



Highlights

FEATURED



US DOJ Finds Evidence of Constitutional Violations at Paramus and Menlo Park Veterans Care Facilities

Sussex County, NJ – On September 7, 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice and the United States Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey released a scathing report exposing the gross negligence by the Murphy Administration at two state-run veteran's homes.

The conditions and practices described in the 40-page report bare strong parallels to those reported within the the Andover Subacute II/Woodland Behavioral and Nursing Center facilities. The DOJ has determined that these practices amount to violations of residents' rights under the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees the right to "conditions of reasonable care and safety while in the custody of the State." Of additional concern is that many of these negligent, dangerous practices are ongoing. DOJ investigators found that, even to date, the Paramus and Menlo Park facilities display the most basic deficiencies in patient care.

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Third Mayor's Dinner of 2023 Hosted for Sussex Municipalities

Sussex County, NJ – On Wednesday, September 20, 2023, the County of Sussex held a Mayor's Dinner, which was available to all municipalities in Sussex County. The well-attended dinner was held at the Carriage House Restaurant in Branchville.

There were several speakers who presented at the September 20th meeting. The County's Division of Senior Services educated the group about the various services the Division offers, such as: Assistance with Medicare, Assisted Transportation, Home Health, Homemaking and Legal Services, Rental Assistance and Managed Long-Term Services and Supports. Lorraine Hentz, the County's Deputy Administrator and Director of the Division of Senior Services advised that many people do not know what assistance is available through the division until they are in crisis. Ms. Hentz and her staff continuously offer these presentations to

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SUSSEX COUNTY
HARVEST HONEY & GARLIC FESTIVAL
 SATURDAY
OCT. 21, 2023
 10:00AM - 4:00PM

SUSSEX COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
 37 PLAINS ROAD AUGUSTA, NJ

FARMERS MARKET • HONEY • GARLIC • LIVE MUSIC • FOOD • KIDS CRAFTS

FREE
 RAIN OR SHINE

NO Pets Allowed. Service dogs only as defined by the American Disabilities Act. Comfort/therapy animals are prohibited.



Join us this Saturday, October 21st from 10AM-4PM for the 12th Annual Harvest, Honey & Garlic Festival located at the Sussex County Fairgrounds! Celebrate nature's abundance and buy fresh fruit and veggies from local farmers, eat at the food trucks, sip apple cider and wine, listen to live music, and shop our unique artisan vendors. Kids can take a hayride, paint a pumpkin, and make crafts for free! Our Fall Festival has fun for everyone! Rain or Shine.



Sussex County Sheriff's Office Welcomes New Officers

Sheriff Michael F. Strada is pleased to announce the recent graduation of several new Sussex County Sheriff's Officers from the Passaic County Police Academy's 59th Basic Police Class.

Following a ceremony held at the Sheriff's Office on September 25th, 2023, Sheriff Strada administered the Oath of Office to the following new members of the Bureau of Law Enforcement:

Sheriff's Officer Michael Bensley

A lifelong resident of Sussex County and a 2009 graduate of Newton High School, before his hiring, Sheriff's Officer Bensley attended Sussex County Community College where he studied Criminal Justice. A US Army / NJ National Guard Veteran, Officer Bensley deployed to Kuwait in 2019 in support of Operation Spartan Shield.



Sheriff's Officer Stephen Rotella

A lifelong area resident and a 2017 graduate of West Milford High School, Officer Rotella holds an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice from Passaic County Community College.

Sheriff's Officer Timothy Blahut

A lifelong resident of Sussex County and a 2013 graduate of Walkill Valley Regional High School, Officer Blahut holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Montclair State University.

Sheriff's Officer Daniel Mejorado

A lifelong resident of Sussex County and a 2015 graduate of Lenape Valley Regional High School, before his hiring, Officer Mejorado attended Norwich University as a student athlete where he played NCAA Division III football and studied History and Education.

Sheriff's Investigator Mark DiGeronimo

A lifelong resident of Sussex County and a 2017 graduate of Kittatinny Regional High School; Investigator DiGeronimo served as a Squad Leader throughout the



US DOJ *Continued from page 1*

At the height of the pandemic, and in the wake of shocking reports of mounting deaths and mistreatment at Andover/Woodland, Sussex County Commissioners struck early in May of 2020 by filing document requests demanding answers for the hundreds of victims of the Murphy Administration’s misguided and failed COVID policies. Nonetheless, the Murphy Administration continues to stonewall the Sussex County leaders who remained undeterred in their fight to advocate for the victims and their families; the County has taken legal action to obtain answers. “Sadly, the disturbing findings in this report reinforce our

determination to see our lawsuit go through to fruition. It is crystal clear why the State is hiding what they did and hiding their lack of competence not only from us, but also attempting to usurp the investigation by the federal government. This Board will keep hammering the State in order to expose those responsible and make sure this never happens again,” said Commissioner Dawn Fantasia, liaison to the Sussex County Division of Health.

The Board will continue to aggressively pursue answers and will share information with Sussex County residents as it becomes available.

Third Mayor’s Dinner *Continued from page 1*

provide an overview of the Division of Senior Services and encourage individuals to contact her and her staff to seek assistance before it reaches a critical point.

Also in attendance was Jacqueline Suarez, the Acting Commissioner for the Department of Community Affairs and Rick Richardella, the Local Assistance Bureau-Bureau Chief for the Division of Local Government Services. The presentation provided an overview of shared services that promote efficiency and effectiveness for the welfare of all parties involved while exercising fiscal restraint, specifically as it relates to school regionalization, municipal courts, and fire/EMS/DPW services.

This is the third such event held in 2023 as Director Carney has repeatedly stated that one

of his main focuses would be to bring all of the County’s mayors together to discuss current County events and initiatives, share what is going on in each of the County’s municipalities, and come together in a roundtable setting. It was one of the goals he identified in his speech at the County’s Reorganization Meeting held back in January. Director Carney stated “My plan for 2023 is to develop better connections with our employees, more meetings with our administrators, and bring back open forums with the County’s mayors to discuss issues and accomplishments throughout the County.”

For anyone that was not able to attend the dinner, information distributed and discussed will be sent to each municipality. Please contact the Board of County Commissioners Office at 973-579-0240 with any questions.

Police Academy.

**Sheriff’s Officer
Alfred Boye-Codjoe**

A lifelong resident of Sussex County and a 2017 graduate of Walkill Valley Regional High School; prior to his hiring, Officer Boye-Codjoe attended the

County College of Morris where he pursued a degree in Nursing. Additionally, between 2020 and 2023 Officer Boye-Codjoe served as a New Jersey State Department of Corrections Correctional Police Officer.

Following a brief period of field training instruction, the new

officers will be assigned to the Courthouse Security and Prisoner Transport Unit.

Immediately following swearing in the new officers, Sheriff Strada congratulated them, welcomed them to the agency, and wished them success in their careers.



The sunspotter telescope outside of Dennis Library at the Spot the Sun STEAM event in September

Center for Lifelong Learning Presentation Canceled

The Center for Lifelong Learning at Sussex County Community College (SCCC), regrets to inform Sussex’s senior residents that its free October 13 presentation, “The Rock and Roll Music of Our Lives – Part 2” has been cancelled due to the presenter having fallen ill. The Center for Lifelong learning will notify the community, should the presentation be rescheduled.

In the meantime, take a look at all that SCCC’s Center for Lifelong Learning has to offer by visiting www.sussex.edu/community/center-for-lifelong-learning/.

SCLS Hosts Events for Upcoming Eclipses

Sussex County, NJ – The Sussex County Library System (SCLS) is hosting a series of educational and engaging programs to gear up for two exciting celestial events – a partial solar eclipse on October 14, 2023 and a full solar eclipse on April 8, 2024.

Earlier this month, the library hosted the “Spot the Sun STEAM” program, which proved to be a hit among kids and families. This program featured informative discussions about the sun, sunspots, telescopes, and offered children the opportunity to create their own sun crafts.

SCLS has additional events planned to further educate and entertain the community including:

[Get Ready for the Eclipse @ Louise Childs](#)

Date: October 12

Time: 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Location: Louise Childs Branch, 21 Stanhope Sparta Rd, Stanhope, NJ

Join Miss Derenda to learn about the eclipse and make eclipse related crafts! Each family that attends will receive a pair of eclipse glasses to safely view the annular eclipse on October 14th! Supplies are limited (1 per family); please register below to secure your spot.

[Kids Eclipse Viewing @ Main Library](#)

Date: October 14

Time: 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Location: Main Library, 125 Morris Turnpike, Newton, NJ

Join Miss Kim outside from 1:00pm-2:00pm for safe solar eclipse viewing with eclipse glasses. Eclipse-related crafts will also be available all-day in the children’s area of the library to celebrate.

In the spring, SCLS will host a Solar Fair in preparation for the total solar eclipse.

These programs and supplies are made possible through the NJ State Library with funding from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Space Science Institute, STAR Net, and its Solar Eclipse Activities for Libraries (SEAL) program.

For more information about these programs and other library events, please visit Sussexcountylibrary.org/events.



Sussex County Public Health Nursing
Offers Flu Vaccine Clinics for Fall 2023



Hardyston, NJ – Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The best way to prevent flu is by getting a flu vaccine each year. Although influenza viruses spread year-round, most of the time flu activity peaks between December and February. The Office of Public Health Nursing offers flu vaccination clinics annually throughout the county at various locations and times.

This fall, the Office of Public Health Nursing will be offering both the regular flu vaccine and the high-dose flu vaccine, recommended for individuals age 65 and older. The cost of the flu vaccine is \$25.00 per dose, and the cost of the high-dose is \$65.00 per dose. Cash or checks are accepted; however, credit

and debit cards are not accepted. Flu vaccines are free for individuals with Medicare Part B and any Blue Cross Blue Shield plan. Participants must bring their Medicare Part B and/or Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance card.

In addition, the Office of Public Health Nursing is also offering flu vaccinations for residents who are homebound. Homebound residents are those requiring a taxing amount of effort to leave the home or those medically advised not to leave the home.

Clinics will be held during October on the dates, times and locations listed in the chart below, registration is required. Please call the Office of Public Health Nursing to schedule an appointment at 973-579-0570, ext. 1275.

FALL FLU VACCINATION CLINICS 2023

By appointment only.

Wednesday
October 18, 2023
Sussex County Library
Sussex-Wantage Branch
69 Route 639
Wantage, NJ 07461
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday
October 19, 2023
Knoll Heights Senior Center
40 Trapasso Drive
Sparta Township, NJ 07871
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Saturday
October 21, 2023
Fredon Civic Center
436 Route 94
Fredon, NJ 07860
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Wednesday
October 25, 2023
Byram Firehouse
225 US-206
Byram Township, NJ 07821
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Thursday
October 26, 2023
The Office of Public Health Nursing
201 Wheatsworth Road
Hamburg, NJ 07419
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Saturday
October 28, 2023
Sandyston Municipal Building
133 Route 645
Sandyston, NJ 07826
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING

Project: Includes Milling, Paving, Striping, and ADA upgrades as necessary, of select distressed Sussex County Routes. Route selection is predicated upon a conditional assessment and rating completed by the Sussex County Division of Engineering and Sussex County Division of Public Works. Resulting route ratings are used to prioritize roads for allocations of available resources.

Contract & Funding:

- Low Bidder: Riverview Paving Inc.
- Contract awarded at June 14, 2023 Commissioner Meeting in the amount of \$8,853,823.57
- Miles of Road in 2023 Program: 30.32
- Funded through NJDOT State Aid & County Capital

Work Schedule: In road 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

MILLING & PAVING: Percent Complete 52%

- Jul. 11-13: CR 565 Lewisburg Rd *-complete*
- Jul. 14-26: CR 565 Glenwood-Martin Station Rd *-complete*
- Jul. 27-Aug. 8: CR 651 Clove Creamery-Unionville Rd *-complete*
- Aug. 9-14: CR 644 Vernon Crossing Rd *-complete*
- Aug. 9-21: CR 517 Vernon-Glenwood Rd *-complete*
- Sep. 5-8: CR 675 Montague New Rd *-active*
- Sep. 11-14: CR 560 Tuttles Corner-Dingmans Rd
- Sep. 18-25: CR 653 Montague Clove Rd
- Sep. 27-28: CR 669 Houses Corner Rd
- Oct. 2-3: CR 648 Sunset Inn-Limecrest Rd
- Oct. 9-13: CR 605 Old Stanhope Rd
- Oct. 17-18: CR 602 Stanhope-Hopatcong Rd*

*Night Work: In road 7:00 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.

STRIPING & PAVEMENT MARKINGS:

- Jul. 17-Sep 6: CR 565 Lewisburg Rd *-complete*
- Jul. 31-Sep 6: CR 565 Glenwood-Martin Station Rd *-complete*
- Aug. 10-Sep 6: CR 651 Clove Creamery-Unionville Rd *-complete*



Typical Paving Operation



Typical Milling Operation

- Aug. 17-Sep 6: CR 644 Vernon Crossing Rd *-complete*
- Aug. 28-XX: CR 517 Vernon-Glenwood Rd *-active*
- Sep. 11-12: CR 675 Montague New Rd
- Sep. 18-19: CR 560 Tuttles Corner-Dingmans Rd
- Sep. 27-28: CR 653 Montague Clove Rd
- Oct. 2-3: CR 669 Houses Corner Rd
- Oct. 5-6: CR 648 Sunset Inn-Limecrest Rd
- Oct. 16-17: CR 605 Old Stanhope Rd
- Oct. 19-20: CR 602 Stanhope-Hopatcong Rd

Note: Tentative schedule based on progression of the contractor. Subject to change based on weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

Traffic Impacts: **EXPECT DELAYS.**

Most work conducted under single lane closures.

Contact Information: For more information about this project please feel free to contact Josh Roe, Principal Engineer at the Sussex County Division of Engineering at 973-579-0430 or emails can be sent to dpw@sussex.nj.us



Sussex County Division of Health Participates in Sussex County Day

The mission of the Sussex County Division of Health is to protect, promote, maintain, and improve the health and quality of life for Sussex County citizens and visitors through a responsive, well-managed, organized community effort. As part of this mission, the Division of Health attends various events throughout the year as a preventative and educational approach to advocating for the health and wellness of its residents.

On September 17, 2023, the Division of Health participated in Sussex County Day at the Sussex County Fairgrounds in Augusta. The division staffed two tables to provide valuable information about its programs and services to the community and answer any related questions.

A Public Health Nurse, Helenanne Keenan, was stationed at one table to provide information and

answer questions about the New Jersey Cancer Education and Early Detection (NJCEED) Program and Special Child Health Services. Visitors received information about the programs and children were given a craft to take home.

NJCEED offers a variety of services to the uninsured including but not limited to breast exams, pelvic exams, prostate exams, PSA levels and mammography if needed. Clinics are held monthly by appointment only at the Office of Public Health Nursing located at 201 Wheatsworth Road in Hardyston. Special Child Health Services are available to assist children with special needs and their families from birth until their twenty-second birthday. To obtain additional information about these programs, please call the Office of Public Health Nursing at 973-579-0570, ext. 1275 or email scphn@sussex.nj.us.

A Community Health Worker, Danielle Osellame, was stationed at another table to provide information about emergency



Danielle Osellame
Office of Public Health Nursing

preparedness. First aid kits were distributed to the community and preparedness coloring books were given to children. Water well testing kits were also distributed to the community for at-home testing of well water as well as at-home COVID-19 testing kits. Municipalities, senior groups, and schools can request additional resources and on-site education sessions by calling the Office of Public Health Nursing at 973-579-0570, ext. 1275 or emailing scphn@sussex.nj.us.

SCCC Center for Lifelong Learning Brings Art Education to Sussex Seniors

Newton, NJ – Last month the Center for Lifelong Learning at Sussex County Community College (SCCC), a collaboration between the Sussex County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Senior Services, and Sussex County Community College hosted a free presentation as well as a class for seniors interested in the art of drawing.

The Center for Lifelong Learning hosted a free presentation titled “Delve Inside Outsider Art” in the Atrium of the Performing Arts Center at SCCC. Professor Michael Hughes, a practicing artist and member of the Fine Arts faculty at SCCC, gave a lecture celebrating artists who are driven by a need to create, yet work outside the parameters of fine art. This “outside the box” discussion highlighted primitive artists such as Henri Rousseau and Grandma Moses along with the Folk Art movement.

The Center will also offered a class called “Introduction to Drawing.” This is a five-part class that emphasizes

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the development of observational drawing skills and hand-eye coordination. Basic drawing elements such as line, proportion, perspective, composition, texture, and the study of light and shade were investigated through various perceptual and conceptual approaches. The class was intended for beginning students as well as those who want to refresh their skills before moving on to more advanced studio courses.

For additional information on the Center for Lifelong Learning or to pre-register for upcoming classes, please contact the Sussex County Division of Senior Services at (973) 579-0555, ext. 1277 or via email at seniorservices@sussex.nj.us.

Essay Contest Announced for Sussex County Military Veterans Salute

Newton, NJ – The Sussex County Board of County Commissioners, Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Senior Services and the Sussex County Veterans Committee honors its veterans each year at the Salute to Military Veterans parade. The event will be held this year at the Sussex County Fairgrounds on November 5, 2023. This is a significant program to honor the sacrifices and contributions of our military veterans.

Each year a patriotic essay contest is held to commemorate this special event and to honor the veterans. Sussex County students in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades are encouraged to submit an essay to show their support and appreciation to the veterans of Sussex County, while gaining an understanding and knowledge of what the veterans have contributed and sacrificed. Entries from students who are home schooled will also be accepted.

The rules/requirements of the contest are as follows:

1. Grades 6, 7 and 8: Topic “Why Are We Saluting Sussex County Military Veterans?”
2. The essay must be 200 words or less. Essays should be written on a volunteer basis by the student.
3. Each school should select one essay each written by a girl and a boy.
4. Copies of the selected essays must be forwarded to the Sussex County Division of Senior Services, One Spring Street, Newton, NJ 07860, by September 29, 2023. The following information



must be submitted with each essay entry:

- School name
 - Grade
 - Student’s name, address, and phone number
 - School point of contact – name and phone number
5. All entries will be reviewed and judged by members of the Veterans Committee which are representatives from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. Student and school information will not be provided to the judges to ensure fairness.
 6. One girl and one boy will be selected as the winners and will be asked to read their essay at the November 5, 2023 event. Each winner will receive \$200.00. Permission to publish the winning essay is required.
 7. Contest winners, their parents and the school will be personally contacted by the contest chair when a decision is rendered.

Additional information and questions can be directed to the Sussex County Division of Senior Services at 973-579-0555, ext. 1226 or seniorservices@sussex.nj.us.

Homelessness Prevention Assistance at Social Services

Sussex County Division of Social Services offers residents various types of assistance based upon their current needs and circumstances. One such form of assistance includes homelessness prevention. Homelessness prevention assistance can be utilized to help with items such as back rent, back utility payments, security deposits and linkage to area providers just to name a few. The overall goal of this assistance is to help the individual attain self-sufficiency. To accomplish this goal, a social worker will often begin by completing a full assessment and review the individual's income and expenses. This process helps to identify the reason for a missed payment and ensures that living expenses are affordable.

The individual is encouraged to take advantage of the Social Services food pantry and other partnering agencies, which in turn can help to lower monthly expenses. All residents seeking assistance are screened for other programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which can truly help to offset living expenses. Residents in need of assistance are encouraged to apply for SNAP online at [MyNJHelps-Customer](#).

Residents who would like to utilize the on-site food pantry or obtain additional information about housing, SNAP, or the various other forms of assistance available through Social Services can call 973-383-3600 or visit the agency at 83 Spring Street in Newton, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Project: Paving of Vernon DPW Yard

Milestone Status: DPW crews work to complete the in-house paving operation of the Vernon DPW garage parking lot.

The parking lot has not been paved since 1978, when the Vernon Garage was built.

This work was completed in two days.



Expo Offers Support Resources for Caregivers

Newton, NJ – The Sussex County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Senior Services recognizes the need for supports and services for caregivers. Caregivers are individuals who help an elderly or disabled family member or friend with tasks such as shopping or getting to the doctor. Caregivers also assist with personal care, housekeeping, nutritional needs, legal and financial matters, transportation, coordination of medical care, and more. Assistance may be provided for as little as a few hours a week or many hours a day. Providing these services on a continual basis can present multiple challenges for caregivers. In most instances, the caregiver does not know what they need until they need it and are unaware of the local services and supports available to them.

The 2023 Caregiver Expo, sponsored by the Sussex County Division of Senior Services, provides caregivers the opportunity to learn about the many resources available in the county to support

them as they strive to enable seniors to remain as independent as possible in their homes and communities. This event will take place on Thursday, October 26, 2023, from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at the Farmstead Golf and Country Club located at 88 Lawrence Road in Lafayette, NJ.

Caregivers will be given an opportunity to obtain valuable information and resources that will assist them in specialized care, self-care, and planning for future eventualities. These will include home care services, transportation, nutrition programs, medical equipment, social services, legal services, respite services, support groups, and much more.

The program will include a short overview of the services provided by each agency in attendance, allowing the caregiver to discover the depth of supports available. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres will be provided.

Admission is free, but pre-registration is required. Register today by contacting the Sussex County Division of Senior Services at 973-579-0555, ext. 1277, by fax at 973-579-0550, or by email at seniorservices@sussex.nj.us.

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