come out of their psychological closets — own your choices. This is the great... Continued on page 16

Dozens rallied outside Borough Hall on May 5 to demand protection for abortion rights.

Eagle file photo by Rachel Vick

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Queens rallies against threat to abortion rights

The celebration of his service was delayed because of the pandemic but on top of the adorning testimony from a number of speakers. The rally was presented with a proclama tion from Assemblymembers David Weprin and Cindy Vane.

"The many friendships and memories I’ve had over the years will never be forgotten," Terranova said. “I guess now my fare well is complete and I thank you all and the Association for this honor."

"This is not goodbye, we’ll continue to be part of the Queen’s legal community and I look forward to seeing you all in the future," he added.

Queens Supreme Court Judge Jodi Orlow Mackoff, whose cousin is the organization’s incoming president, led the swear in ceremony. Former Queens Supreme Court Judge Jeremy Weinstin served as the event’s host.

Also sworn in Thursday were Michael Abneri as president-elect, Zenith Taylor as vice president, Deborah Marie Weinstein as treasurer and Karen Spinelli as secretary.


The celebration was hosted by Eagle Urban Media.

In opposition to the Supreme Court draft opinion leaked days by Eagle Urban Media. Queens office is located at 8900 Sutphin Boulevard, Lower Suite LL11, Jamaica, Queens, NY 11435. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Daily Eagle, Circulation Office, 110 Fountain Street, Suite 2200, Brooklyn, NY 11211. Tuna: 718-422-7122. Legal Advertising Manager: Gina Ong. Legal@queenspublicmedia.com

City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams was among the elected officials in attendance at a May 5 abortion rights rally at Borough Hall. Adams shared her personal experiences in clinics.

Photo via Adrienne Adams/Twitter
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BROOKLYN DAILY EAGLE, of course, goes back to 1841.

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Jen Hopewell,
Assistant to the Publisher
jdh@brooklyneagle.com
America’s love affair with the lawn is getting messy

By Julia Rubin
Associated Press

It didn’t happen all at once, says the mother of two young kids. “We started smothering small sections of the lawn each year with cardboard and mulch and planting them, and by now the front yard is probably three-quarters planting beds,” she says. “Every year we do more.”

Her perennials and native plants require less upkeep and water than turf grass does. And she doesn’t need herbicides or pesticides — she’s not aiming for emerald perfection.

For generations, the lawn — that neat, green, weed-less carpet of grass — has dominated American yards. It still does. But a surge of gardeners, landscapers and homeowners worried about the environment now see it as an anachronism, even a threat.

“Like Ferrara, they’re chipping away at it. ‘America is unique in its fixation on the monoculture lawn,’” says Dennis Liu, vice president of education at the E.O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation in Durham, North Carolina. “Our English inheritance is our own little tidy green space.”

Now, drought, crashing insect populations and other environmental problems are highlighting — in different ways, in different places — the need for more kinds of plants in spaces large and small.

Some people are experimenting with more “eco-friendly” lawns, seed mixes you can buy with native grasses that aren’t as thirsty or finicky. Others are mowing less and tolerating old foes like dandelions and clover. Still others are trying to replace lawns, entirely or bit by bit, with garden beds including pollinator-friendly and edible plants.

It all leads to a more relaxed, wilder-looking yard.

“The more you can make your little piece that you’re a steward of go with nature’s flow, the better off everyone is,” says Liu.

In states with water shortages, many homeowners long ago swapped out turf grass for less-thirsty options, including succulents and gravel.

Elsewhere, the pandemic has sped the shift in thought, in aesthetics. “The more you can make your little piece that’s yours, but part of a more beautiful, larger space.”

Many homeowners associations still have rules about keeping yards manicured. And lawn services tend to be geared toward maintaining grassy expanses.

The landscapers’ trade group set up a new public platform this year, Voices for Healthy Grass, to present its side of things. “Whether people want to have a large yard, plant a forest of trees in their backyard, or want a meadow and unstructured plantings,” all are green options, he said.

Those concerned that grass lawns fall short in helping pollinators and other species face another problem. “A lot of people don’t want bees — there’s fear of nature,” says Holloway, the Georgia extension agent. “I think that’s changing, but it still has a long way to go.”

Replacing grass also takes patience. “One of the best parts of my job is site visits. I go to backyards that people have been working on for 20, 30 years, and it’s helped me get over the mindset that everything has to be done all at once. It really takes time” to create a yard that’s got plantings, rather than just lawn, Holloway says.

And it’s hard to overcome tradition and neighborhood expectations. A lawn “looks tidy, and it’s easier, it pays all these benefits.”

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COVID-19 official counts can miss mild cases – here’s how serosurveys that analyze blood can help

By Isabel Routledge

What does a serosurvey look for?

When you’re infected or vaccinated against a pathogen, like the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19, your body produces antibodies to fight it. Some types of antibodies remain in your blood long after you’ve recovered. During a serosurvey, researchers look in blood samples for these long-lasting antibodies. They act as markers of past exposure to the pathogen.

The power of this type of study is that it can reveal whether someone was previously infected with a particular pathogen, even if they didn’t have symptoms or take a test. Having specific antibodies in your blood can also mean you’re immune to a certain disease – scientists are still investigating what the markers of protection against COVID-19 might be, though.

If they test enough blood samples – ideally through a random sample of the population – researchers can use a serosurvey to estimate the proportion of a population that has been previously infected or vaccinated, and in some cases estimate the proportion of the population that is immune to a particular disease.

Can serosurveys tell the difference between an infection and vaccination?

Yes. In a recent study, my colleagues and I wanted to separate out those who had been previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 and those who had been vaccinated. So we looked for two different biomarkers in the blood samples.

Vaccines administered in the U.S. trigger your body to produce antibodies to a particular part of the SARS-CoV-2 virus called the spike protein. If we identified antibodies to the spike protein, that means a person could have been vaccinated, been previously infected with SARS-CoV-2, or both.

When people are naturally infected with SARS-CoV-2, they produce antibodies to another part of the coronavirus called the nucleocapsid protein. If we identified antibodies to the nucleocapsid protein, then we knew the patient had previously contracted COVID-19. Vaccination doesn’t trigger these particular antibodies.

The CDC study used this type of test to separate out only those who were previously infected.

How far back in time can this method ‘see’?

Antibodies take a few weeks to build up to their maximum level. Then their concentration wanes in the weeks and months after exposure to an infectious disease.

Colleagues of mine at the University of California, San Francisco are currently studying the dynamics of this process for COVID-19 in the Long-term Impact of Infection With Novel Coronavirus (LIINC) study. Since March 2020, they’ve been following volunteers in the Long-term Impact of Infection With Novel Coronavirus (LIINC) study. Several tests, including the one used in the recent CDC study, showed no evidence of any decrease in detecting antibodies over six months of observation. Additional studies using a different test found that the majority of patients had detectable levels of nucleocapsid antibodies in the blood at a year and at 16 months after infection.

The CDC study looked at blood samples collected between September 2021 and February 2022, which was at most two years after anyone would have contracted COVID-19. Based on current evidence, I’m not too concerned about a lot of false negatives based on how long ago people were infected. However, if there were some missed infections in this study, that would mean that the true proportion of the population that was previously infected is slightly more than the estimated 58%.

Why are serosurveys important to do?

Traditional disease surveillance measures, such as counts of reported cases or positive tests, are super important for monitoring the spread and burden of infectious diseases. But for a disease like COVID-19 that can cause lots of asymptomatic and mild infections, the numbers of reported cases may represent only the tip of the iceberg.

Case counts often miss asymptomatic infections, as well as infections in those who do not have access to health care or testing. It can also be tricky to compare data from disease surveillance systems over time and in different places.

Serosurveys are a way of capturing asymptomatic and unreported infections, and a well-designed serosurvey can often provide a “truer” picture of infection history in a population than case counts.

But serosurveys have their own, separate biases.

What factors make a serosurvey tricky to do well?

You need to consider who is in the group you’ve taken your samples from and whether they’re representative of the wider U.S. in terms of demographics, including location, age, biological sex, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, occupation and so on. Otherwise your finding might not be generalizable to the population as a whole.

Many studies, including the CDC report and my own work, rely on what’s called convenience sampling. We piggyback on blood samples that were initially collected for clinical testing or blood donation and then reuse them for the serosurvey. This means we’re only including people who are getting blood tests for health conditions or checkups, or those donating blood. We’re missing out on parts of the U.S. population who don’t access health care or donate blood.

Randomly selecting a representative sample of the entire population can get around those biases. However, this kind of study is extremely expensive and time-consuming to carry out. Just a small number have been conducted at the state level.

A further challenge is defining the threshold for considering an antibody test as positive or negative. These tests measure the concentration of a particular antibody in the sample. Antibody responses can vary depending on the severity of illness and time since infection. Researchers set the cutoff for a positive result too high, it can lead to more false negatives.

The recent CDC serosurvey acknowledged some limitations in how generalizable it really is. No data on race/ethnicity was available to weight the study results, and the study was likely to have over-represented people who could seek health care. If the antibody test was less accurate with mild or older infections, the true proportion of the population that was previously exposed could have been even higher than the 58% estimate. Despite these limitations, this study does provide hugely valuable data for tracking changes in SARS-CoV-2 transmission over time.

Isabel Routledge is a Postdoctoral Scholar in Medicine, University of California, San Francisco.
For Legal Advertising in the
Queens Daily Eagle
and assistance filing notices

Contact Gina Ong, Legal Advertising Manager
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By Andy Furman
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Dylan Brown is the newest member of the athletics staff at Brooklyn’s St. Joseph’s University – and Margaret Alaimo, the school’s Director of Athletics and Recreation says, “he’s had to hit the ground running, and will have a positive impact in our department.”

Brown is the Assistant Director of Athletics and Recreation. In his new position he’ll be a member of the senior administrative staff and will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of The Hill Center and the St. Angela turf facility and for the coordination of off-campus field rentals.

A double-alumna from SUNY-Cortland, Brown comes to Brooklyn after spending a year at Cornell University as event management and operations assistant.

Highlighted by senior Jessica Mecham’s two-hit shutout and walk-off hits by Ashleigh Hartwig and Jaden Mecham, the Bears of St. Joseph’s softball team swept the College of Mount Saint Vincent, 8-0 and 10-2 – both in six-innings, last Sunday in their season finale. The Bears finished their season 22-12, their best since joining the Skyline Conference, and clinched the No. 5 seed for the 2022 Skyline Championship with a 10-8 conference record.

Former St. Francis College baseball coach Dan Lynch reminds us St. Joseph’s basketball has always had a St. Francis connection. Three former men’s basketball coaches were Terrier alums – John Marinello, Dennis McDermott and Lynch. Some Brooklyn names who recently entered the CHSAA Hall of Fame – Jimmy Sullivan, Dennis McDermott and Lynch.

Some Brooklyn names who recently entered the CHSAA Hall of Fame – Jimmy Sullivan, Dennis McDermott and Lynch.

The Hill Center, St. Joseph’s athletic facility and practicing grounds of the Bears.
MEXICO — Cinco de Mayo: A person dressed as a woman fighter participated in a re-enactment of The Battle of Puebla as part of Cinco de Mayo celebrations in the Peñon de los Baños neighborhood of Mexico City, on Thursday. Cinco de Mayo commemorates the victory of an ill-equipped Mexican army over French troops in Puebla on May 5, 1862.

Ecuador — World Cannabis Day: A man smoked a marijuana cigarette as he took part in a march marking World Cannabis Day, officially observed annually on April 20th, to call for the full legalization of the drug in Quito, on Thursday. The law in Ecuador allowed personal use of cannabis of up to 10 grams and limited cultivation at home, but trafficking and sale of cannabis are illegal.

Spain — Return: Spain's Rafael Nadal returned the ball against David Goffin of Belgium during their match at the Mutua Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, on Thursday.

Washington, DC — Fenced in: An anti-scaling fence surrounded the US Supreme Court on Thursday. A draft opinion suggested the US Supreme Court could be poised to overturn the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade case, according to a Politico report released Monday. Whatever the outcome, the Politico report represented an extremely rare breach of the court's secretive deliberation process.
PHILIPPINES — Election: Residents passed by election campaign posters near a polling center in Manila, on Friday. The son of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr., Ferdinand Marcos Jr., and the current Vice-President Leni Robredo continued to lead against other presidential candidates as the country prepared to vote for its new leader next week.

Photo: Aaron Favila/AP

HOT TEA ISN’T ENOUGH

COVID-19 treatment is available. Treatment stops severe symptoms of the virus and reduces the risk of hospitalization. It works best when you start as soon as you get sick.

COVID-19 treatments are not a substitute for vaccination.

If you have COVID-19, call your doctor.
If you do not have a doctor, call 212-COVID19 to be evaluated for treatment.
Man who stormed Capitol in caveman costume gets prison

By Michael Kunzelman
Associated Press

A New York City judge’s son who stormed the U.S. Capitol wearing a furry “caveman” costume was sentenced on Friday to eight months in prison.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg told Aaron Mostofsky that he was “literally on the front lines” of the mob’s attack on Jan. 6, 2021.

“What you and others did on that day imposed an indelible stain on how our nation is perceived, both at home and abroad, and that can’t be undone,” the judge told Mostofsky, 35.

Boasberg also sentenced Mostofsky to one year of supervised release and ordered him to perform 200 hours of community service and pay $2,000 in restitution.

Mostofsky had asked the judge for mercy, saying he was ashamed of his “contribution to the chaos of that day.”

“I feel sorry for the officers that had to deal with that chaos,” said Mostofsky, who must report to prison on or after June 5.

Federal sentencing guidelines in his case recommended a prison sentence ranging from 10 months to 16 months. Prosecutors recommended a sentence of 15 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release.

Mostofsky was one of the first rioters to enter the restricted area around the Capitol and among the first to breach the building itself, through the Senate Wing doors, according to prosecutors. He pushed against a police barrier that officers were trying to move and stole a Capitol Police bulletproof vest and riot shield, prosecutors said.

“Mostofsky cheered on other rioters as they clashed with police outside the Capitol building, even celebrating with a fist-bump to one of his fellow rioters,” prosecutors wrote in a court filing.

Inside the building, Mostofsky followed rioters who chased Capitol Police Officer Eugene Goodman up a staircase toward the Senate Chamber, in Washington, Jan. 6, 2021. Mostofsky, the son of a New York judge, was sentenced on Friday to eight months in prison.

Supporters of President Donald Trump, including Aaron Mostofsky, right, who is identified in his arrest warrant, walk down the stairs outside the Senate Chamber in the U.S. Capitol, in Washington, Jan. 6, 2021. Mostofsky, the son of a New York judge, was sentenced on Friday, May 6, 2022, to eight months in prison.

AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta, File

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Inside the building, Mostofsky followed rioters who chased Capitol Police Officer Eugene Goodman up a staircase toward the Senate chamber. He took the police vest and shield with him when he left the Capitol, about 20 minutes after entering.

Mostofsky was carrying a walking stick and dressed in a furry costume. He told a friend that the costume expressed his belief that “even a caveman” would know that the 2020 presidential election was stolen from former President Donald Trump.

Mostofsky frequently wears costumes at events, according to his lawyers.

“To put the matter with understatement, the New Yorker is quirky even by the standards of his home city,” they wrote.

A New York Post reporter interviewed him inside the Capitol during the riot. He told the reporter that he stormed the Capitol because “the election was stolen.”

Mostofsky has worked as an assistant architect in New York. His father, Steven Mostofsky, is a state court judge in Brooklyn.

“The fact that his father is a judge means that he should have been better able than other defendants to understand why the claims of election fraud were false,” said Justice Department prosecutor Michael Romano.

Boasberg said none of the supportive letters submitted by Mostofsky’s family and friends explained how he “went down this rabbit hole of election fantasy.”

“I hope at this point you understand that your indulgence in that fantasy has led to this tragic situation,” the judge added.

Aaron Mostofsky pleaded guilty in February to a felony charge of civil disorder and misdemeanor charges of theft of government property and entering and remaining in a restricted building or grounds. Mostofsky was the first Capitol rioter to be sentenced for a civil disorder conviction.

Mostofsky’s lawyers asked for a sentence of home confinement, probation and community service. Defense attorney Nicholas Smith described Mostofsky as a “spectator” who “drifted with the crowd” and didn’t go to the Capitol to interfere with the peaceful transfer of power.

“He did things he should not have done,” Smith said. “But there’s a big difference between an ideologue who is motivated to commit violence and someone who ends up doing bad things when they find themselves in a crowd.”

More than 780 people have been charged with federal crimes related to the Capitol riot. Over 280 of them have pleaded guilty, mostly to misdemeanors. More than 160 defendants who have been sentenced, including over 60 who have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 14 days to five years and three months. Approximately 100 others have trial dates.

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

Ozone Park woman shot on doorstep

By Rachel Vick
Queens Daily Eagle

A Howard Beach man has been charged with the fatal shooting of an Ozone Park woman on her doorstep last week.

Giuseppe Canzani, 41, was charged with murder in the second degree and two counts of criminal possession of a weapon for the Wednesday afternoon attack at 94-59 106th Avenue.

“As alleged, this defendant clearly has no regard of human life and in broad daylight shot the victim as she stood in the entrance to her home,” said Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz.

“This is yet another reminder how senseless gun violence is causing heart-wrenching loss in our communities. The defendant is now facing very serious charges.”

Anna Torres, 51, was found by emergency services with a gunshot wound to the neck around 2:30 p.m. There were three shots fired, two of which hit Torres, NBC reported.

“Everybody loves my wife, my wife does no wrong to nobody, she’s always helping people,” her husband, David Aguilar, told the outlet. “I wanna know why he did that...She don’t deserve that.”

The DA alleges that the defendant is recorded on nearby video surveillance walking away from the home and getting into a car nearby. Canzani then drove to the 106th Precinct with a 45mm handgun and turned himself in.

He returns to court on May 26 and faces 25 years to life in prison if convicted.
Graffiti on subway surges as world visits NYC for ‘risky game’

By Jose Martinez
THE CITY

On April 18, the French graffiti artist Julien Blanc posted photos to Instagram of his signature "JiBEONE" tag on a Manhattan rooftop where he was, he wrote, “waiting for the sunrise.”

Days later, Blanc and graffiti partner Pierre Audebert were both struck and killed by a train at an elevated station along the No. 3 line in Brooklyn, in what sources described as the pursuit of a prized canvas sought by spray-paint Picassos around the world.

The deaths of Blanc, 34, and Audebert, 28, highlighted the enduring — and growing — allure of tagging New York trains decades after the heyday of graffiti in the transit system. The MTA has documented a recent surge in the number of subway cars tagged, nearly double so far this year from the same time period in 2019.

“For the newer generation who are interested in the subway, it’s still a draw,” said Eric Felisbret, a graffiti historian who painted trains as ‘DEAL CIA’ in the late 1970s and early 80s. “It’s the Mecca, where they want to sort of get that feather in their cap that they’ve painted on a train in the birthplace of subway graffiti.”

The 209 graffiti markups from Jan. 1 through early May amount to a 95% year-to-date increase from 2019; among those, a 33% decrease in April, days after the two deaths.

For the week starting March 28, the MTA tally showed 59 graffiti tags, by far, the highest weekly amount to a 95% year-to-date increase from 2019; among those, a 33% decrease.

The rise in underground artistry is evident on the MTA website, where the agency posts weekly updates for “incidents of vandalism” in the transit system. The MTA has documented a recent surge in the number of subway cars tagged, nearly double so far this year from the same time period in 2019.

The subway system has seen a nearly 20% increase since 2019 in the number of people on the tracks, most of whom are there voluntarily, according to the MTA, which is looking at ways to reduce intrusions into the path of trains.

The agency could not say how many track trespassing cases involved graffiti.

Fred Vilomar, who tagged trains as “REE” from 1973 to 1977, said the area in Brownsville has been “well known” in street-art circles for decades.

“It was a hotspot when I was teenager, but getting into that location, you have to have timing and luck, you understand?” he said. “It’s a risky game to play and I’m sorry their lives were lost.”

Vilomar, who is in his 60s and remains active as a street artist, said he quit spray painting in the subway after a friend was fatally struck by a train in the 1970s.

“It’s a Pilgrimage”

An NYPD spokesperson said trains stored in New York City and paint a subway car — they take that glory with them and have that notch on their belt, but they have to understand it’s not as glorious as it seems.

The short-lived sizzle driven by social-media photos and videos of spray-painted trains, which the MTA quickly removes from passenger service, has contributed to the subway graffiti resurgence, according to veterans of the scene.

“The MTA’s line of thinking was that if you remove the train from service instantly, you never let anyone see it and you take away the motivation immediately,” said Felisbret, the author of “Graffiti New York” and founder of at149.com, which chronicles subway graffiti history.

“But with the arrival of social media, they don’t really have that as a fighting tactic anymore.”

The Cost of Paint

The MTA said it expects to spend more than $1 million in 2022 on graffiti-related costs, as it has for the previous two years.

HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WERE SPENT TARGETING GRAFFITI FROM 1972 UNTIL 1989, WHEN THE MTA TOOK WHAT IT SAID WAS THE LAST TRAIN COVERED BY GRAFFITI OUT OF SERVICE TO BE SCRUBBED CLEAN.

The Sutter Avenue station in Brooklyn where two French artists’ bodies were found in April. May 5, 2022.

The agency could not say how many track trespassing cases involved graffiti.

Cest Fouad, a French-Algerian artist, told Gothamist last month he was not aware that Blanc and Audebert were planning to spray paint subway trains when he had dinner with them the night before they were found on the tracks.

“If I knew, I would tell them not to do it,” he said.

Felisbret, the veteran graffiti artist, told THE CITY this week he was “really horrified” by the two deaths, but said he doesn’t expect a long-term chilling effect on the number of artists from abroad who want to spray paint in the subway.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if we soon see tributes to them on trains, paintings that are posted to Instagram,” he said. “I think it will only briefly slow things down.”

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weeks from start of trial, judge orders emergency meeting in Churaman case

by Jacob Kaye
Queens Daily Eagle

A Queens Supreme Court judge has called for an unscheduled conference in the case of Prakash Churaman, who is weeks away from being tried a second time for the 2014 murder of 21-year-old Taquane Clark.

Queens Supreme Court Judge Kenneth Holder has ordered Churaman, his attorney Jose Nieves and Queens prosecutors to appear in court on Tuesday, May 10, to discuss the contents of a story recently published in Hell Gate, a new online New York City publication.

The outlet reported Wednesday that the two detectives who interrogated Churaman at the time of his arrest, when he was 15 years old, were the subject of a recent $2 million settlement paid by the city after the duo and eight other detectives allegedly withheld exonerating evidence in a 2015 Queens murder case.

Sharing similarities with Churaman’s case, Nieves argues that the settlement has relevance in Churaman’s upcoming re-trial and that prosecutors should have submitted the information into discovery.

“It’s very concerning to me that this information was provided to me by the press [and not by the DA’s office],” Nieves, a former candidate for Queens district attorney, told the Eagle.

On Wednesday evening, less than 24 hours after the story was published, Holder called for the unscheduled appearance to discuss the content of the article, according to Nieves.

“This story has basically prompted Judge Holder to call an unscheduled, and almost emergency court appearance so that we can discuss what ramifications this story has on this case and whether this story is going to become an issue with jury selection,” Nieves said. “That’s the purpose of the court appearance, to have both parties present and for the judge to articulate his concerns.”

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz inherited Churaman’s case from former Queens District Attorney Richard Brown but was in office when the now-22-year-old defendant successfully petitioned to have his original conviction overturned on the grounds that Holder had improperly prevented the defense from calling an expert on juvenile confessions as a witness.

“It’s an ongoing case — it’s something I can’t talk about outside of court,” Katz told the Eagle on Thursday. “But it is a prosecution that is coming up soon and the people stand ready.”

A spokesperson for the Queens district attorney’s office denied that prosecutors had violated discovery laws by not sharing information about the settlement with the defense. The spokesperson declined to comment on whether or not the district attorney’s office was aware of the recent settlement.

“We are ever cognizant of our discovery obligations and confident we have met them,” the spokesperson said.

Churaman, who maintains his innocence in the case, was arrested in 2014 on felony murder charges. Though prosecutors do not allege that Churaman pulled the trigger that killed Clark, they are allowed to charge him under the felony murder rule — the rule, which is used in over 40 states, says that if a death occurs during the commission of a felony, the death can be charged as murder for all participants in the alleged felony, even if they had no intention to kill or had no role in it.

Prosecutors say Churaman was one of the intruders in a 2014 Jamaica home robbery gone wrong. Churaman is accused of joining two others in the break-in of one of Churaman’s friend’s home. One of the intruders fatally shot Clark and injured another.

An elderly woman who lived in the home during the robbery later told police that while she was being held up by the intruders, she recognized Churaman’s voice and identified him as one of the suspects.

The “earwitness” is allegedly the only piece of evidence tying him to the scene.

Churaman says he was coerced into confessing to participating in the murder by Brown, who also led the interrogation of Chanel Lewis, the man charged in the 2014 killing of Karina Vetrano in Howard Beach. Lewis later said that he too was coerced into confessing to the crime.

Churaman, who spent three years as a teen detained on Rikers Island and several more in a New York prison, has been on house arrest, living with his mother and newborn child in their Queens home since his conviction was overturned in 2020.

He turned down a plea deal from the district attorney in the months following his overturned conviction, insisting he get the chance to prove his innocence. Since then, the lead up to his trial has been contentious.

Both the defense and prosecution have repeatedly accused one another of purposely delaying the start of the re-trial, which is currently scheduled for late June, when Holder is expected to wrap up an unrelated felony murder trial.

Additionally, a group of Churaman’s supporters have flocked to the courthouse for nearly all of his recent appearances and he has, at times, joined them. Holder scolded Churaman for participating in the rallies during a January hearing.

“(Churaman) is only out because of the consideration of this court and I have made considerations for him in order to continue to have his case go forward — it doesn’t allow him to be at rallies in support of what he has enough people running around doing that from what I can see,” Holder said in January, according to a court transcript.

“I haven’t told him to shut up. I haven’t put a gag order on this. I haven’t put a gag order on you. I am considering it, but I haven’t done it,” he added.

Tuesday’s appearance will mark the 96th time Churaman has appeared in Queens Criminal Court in relation to the case.
Queens bar gathers for annual dinner

Judge Hector LaSalle and Judge Valerie Brathwaite Nelson.

Oliva, Judge Karen Gopee and Sharifa Milena Nasser.

Judge Gary Miret, Jasmine Valle, Jessica Orellana, Thomas George Grasso, Judge Wendy Li.

Rocco Riccobono, Regina Grasso, Administrative Judge George Grasso, Judge Wendy Li.

Judge Lee Alan Mayerson and Scott Gary Kaufman. Photos by Walter Karlin.

Judge Randall Eng, Michael Abneri and Judge Karina Alomar.

Michael Nussbaum, Adam Orlow and Steven Orlow.

Adam Orlow, Judge Jeremy Weinstein and Paul Kerson.

QCBA Executive Director Jonathan Riegel (center), Janice Ruiz (second from right), Sasha Khan (right) and staff.

Adam Orlow, Judge Jeremy Weinstein.

Judge David Kirschner (center) and Judge Jeffrey Lebowitz (right).

Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, Arthur Terranova and Assemblymember David Weprin.

Adam Orlow and Judge Jeremy Weinstein.

Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, Arthur Terranova and Assemblymember David Weprin.

Brian Orlow, Steven Orlow, Judge Jodi Orlow Mackoff and Adam Orlow.

Janet Camilo. Photos courtesy of Ventura

Justice Lourdes Ventura honored by Dominican president

Chief Judge Roslynn Mauskopf said that after

Korea, Japan, Italy or Iran within the last 14 days; has been

70-99°F or 32-37°C and has a history of other serious

restricts access amid

Brooklyn federal court

by the Centers for Disease Control,

NUCLEAR WAR

Utility at the Thule Air Base.

outbreak, and asked high

Apparrently, a blast

from MDC, and asked high

the court due to concerns about the area's

Chief Judge Mauskopf also ordered all detain-

of the virus. Anyone who has travelled to China, South

and average

of Brooklyn's Metropolitan Detention Center

Advisement on the threat of a nuclear

sues the award to notable Dominican women, or

Grass, Judge Karen Gopee.

Judge Adam Orlow.

Adam Orlow, Steven Orlow, Judge Jodi Orlow Mackoff and family.

Adam Orlow, Steven Orlow, Judge Jodi Orlow Mackoff and family.

Judge Henryk H. Leuty and Judge Karen Gopee.

Judge David Kirschner (center) and Judge Jeffrey Lebowitz (right).

Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, Arthur Terranova and Assemblymember David Weprin.

Brian Orlow, Steven Orlow, Judge Jodi Orlow Mackoff and Adam Orlow.

Queens Supreme Court Justice Lourdes Ventura was honored by that nation's president Danilo Medina Sánchez.

Dominican Republic President Danilo Medina Sánchez presents Justice Lourdes Ventura with the Medal of Merit at the National Palace in Santo Domingo.

Dominican Women during an official ceremony.

Justice Lourdes Ventura, Dominican Republic First Lady Cándida Montilla de Medina, Dominican Republic Ministry of Women Minister Janet Camilo.