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STATE REP. KINSEY
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IN PA. PRISON SYSTEM

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BBQ

BBQ Pork Ribs	\$16.50 (1/2) \$29.00 (Slab)
BBQ Beef Ribs	\$19.25 (1/2) \$31.25 (Slab)
BBQ Chicken	\$9.25 (1/2) \$18.50 (Whole)
Jerk Chicken	\$9.25 (1/2) \$18.50 (Whole)
Fried Chicken	\$9.50 (1/2) \$18.50 (Whole)
BBQ, Jerk, or Fried Wing	\$4.65 (3 Wings)

Platters

BBQ Pork Ribs-	\$17.00
Pulled Pork-	\$15.00
BBQ Beef Ribs-	\$18.00
BBQ Chicken-	\$14.50
w/White Meat	\$15.50

Jerk Chicken-	\$14.50
w/White Meat	\$15.50
Fried Chicken-	\$14.50
w/White Meat	\$15.50
Chicken Wings-	\$13.25
BBQ Pork Ribs & Chicken-	\$22.50
w/White Meat	\$23.50
BBQ Beef Ribs & Chicken-	\$24.50
w/White Meat	\$25.50
Turkey Wing-	\$13.50

Seafood

Shrimp-	\$24.00 (12) \$12.00 (6)
Fresh Fish Sandwich-	
Whiting	\$9.75
Catfish	\$10.25
Swai	\$10.25
Fresh Fish Platter-	
Whiting	\$14.75
Catfish	\$15.25
Swai	\$15.25
Grilled Salmon	\$17.00

Shrimp Platter-	\$27.50 (12) \$17.00 (6)
Fish/Shrimp Combo Platter-	
Whiting	\$26.75
Catfish/Swai	\$27.25
6 Crab Balls	\$10.00

Crab Cake Platter (2 Cakes) \$21.00

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Apple Cobbler-	\$4.00
Peach Cobbler-	\$4.00
Assorted Cakes-	\$4.00
Banana Pudding	\$4.00

Signature Sides & Sides

Potato Salad-	\$4.00/8.00
Cabbage-	\$4.00/8.00
Collard Greens-	\$4.00/8.00
Candied Yams-	\$4.00/8.00
Mac & Cheese-	\$4.75/\$9.50
String Beans-	\$4.00/8.00
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Seafood Salad-	\$4.00/8.00
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*All vegetables cooked
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**WE
ACCEPT**



STATE REP. CHRIS RABB: THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE AND BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS



By James Williams
Editor-in-Chief

Photo courtesy of: Rep. Rabb

James: Ok, let's get right to it. You crafted legislation for rotating ballot positions for candidates. And I love it because, you know, whoever gets the first or second ballot position, is probably going to win.

Rabb: And equally important, the person no matter how great they are, who gets the worst ballot position is almost certainly going to lose. So imagine, I'm one of your listeners/readers, who has done everything right. I got a great resume, a strong connection to the community, good values, all of those things. And they do everything they're supposed to do, and then they have to pick a number out of an old coffee can, to determine their place on the ballot...and they pull the worst number. Their party leadership is going to say don't run because nobody's going to make it down that far on the ballot. You don't have any chance. And then they say, I was raised to believe, if you work hard, do all the right things, you have a chance. And they're going to say, you picked a bad number so you got to drop out. People are pressured all the time to drop out because of the architecture, the inequitable architecture of ballots. And most people don't know that because they've never been a candidate before. But for those folks like you, for me, who understand the backroom process and all of that, we know that good people are discouraged to run if they have a bad ballot position. So we're basically saying, for those counties that have the tech-

nology to do so right now, just rotate the ballot position so no one has an unfair advantage. That's it! I mean it's that simple. And people who push back say, well, I don't know if we can do that. I said, you play the lottery, you trust the government to run the lottery, I think you do. Because you're at, you know, Wawa, and you're getting your numbers in there. That's run by the government. We can do the same thing with elections, just rotate the names so that no one has a significant advantage over anyone else. And then people can run on the merits and not how high up they are on the ballot.

James: There's a reason why everybody puts their ballot number on their signs, right?

Rabb: But you know what? No one's ever voted for me because of a number.

James: Let's talk about your legislation for a National Popular Vote. I don't think that will ever happen. It's a good idea in theory and I support it. But I just don't see that coming to pass in my lifetime.

Rabb: I understand. But I think after the insurrection of January 6, more people will start thinking about how important this stuff is. The insurrectionists sought to have a coup, at the very least. They sought to stop the process of counting the electoral votes. Now, the electoral votes, you need 270. But each state has to certify them. But how they do that goes from state to state. So if you enter into an interstate compact of states, if states come together and say, we are only going to put our electors to whomever won the popular vote. Then you just need to have enough states that represent at least 270 electoral votes to bypass the electoral college. So this doesn't get rid of the Electoral College.

This just leverages the individual and collective power of states to say, we are giving our electoral votes to the winner of the popular vote, which every industrialized nation does a popular vote. Like we're a democracy that doesn't trust the voters. Because we have this intermediary, the Electoral College, which no one understands, actually decides who becomes president and not a direct vote. So this bypasses that and says, look, if the national popular vote goes to that candidate, our state will give our electoral votes to whomever that is, regardless of their party. And by the way, this movement was started by Republicans, even though you know, we've had two presidents who've lost the popular vote this century. It's actually a nonpartisan piece of legislation. This does not benefit one party over the other. This benefits democracy.

James: I don't like the Electoral College in itself, because I know that most of the electors are just political heads. It's nothing but political insiders who donate a lot of money. If you ever want to meet who's in the Electoral College in Pennsylvania just go to the PA Society.

Rabb: So here's the thing though, to change it, to remove the Electoral College, you need a constitutional amendment to the US Constitution. And that's beyond my authority as a state lawmaker. So this is how those of us in state legislatures around the country can work in a bipartisan effort to bypass the Electoral College without abolishing it. I have constituents and other stakeholders who say what you say, we need to get rid of it altogether, which I agree. That's much more difficult than my legislation because my legislation doesn't require every state to participate, only enough states to get us to 270 electoral votes. And we simply

say, our electors are going to whoever won the national popular vote. And that's a very inventive way to do something legally and constitutionally, as opposed to saying, let's dismantle something that's been around for 200 years.

James: And you can probably get that with just the North East and the Great Lakes. You can almost get to that number, just using those states.

Rabb: I forget what the number is, but we're not too far away from it. And as soon as we get to that 270, it's a game changer. There's going to be a circuit breaker to make sure that we never have a president who is in office who has not won the majority of the public well of voters.

James: Before we wrap up, let's talk about your legislation on background checks for individuals looking to run for elected office?

Rabb: Why wouldn't we do that for folks who are going to be around young people, and going to be around all kinds of folks. It's just a matter of equity. If we ask it of one group of people, we should ask of another, particularly folks who could be the next generation of public servants. Now, this doesn't prohibit people from running. So this is not a ban. This is about transparency. And I'm consistent about transparency and accountability. There's extraordinary transparency around elected officials in terms of how we vote, how we spend our money, our public remarks, our attendance, all of that is available. Well, if you're a candidate, there should be a certain level of transparency as well. And I'm just asking for fairness across the board. Now, you know, people have asked me what about drug testing? Drug testing of public servants. I think what's good for the goose is good for the gan-

der. So if we're doing drug testing, and if lawmakers are allowing private employers to do that, including medical cannabis, which is a problem because that's a legal medication for folks who are card carrying members whom are patients. But look, that would change a lot of behaviors in Harrisburg. If my colleagues and I were drug tested, it could reveal all kinds of hypocrisy, that would potentially clean out Harrisburg. So that's just one example of how far we could go to make a point. Because just the number of DUIs among my colleagues in a given term is significant. And we're voting on DUI legislation. I have an amendment coming up to remove penalties for cannabis DUIs, where the driver is not impaired. So if you have cannabis in your system, from 30 days ago, and even if you ingested that cannabis four weeks prior, and were not high, then you could be arrested. You could be tried and convicted of a DUI having never been high. And let's remember that over 600,000 Pennsylvanians have medical cannabis cards. Many of them are elders. Many of them need the medication and do not use it for psychedelic purposes. They're not using it to get high. And they are endangered every time they get behind the wheel, even though they're not impaired. And so we're trying to protect responsible drivers who are legal users of medical cannabis. And when we talk about drug testing, we have to put that in context. But yes, I believe that we need to have more transparency. And if lawmakers are asking regular folks to jump through hoops, they should jump through the same hoops.

POLITICS

STATE REP. KINSEY SEEKS SOLUTIONS FOR PROBLEMS IN PA. PRISON SYSTEM

The Town Crier- is a re-print of press releases issued by elected officials.

Harrisburg- State Rep. Stephen Kinsey, D-Phila., held a news conference today with House and Senate colleagues and prison-reform advocates to discuss legislation to help address systemic problems in Pennsylvania's prison system

"Right now, in Pennsylvania and the entire United States, we have a prison system that does not work," Kinsey said. "We must pass legislation to reform this system, so that those incarcerated have a chance to live dignified lives when they're serving their sentence and when they've completed it."

The lawmakers are seeking enactment of several bills that would improve the prison system for incarcerated people and their families as well as save taxpayer dollars, including:

Probation and Parole Reform: Earned Compliance Credits. This legislation would create Earned Compliance Credits, which would reduce the time that low-risk, non-violent offenders would be on active supervision. For each month in compliance, their supervision time would be reduced by 15 days. Once all restitution, fines, and fees have been paid, the court or releasing authority would be able to reduce the period of supervision in proportion to the total amount of credits earned.

SCI Nutritional Health Study. This legislation would require the Joint State Government Commission to study SCI's nutritional value of food and incarcerated peoples' health conditions. The commission would examine sources of calcium, fruits, grains, protein and vegetables that are provided with each meal.

Furthermore, the number of calories provided over the course of three meals per day would be examined.

Medical Parole and Early Release of Aging and Infirm Inmates (co-authored with Burgos). This legislation will be introduced in the form of a two-bill package. The first bill would establish a medical parole program for non-violent, older inmates who have medically debilitating or terminal ailments, as well as an early release program that would allow for the early release of non-violent inmates who are 60 or older or who have served 20 years of their sentence. The second bill would create a medical parole program for inmates who are 60 or older and who have a terminal illness. Those eligible under the legislation would be allowed to petition the Pennsylvania Parole Board for medical parole or early release, and the board would have full discretion to accept or reject these petitions.

Alternatives to Arrest. This legislation would require that instead of immediately arresting an individual for committing a low-level offense which is subject to arrest without a warrant, an officer must first issue a warning or citation with a command to cease the illegal activity in question. Only if the officer's command is ignored could the officer then arrest the individual.

Supporting Our Veterans Exiting Incarceration. (co-authored with Guzman) This legislation would require that veterans who are incarcerated in a State Correctional Institution (SCI) be given a veterans benefits briefing before they are released, including state and federal benefits available to the veteran and their family

as well as how to access and apply for them.

Inmate Visitation Rights. This legislation would require all state prisons and county jails to provide inmates with a minimum of two in-person visits per week. Each visit would be required to last for at least one hour and a minimum of three people would be allowed to attend each visit. Furthermore, these new standards for visitation would not limit the use of video visitation which is provided in addition to the in-person visits. This in-

person visitation requirement would provide inmates with the social connection they need, improving the well-being of the incarcerated population and decreasing recidivism once individuals are released.

Street said he is proud to join Kinsey in offering policies that are both morally and fiscally sound.

"The rights of the incarcerated do not disappear behind the prison walls. From the health of the geriatric and aging, to visitation rights or ensuring the suc-

cessful reintegration into society of those who have redeemed themselves, as government it falls to us to maintain the dignity of the incarcerated while being good stewards of our taxpayers' dollars," Street said. "I'm proud to offer legislation to bring relief to geriatric, aging and the terminally ill and join Representative Kinsey in offering policy that is both morally and fiscally sound."

From the office of Stephen Kinsey.

The advertisement features a black background with a collage of newspaper clippings. At the top left is a logo for 'GLOCAWEAR RADIO STATION' featuring a large 'G' with headphones. Below it is a red banner that says '#1 INTERNET RADIO'. To the right is a red 'You Tube' button with a white 'SUBSCRIBE' button next to it. Below these is the website 'www.glocawear.com'. In the center, the words 'REAL HIP HOP' are written in large, white, block letters. At the bottom, 'THE G SHOP' is written in large, white, block letters. Below that is the address '4933 OLD YORK ROAD • PHILADELPHIA PA 19141' in red. At the very bottom, the text 'Create your custom gear here! T-shirts, clothing and more!' is written in white. A small 'Made with PosterMyWall.com' watermark is visible at the bottom left.

Roxy Hall & Bistro

6139 Ridge Avenue
Philadelphia,
Hours of operation:
Tues - Thurs 11am to 9pm
Fri - Sat 11am to 10:30pm
Sunday 11am - 9pm

STARTERS

The Roxy Hall & Bistro Starters are a delicious set of appetizers designed to introduce you to the flavors of our menu through small bites.

Fried Fish Tacos \$13
Topped with Slaw, Red peppers, Jalapeno, Avocado, Cilantro mix

Wings \$12
Wings (Hot, Mild, Sesame Glaze) Celery, Ranch

Boneless Vegan Wings \$12
Boneless Vegan Wings (Hot, Mild, Sesame Glaze) Served with Celery, Ranch

VG V

Crab Cake \$14
Lump crab meat, Honey Chipotle Butter, Herb oil

Shrimp Cocktail \$13
Jumbo Shrimp Served with Cocktail Sauce & Lemon

Fried Chicken Thighs \$10
Served with Cabbage, Green Beans, Soy Chablis Sauce

Roasted Curry Cauliflower \$8
Topped with Garlic, Parmesan Cheese, parsley

VG V

Corn Cakes \$7
Served with Sour Cream, Scallion

VG

Fig and Goat Cheese Crostini \$10
Topped with Clover Honey, Micro greens, Balsamic

Firecracker Shrimp \$12
Served with Cherry Peppers, Garlic, Tossed Butter Sauce

Mixed Greens Salad \$6
Served with a house made Champagne Vinaigrette

VG

Cole Slaw \$4
Traditional Cabbage Slaw

Caesar Salad \$6
Traditional caesar served with parmesan cheese, garlic croutons, and caesar dressing

MAINS

Welcome to our entrée menu where traditional American Favorites and Caribbean spice meet.

Fish n' Chips \$24
Caribbean Fish and Chips or Plantains, served with an Avocado Tartar Sauce, Carolina Slaw

Roxy Slaw \$17
Pulled Pork, Carolina Cole Slaw, Roxy Corn

Roasted Chicken \$17
Oven Roasted Chicken Breast, served with Herb Roasted Potato, Sautéed Broccoli

Roxy Ribeye \$38
Grilled Caribbean rubbed Ribeye, served with Shiitake Mushroom Demi, Sautéed Green Beans

In The Wild \$22
Grilled Wild Caught Salmon served with Wild Rice, Pineapple Soy Glaze, Wilted Spinach

Crab Cakes \$32
Served with Honey/Chipotle Butter Sauce, Roasted Herb Potatoes, Wilted Spinach

Roxy Pasta \$19
Seared Jumbo Shrimp, Tomato, Spinach, Red Onion, Herb Butter over Linguine

Bistro Burger \$15
A Traditional Beef Burger, Topped with Lettuce, Tomato, Apple wood Bacon, Red Onion Jam, Herb Oil

Sauces

Delicious specialty sauces that can be added to any entrée or starter.

Pineapple Soy Glaze \$2

Roasted Shiitake Mushroom Demi \$2

Honey Chipotle Butter Sauce \$2

Kids Menu

Chicken Fingers and Roxy Fries \$8

Popcorn Shrimp and Roxy Fries \$8

Fish & Roxy Fries \$8

Salads

Mixed Greens Salad \$6
Served with a house made Champagne Vinaigrette

VG

Cole Slaw \$4
Traditional Cabbage Slaw

Caesar Salad \$6
Traditional caesar served with parmesan cheese, garlic croutons, and caesar dressing

Soup

French Onion Soup \$7

Tomato Bisque \$7

Side Dishes

Order our Signature side dishes à la carte or as an add-on to your meal.

The Roxy Grilled Corn \$4
Topped with Parmesan Cheese and Cilantro

Wild Rice \$5

Herb Roasted Red Potatoes \$5

Sautéed Green Beans \$6

Sautéed Broccoli \$6

Roxy Fries \$5

Homestyle Cornbread \$2

Glazed Carrots and Onion \$5

Fried Sweet Plantains \$5

WILL THE HOUSING MARKET EVER BE AFFORDABLE?



By R. S. Broker

Uptown has always been a good place to live. As you know, because this is an uptown newspaper, It's a middle class section of Philadelphia, located in the northwest side of the city. 75% of the residents who live in this area are homeowners. In San Francisco, there was a home called "the worst house on the block" sold for

\$2 Million in an auction. See image below. It's not much to look at, and if you ask me, it looks like the developer forgot to add a second floor. The point is that this house that looks like it needs a total rehab, and currently unlivable, sold for \$2M.

It's for good reason, the law of supply and demand. Demand for houses is so high relative to the supply available for sale, in which prices for housing saw a 19.6% year over year ending 2021. There aren't many houses for sale, and when they are, sellers are receiving multiple offers.

The US housing market has doubled since the Great Recession, and it gained over \$6 Trillion in 2021. You can see this in our area, Uptown (Mt Airy, West Oak Lane, Germantown). Houses all over these sections of the city went up 100%-300% in the last 10-15 years. Ask one of these homeowners; they tell you, they never thought they'd see these prices rise so fast. For example, there is a rowhome that just sold on 1300 block of Sharpnack st that sold for almost \$300,000. It's fully rehabbed, and has all the modern amenities anyone would love to have. However, 10 years ago, these homes were selling for

\$100K.

After recognizing prices skyrocketed, and add in the homeless problems we have in the USA, those are the biggest reasons for these increases. But help could be around the corner. Interest rates are to climb between the end of 2022 through 2024. And when interest rates rise, housing prices fall. Also, there could be foreclosures coming as rates rise. Lastly, there's likely no more stimulus checks coming because of employment opportunities available.

In short, prices will fall. It always does, and we are due for a market correction. Just

have your money ready so you don't miss the opportunity of buying one. If you want to invest, please talk to your local bank or a financial advisor. Whether you're 20 or 60, a new transfer of wealth is upon the horizon. This isn't just the USA going through a change. The whole world is... It won't be easy, but you never know until you try. Oh, and don't forget to follow me on IG or YouTube at @TheGetMoneyShow. Believe in yourself, believe in your dreams, and always remember money ain't just green.

3/26/22

UPTOWN STANDARD

9PM-1PM

2YR

Anniversary

30 YEAR TRIBUTE TO URBAN EXPRESSIONS

TICKETS: WWW.UPTOWNSTANDARD.COM

COMMODORE BARRY, 6815 EMLIN STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA, 19119



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MENU

SIDES

Tempting Potato Salad	\$4.75
Southern Collard Greens	\$4.75
Smoky String Beans	\$4.75
Big Mama's Baked Beans	\$4.75
Tasty Baked Mac & Cheese	\$4.75
Apple Raisin Cole Slaw	\$4.75

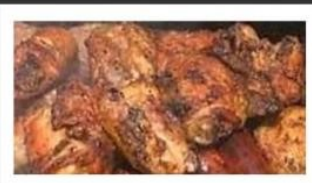
8 oz. portions
purchased separately from platter

PLATTERS

Chicken Platters	\$21.00
(1/2 of whole chicken w/(2) Sides)	
Fried Fish Platters	
3 pieces w/(2) sides	\$18.00
5 pieces w/(2) sides	\$20.00
Pork Rib Platters	\$23.00
With (2) Sides	
Beef Short Rib Platters	\$23.00
With (2) Sides	
Full Slabs	\$32.00

DESSERTS

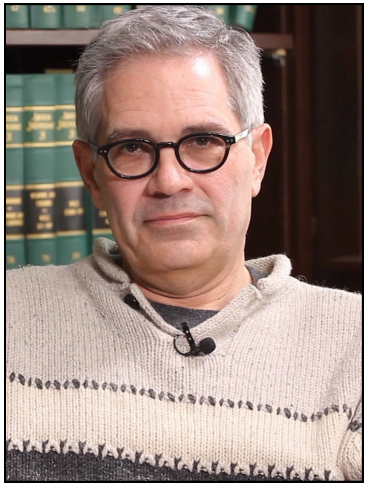
Dessert of the Month	\$5.00
(ask about our seasonal flavor!!)	



GUN VIOLENCE

PHILLY DA:

CITY'S 2022 MURDER RATE ALREADY OUTPACING RECORD-DEADLY 2021



By Tom McDonald, WHYY
Photo courtesy of Wiki

Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner wants his office laser-focused on fighting the city's gun violence epidemic as homicides spike to a rate unseen

for at least six decades.

"We should focus on shootings when the crisis is shootings," Krasner said at a weekly violence briefing held Monday. "I don't think that's complicated."

Three weeks into the new year, Philadelphia has seen 38 killings, two more than this time a year ago.

"This is a slight increase from terrible to terrible," Krasner said. "That's where we are with homicides. This is truly a terrible crisis that we are suffering through."

The city ended 2021 with a record of 559 homicides — a loss larger than any year since 1960, when city lead-

ers began tracking killings. Krasner reported 145 gun violence incidents, and 105 arrests were made by law enforcement in the week ending Jan. 21

The DA fielded questions about people shooting back at perpetrators— relevant as the city sees a spate of attempted crimes end in gun-fights, including a recent attempted carjacking that ended with a 60-year-old retired postal worker firing at a 16-year-old gunman. The grandfather who shot back was licensed to carry a gun.

"There is a lawful place for people to carry a firearm under proper circumstances and in the right way. And there are rare circumstances,

but circumstances where it is legal for people to use that firearm," Krasner said. Krasner said that he would like to see fewer firearms on the city streets and will have no tolerance for guns that are illegally obtained and used.

The DA also spoke about how he is prioritizing more serious crimes over so-called quality of life issues.

"When I came into office, there's more than a thousand people being prosecuted a year for possession of marijuana," said Krasner, who called it a waste of resources. "We were spending a ton of time and money prosecuting prostitutes," something he has also

ceased doing.

In addition to prosecuting shootings, the DA continues to prioritize illegal gun possession, sexual assaults, domestic violence and "other crimes that pose a threat to public safety."

Dustin Slaughter, Krasner's spokesperson, said that the office no longer considered illegal dumping a priority for prosecution. He tied that change to a decline in arrests and the fact that the courts remain mired in delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic and only able to hold four jury trials a week versus 10 in a pre-pandemic week, according to a court source.

GUN VIOLENCE

PHILADELPHIA RELEASES FINDINGS AFTER REVIEWING OVER 2,000 SHOOTINGS IN THE CITY

By Ericka Conant, WHYY

A new report examining more than 2,000 shootings in Philadelphia has confirmed what community members already know all too well: that the city's gun violence epidemic overwhelmingly affects Black residents, especially young Black men.

On Thursday, city officials released the report's key findings and recommendations for dealing with the gun violence crisis.

The findings were part of a multi-agency report by the 100 Shooting Review Committee, which in September 2020 announced it would examine 100 shootings in Philadelphia. "We created the 100 Shooting Review Committee to examine the root causes of gun

violence and make recommendations for how to pro-

ceed in addressing them. Due to the increasing rates of crime, we expanded the Committee's purview to examine 2,000+ shootings," councilmember Curtis Jones writes in the report's introduction.

At just under 200 pages, the report found that those most affected are people who have previously been traumatized by high levels of violence growing up. It found that since 2015, more than 80% of shooting victims and 79% of those arrested for shootings have been Black.

The report comes at the end of 2021, which saw more than 500 people murdered in the city, and many more people who were shot, but survived their injuries. "It is clear we are sitting at a crossroads of crisis," wrote Jones in a statement.

Kisha Hudson, Philly's new chief public defender, said that not only is gun violence a public health crisis, it is a

racial justice emergency. "We know that the victims and arrestees are overwhelmingly people of color, with young Black men at the risk, most at risk of being murdered. The policy decisions we make today almost exclusively impact people of color and their families," she said. State Sen. Vincent Hughes said the report details how Philadelphia is paying the price for ineffective anti-violence efforts. "The city of Philadelphia is paying the cost for state gun laws that are not relevant to the reality that exists in Philadelphia," he said, adding that funds should be prioritized for community based organizations as the city grapples with state gun laws he says have proven ineffective.

A week ago, Hughes, joined by Gov. Tom Wolf, announced a more than \$15 million increase in state funding to support gun vio-

lence prevention efforts, which would go towards community violence prevention grant programs. Yesterday, it was announced that half of those funds would go to community groups in Philadelphia.

But Hughes said that the \$15 million isn't enough to effectively deal with the gun violence across the state and Philadelphia. He hinted that the state will soon announce millions in surplus funds, and that they should be allocated in a similar way. "That money deserves to be in communities and neighborhoods to invest in these neighborhood based organizations, to give the commissioner what she needs to give the D.A. what he needs to give the public defenders," Hughes said.

In the report, city and state leaders agreed there is no single or universal solution to address the findings. Each of the more than 2,000

cases studied were complex and varied, and so are the solutions, the report said. "Addressing the gun violence crisis requires a comprehensive strategy with elements of enforcement, intervention, and prevention to achieve both short-term and long-term reductions in gun crimes," the report reads.

District Attorney Larry Krasner said moving forward, the city needs to invest more in trauma-informed efforts to restabilize hard-hit neighborhoods.

"This city was pretty good at taking resources out of those places, destabilizing them and getting them to the point where we have so much harm," Krasner said. "We should all be pretty good at putting resources back."

GUN VIOLENCE

A REVIEW AIMS TO FIND OUT IF ANTI-VIOLENCE MONEY IS DOING ITS JOB IN PHILADELPHIA

By Tom McDonald, WHYY

An effort is underway to evaluate the anti-violence initiatives in Philadelphia, to make sure the funding is getting to those most at risk. Leon Andrews of Equal Measure said the group partners with nonprofits and government organizations to apply new ways of thinking and learning to advance social change. The effort will review the almost three dozen groups receiving money from the city to reduce gun violence.

“The aim of our evaluation is to help the city understand which anti-violence community partnerships, grant-funded programs, and interventions are effectively reaching individuals who are highly at risk for engaging in gun violence and advancing the city’s efforts to reduce gun violence,” Andrews said.

He believes the evaluation will take a multifaceted approach to the issue of whether the money is being property spent. “Our collective work in this 14-month partnership will focus on two work streams: a comprehensive evaluation of 31 grantees and an as-

essment that examines the administrative processes for the evaluation. We will address critical questions, such as: Is the funded program reaching its intended audience? What are the outcomes of the funded programs that are aligned with the goals? Which organizations and programs have the greatest potential to impact gun violence, and how can Black- and brown-led programs be best supported to serve Black and brown communities most effectively?

Samantha Matlin of the Scattergood Foundation said it has been doing capacity building around evaluation and impact for the past decade.

“We think it’s really critical to meet organizations and communities where they are, to build off the good work that they’re doing to strengthen it,” Matlin said. “So our role in this initiative will be that it will be working directly with the organizations to see where they’re at and help them augment and increase their impact. We recognize that all nonprofits and our great region work really hard, and our job is to help make sure that

we understand what we are doing as an organization, how well we’re doing it, and what difference it makes. And really importantly, what difference does it make for a home?”

Matlin said that there is no way to “program our way out of the issue” of gun violence.

“We have to have effective programs, but we also have to have effective policies and practices that go beyond what a nonprofit can do. And that’s why we’re so excited that this partnership includes, of course, the city and includes criminal justice and policy work, because all of us are going to need to be part of this to make an impact. So we’ll be working

directly with these organizations, will be doing group learning and trainings, as well as individual consultation and coaching.” Andrews said his Philadelphia-based group is happy to take on the evaluation challenge.

“We are honored to have this opportunity to work with the city and the community to prevent and reduce violence and to help dismantle the drivers of violence such as structural racism, disproportionate contact with the justice system, incarceration, unemployment and poverty,” Andrews said.

“Our evaluation team brings a depth and breadth of experience in mixed methods,

research, and public policy change in community gun violence prevention and public safety, all with a focus on making communities stronger, healthier and more equitable,” he added.

The goal of the one year-plus effort, said Andrews, is to “develop evaluation reports on all the individual groups that can be shared with them, and then an overall review that can be made public.”

There already have been more than 30 homicides in Philadelphia this year, a 19% increase over 2021, during which a record 550 homicides occurred in the city.

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GUN VIOLENCE

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, GUN VIOLENCE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE

By Janay Hawthorne

Last year on January 19, 2021, I received a frantic call from my grandmother. She was calling to break the news that my younger cousin Chris had been murdered. This rocked my family to its core, as we hadn't had a death in the family for over a decade, let alone one of the younger and healthy members being a victim of a senseless assault. Although we call Philadelphia the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, my family wasn't on the receiving end of that motto that night. Unfortunately, my family's story is not unique. Last year in 2021, there was a record number of 562 homicides in Philadelphia, a 13% increase from 2020. There were also at least 1,846 victims of nonfatal gun violence. 2022 is on the path of

setting a new record, with 32 homicides so far, which is a 19% increase compared to last year. There have been calls from the community to have our leaders solve this significant and ravaging problem. And many have questioned why it appears the city's leadership (elected or otherwise) have buried their heads in the sand and refuse to implement evidence-based solutions.

Gun violence is the leading cause of premature death in the United States. Some may say it's an issue caused by parents, schools, or even social media. But perhaps our community, in particular, is approaching this wrong. Because believe it or not, Gun Violence is a public health issue here in the United States, especially related to the epidemic in

Philly. Shootings and the consequential grief and trauma are concentrated in lower-income, mostly Black and Latino communities. And no one feels this more than young Black men. Over half (52%) of Philly shooting victims were between 18 and 30, with 88% of Philly shooting victims being male and 84% Black non-Hispanic.

But aside from the numbers and graphs, does anyone know how to solve the issue? Short answer... yes. Can our elected leaders fix it ASAP? Yes and no. Public health experts and gun violence prevention advocates have provided tried and true solutions. And with the influx of money into Pennsylvania and Philadelphia alike, we can put our money where our mouths are. But it will take time,

but we can be effective AND efficient.

I recently completed a Johns Hopkins course where I proposed an intervention that models the existing Philadelphia Police Assisted Diversion (PAD) program. The current program focuses mainly on individuals who have committed non-violent crimes such as illicit drug use, prostitution, or theft. Specific Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) locations partner with community-based organizations to provide those individuals with alternative incarceration options. I think a comprehensive intervention that focused on Philadelphia youth involved explicitly in community gun violence (perpetrator or victim) could be an effective intervention.

The gun violence PAD in-

tervention would use the "Cure Violence" approach to reducing gun violence. This model is typically used for widespread community violence, but the proposed activities and outcomes can focus on Philadelphia's high-risk youth. The PAD program would have the City of Philadelphia local government collaborate with local community-based organizations. This partnership would create access for employment and provide other skills and knowledge to interrupt social norms seeped in gun violence. The community at large would be involved in this effort, as we can't solely rely on our elected officials. It will truly take an all-hands-on-deck action for Philadelphians to take back ownership in protecting their neighborhoods.

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SPORTS

4 OUT OF THE TOP 5 RANKED HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAMS IN THE STATE ARE FROM PHILLY

By EJ Holt
Sports Editor

With the high school and college football seasons coming to an end, and the NFL quickly coming to it's crescendo, some sports fans are left looking to find their next sports fix. I say we turn to hoops. The basketball season has been in full swing for a while now and it's time to catch up. Let's get to know some of our local high school basketball teams are doing shall we?

First thing you need to know is that Philly is well represented when it comes to the top basketball programs. I pulled up the high school boys basketball rankings, and immediately found my title for this article. Philly is Ballin. Out of the top 5 ranked basketball teams in the state, 4 of them are Philadelphia schools. The top 5 looks like this:

1. North Hills (Pittsburgh)
2. West Catholic (Philadelphia) - West Catholic has an impressive 10-2 overall record. They are undefeated at home and away, with a 6-2 record at neutral sites. Led by Head

Coach Miguel Bocachica and Assistant Coach Jamaine Jackson. West Catholic just came off a tough loss to #19 ranked Roman Catholic and head into a showdown with #5 ranked Neumann-Goretti

3. Archbishop Ryan (Philadelphia) - Archbishop Ryan has only lost 1 away game and 1 neutral site game, giving them a solid 12-2 overall record. Archbishop Ryan is riding a 2 game winning streak into their next game against Archbishop Wood. The team is led by Head Coach Joe Zeglinski and Assistant Coach Anthony Minor.

4. Inhotep Charter (Philadelphia) - At #4 is Imhotep Charter led by Head Coach Andre Noble and Assistant Coach Sam Grant. Imhotep currently has a record of 12-4 with 3 away game losses and 1 neutral site loss, undefeated at home. Imhotep just came off a 74-57 win against Downingtown and look to continue their winning ways against John Bartram.

5. Neumann-Goretti (Philadelphia) - Neumann-Goretti is just getting start-

ed, but is already off to a 5-1 start. Riding a 2 game winning streak, Neumann-Goretti heads into a tough matchup against the #2 ranked West Catholic for and early season barometer test. Neumann-Goretti is led by Head Coach Carl Arrigale.

Also rounding out the top 20 is Philadelphia's own Roman Catholic. Ranked 19 to be exact, Roman Catholic has an 8-3 record with 1 loss each home, away and neutral. Roman Catholic is coming off a big

70-63 win at #2 ranked West Catholic, and look to extend their 3 game winning streak against Devon Prep. Matthew Griffin and Bill Goebig are the Head and Assistant Coaches.

So that was a quick primer on what our local boys basketball teams are doing. Later on I'll be taking a dive into the girls team as well. Stay tuned, maybe next time your alma mater maybe be having a great season!



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GERMANTOWN CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN CELEBRATES 300 YEARS



By Shelly Shell Williams

Germantown Church of the Brethren, 6611 Germantown Avenue, has always seen the need to ensure that the community had access to food, education, resources, events that offer a haven for youth. The congregation, over the years, has served the Germantown/Mt Airy, W/E Oaklane communities, and beyond with a myriad of family-focused and youth educational programs. The congregation cited in Ron Sider's study and book: "Churches That Make A Difference."

We've partnered with Germantown Church of The Brethren for many outreach initiatives, from toy giveaways, food, and family fun nights to entrepreneurial training for the past nine years. Last year, like no other time, we saw an increase in the community's need, serving over 600 families during tough economic times, primarily due to the pandemic.

I want to thank Pastor Richard Kyerematen, aka Pastor Richard, senior Pastor of Germantown Church of The Brethren, for his ongoing support. I look forward to celebrating the 300th Anniversary, the oldest surviving Brethren congregation in the world established in 1723.

Shelly Shell: How would you describe your style of ministry?

Pastor Richard: Another seemingly simple question calling for a straightforward

answer. Not so? You know by now, through some of our joint ministry projects, I enjoy making simple things "complicated" and simplifying complicated things.

On a more serious note, this is also another loaded question. Let me attempt to break it down. The two main words, "style" and "ministry," have undercurrents and undertones. But both words, though, have established underpinnings.

When you talk about style, most people refer to personality types and traits. With ministry, they are referring to theological and, for that matter, historical persuasions.

There are many personality types of assessments out there. For the sake of this interview let me categorize them as follows especially in relation to leadership: intuitive/emotional/spontaneous/extrovert/introvert/dialectic/dichotomous/ manager/boss

You will agree with me that we are all born with some of these ingrained personality traits but also through the course of our lives our personalities metamorphosizes.

So what is my style? I will say it's evolving, and I see God shaping me over the years to best handle ministry changes and challenges. People sometimes wonder how I feel comfortable with all kinds of people in ministry. I will say it's all because of God's grace working through my personality.

With ministry, I will say people want to know what theological box you fit in. Are you Catholic, Mainline, Evangelical, Charismatic, Pentecostal, Kingdom Centered – the list keeps growing.

All these "boxes"/

movements that gave birth to denominations have historic trails, and if people took a little time to understand the trials, the Body of Christ wouldn't be as divided as it's today.

I hate being put in a box, but I will conclude that I am Biblical, Theological, "Full Gospel." I guess ECLECTIC

Shelly Shell: You are approaching your 300th Church Anniversary, wow 300 years, you lived a long life. What are your plans to celebrate G.C.O.B.'s 300th year in ministry?

Pastor Richard: Yes, 300 years ooooooh as they will say in Ghana. It may be of interest to you to know that that G.C.O.B. shares the unique honor with a very few 200+ years old congregations in the world where worship still occurs at their original birthplaces.

It's is a significant milestone. The Church of the Brethren, in general, "shy" away from publicity, promotion, and fanfare. In our own "quiet" way, though, we will celebrate the Glory of God for his faithfulness. We plan to have a series of musical concerts, seminars, special services with a culminating worship service in the late summer of 2023.

Shelly Shell: How would you describe Germantown Church of the Brethren? Pastor Richard: I will refer readers to our website: gcob1723.com. Our current tagline says we are: "A people of Peace, A Place of Worship." I will add we are an inviting, Christ-Centered, Community Engaging Congregation.

Shelly Shell: Who are some of your community partners?

Pastor Richard: I will say all our neighbors are our partners, and I mean it. All

those who seek the betterment of our community are our partners. I want to single out though my good friend Bill Simon – a community leader who has kept me in the loop all these years; Dr. Tom Mosca who helps run all our youth educational initiatives; Mr. Andrew Lofton; Sherri Johnson of Supreme Gospel Entertainment who has helped us tremendously to have a presence on social media and not forgetting you Shelly Shell.

Shelly Shell: There seems to be a great falling of the Church; what do you think we can do to get people back into the Church?

Pastor Richard: Let me say that there has always been a falling off/away. However, it was masked by the competitive advantage the Church enjoyed by virtue of its proliferation and it being the strongest hub in many communities.

But with the ascendancy and subsequent virulent advocacy of the separation between Church and State; the rise of many "non-profit" groups/associations; the growth of sports and other recreational activities; the surge of the social media "beast" and other "competitors"; the Church has been caught flat-footed.

Many Churches/ congregations are trying their best to re-invent themselves to be relevant in today's world. They have to be applauded. I would want to caution the CHURCH, though, that our focus should not be on getting people back to Church but to God. When that happens, then our churches will be "alive" again

The Scripture still holds true: "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His vineyard" Luke 10:2

Shelly Shell: You have a passion for Music and the arts; how do you plan to expand the music ministry? Pastor Richard: Please don't talk about Music. You know too well my passion for it. Let me clarify, though, that my passion is really for WORSHIP and Music, which in my estimation, is a major avenue through which we worship.

You are aware of the digital studio in the Church operated by Dr. Tom Mosca. A few years back, we named the studio, STUDIO 6611. After our just-ended annual Gospel Christmas Concert with virtuoso performances by some youth, we birthed the vision of having periodic music concerts to be broadcast live focusing on youth with talent. Supreme Gospel Entertainment and Mr. Andrew Lofton are helping us in this regard

Shelly Shell: Reading and education are a key focus for G.C.O.B.; what types of programs do you offer? Pastor Richard: For our reading program "R.I.S.E.," readers can always visit: www.risereadingcenter.com. To sign up, they can email rich684@cs.com.

We have also initiated an S.A.T. readiness program called A.C.E. S.A.T. (Achieving Competitive Excellence). Interested parents/guardians can email rich684@cs.com.

Shelly Shell: Lafiya Family Services is one of the programs you offer; what type of resources does it offer the community?

Pastor Richard: Actually, Lafiya Family Services Center (L.F.S.C.) and Integrated Community Services (I.C.S.) are the umbrella agencies for all our community initiatives; educational, counseling, and community resources (mobilization and referrals).

BIDEN VOWS TO NOMINATE THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN TO SUPREME COURT BY END OF FEBRUARY

By Jennifer Shutt
Pennsylvania Capital-Star

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer formally announced his retirement Thursday, giving President Joe Biden his first, and possibly only, opportunity to make a nomination for the lifetime appointment. At the White House, Biden said he will make his decision by the end of February and recommitted to nominating the court's first Black female justice, fulfilling a promise he made repeatedly while campaigning for the Oval Office.

"The person I will nominate will be someone of extraordinary qualifications, character, experience and integrity. And that person will be the first Black woman ever nominated to the United States Supreme Court," Biden said. "It's long overdue in my opinion." Breyer's retirement, which will take effect in late June or July when the court recesses, follows nearly 28 years as an associate justice who often sided with the court's more liberal members.

The 83-year-old was the eldest of the nine and had been facing public pressure from left-leaning groups for months to retire while Democrats hold control of the White House and the Senate.

Appearing with Breyer on Thursday from the Roosevelt Room, Biden said that he has not yet made a decision about whom he will nominate, but said he has begun studying candidates' backgrounds and writings. If confirmed, Biden's nominee would be the sixth woman to join the court and the third Black American to be approved since the first justice took his oath of of-

fice in 1789.

"I'm ready for a Black woman to be on the Supreme Court," tweeted New Jersey Democratic Sen. Cory Booker, one of three Black members of the Senate.

Senate GOP pushback

Biden's nominee is expected to face a tense confirmation process in the evenly divided Senate, where Republicans are already signaling they may not support his pick. "Justice Breyer's successor should be an individual within the legal mainstream who can receive similar broad, bipartisan support," U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said in a statement. "Such a candidate will preserve faith in the court, and reflect Americans' will when they elected an evenly divided Senate." Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said in a statement that the evenly divided Senate means Biden has "a mandate... to govern from the middle, steward our institutions, and unite America." "The President must not outsource this important decision to the radical left. The American people deserve a nominee with demonstrated reverence for the written text of our laws and our Constitution," McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, continued.

Focus on Judiciary

The first step for Biden's nominee, once formally announced, will be to schedule private meetings, or conversations, with senators. While nominees typically meet with all or nearly all 100 lawmakers, there's usually a special focus on those who sit on the Judiciary Committee, which holds the confirmation hearing.

The Biden administration will likely dedicate several White House staffers to prepare the nominee for those meetings and shepherd her through the confirmation process.

The Judiciary Committee, divided between 11 Democrats and 11 Republicans, is expected to move "expeditiously" to confirm Biden's pick, according to Chairman Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat.

This would be Durbin's first Supreme Court nomination process as chairman, though he's been on the panel for more than 16 years. U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, of Calif., was the top Democrat on the panel and oversaw confirmation hearings for the three Supreme Court nominees former President Donald Trump named. Feinstein stepped down from that role in November 2020 after several left-leaning organizations called for her resignation over her approach to Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett's confirmation hearing. Many Democratic groups felt that Feinstein's cordial tone with the chairman at the time, Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican, and a hug at the end of the hearings didn't strike the right tone.

"After serving as the lead Democrat on the Judiciary Committee for four years, I will not seek the chairmanship or ranking member position in the next Congress," Feinstein said in a statement at the time.

Republicans also have a different leader on the panel than they did during the last Supreme Court confirmation process — Grassley, who has overseen the confirmation hearings of two justices during previous

stints as chairman.

Possible deadlock

If Biden's nominee gets the backing of at least one Republican on the Judiciary Committee, her nomination will go directly to the Senate floor for a vote. But if the panel deadlocks with all Democrats voting for her and all Republicans voting against her, the Senate will need to go through the extra step of discharging her nomination from the committee.

The Senate would debate the motion to discharge for up to four hours, after which it would vote to bring the nomination to the Senate floor. If a simple majority of the Senate votes to do that, the Supreme Court nominee would move forward for procedural votes and a confirmation vote. If all GOP senators oppose the nominee, then all 50 Senate Democrats, including centrist Arizona Sen. Krysten Sinema and West Virginia's Joe Manchin, will need to vote to confirm her and Vice President Kamala Harris would need to break the tie.

Manchin, in a Thursday interview with West Virginia MetroNews' "Talkline" program, said he wouldn't rule out a nominee who is more left-leaning than he is, noting "it's not too hard to get more liberal than me." Manchin said that Biden's nominee, regardless of philosophical beliefs, wouldn't change the balance of the 6-3 conservative-leaning court and that he's more interested in their disposition. "Do they have the disposition to be able to work with their fellow justices, to make good judgment and be able to disperse and use the rule of law as your guide?" Manchin said. "That's what I'm looking for, so it will be the character of the person."

One of Biden's possible nominees, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson — who grew up in Miami — already has experience with the Senate's judicial confirmation process.

The Senate voted 53-44 in June 2021 to confirm her to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit with Republicans Susan Collins of Maine, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska voting with Democrats to approve her.

'Rigorous' process

Biden said his process to pick a nominee for the seat will be "rigorous" and that the woman he selects will be "worthy of Justice Breyer's legacy of excellence and decency."

Breyer's remarks about his retirement focused less on this career and more on the diversity of the country's 330 million residents as well as the way many of the United States' founders referred to democracy as an "experiment."

Breyer said that his wife had paid many of their grandchildren to memorize former President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, before repeating several lines of the speech himself.

"My grandchildren and their children; they'll determine whether the experiment still works," Breyer said. "And of course, I am an optimist, and I'm pretty sure it will. Does it surprise you that that's the thought that comes into my mind today?"

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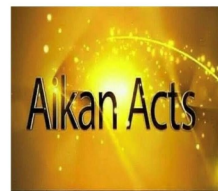
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