



## **MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER**

The Huntington Anti-Bias Task Force (HABTF) is a non-partisan group formed by the Town of Huntington in conjunction with the Suffolk County Anti-Bias Task Force. It is made up of concerned clergy, community representatives and lay persons who work together to address the issue of intolerance, prejudice, discrimination and racism in any segment of our Town.

We've been holding public monthly since January 2019 and have accomplished quite a lot. [Upcoming meetings are 1 PM Wed May 25 and June 22 \(4th Wed\)](#). For more information about HABTF, click [www.huntingtonny.gov/abtf](http://www.huntingtonny.gov/abtf).

Send [suspected bias incidents](#) to:  
Town of Huntington Anti-Bias Task Force  
Department of Human Services (Room 203)  
Attn: Carmen Kasper, Director  
423 Park Ave, Huntington, NY 11743  
631-351-3304    [antibias@huntingtonny.gov](mailto:antibias@huntingtonny.gov)



Also contact SCPD Hate Crimes Unit at 631-852-6323

[Click here to read HABTF Jan 2022 Newsletter](#)  
[Click here to read HABTF Oct 2021 Newsletter](#)

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2nd Precinct SCPD Report

By Inspector William Scrima



During the period of January through April 2022, there were three significant incidents in The Second Precinct that were reported to have elements of bias:

- On 2/21/22, a homophobic slur was etched into a slide at Wicks Park in Elwood. SCPD Hate Crimes Unit is investigating.
- On 3/19/22, a swastika and other graffiti were painted on the pavement in the parking lot of the Northport train station. SCPD Hate Crimes Unit is investigating.
- On 4/20/22, a small post-it note with a racial slur was left on a vehicle which was parked in a parking lot on Pulaski Rd in Greenlawn.

[Click here to check out 2nd Precinct News on Twitter](#)

[Click here for the 2nd Precinct Community Meeting Schedule](#)

For more information, please visit the 2nd Precinct department Website at [www.suffolkpd.org](http://www.suffolkpd.org).

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## Huntington Car Dealer Fires 2 Employees Involved in Racial Dispute

By David Pinkowitz

Empire Toyota of Huntington said that it fired two employees who shouted racial slurs at a Latina woman and her family on a Long Island Rail Road train Monday night January 10th.



"Empire Toyota ownership and management were outraged by the event involving two of its employees this past Monday night on the Long Island Rail Road. The two employees were suspended when we first heard about this incident, and, as our investigation just concluded, they have been terminated. The heart and soul of our labor force is extremely diverse and we value our employees beyond description. Further, our company's deep support—financial and in-kind—of Long Island's diverse communities is a matter of public record. We can say without hesitation that whatever occurred on that LIRR train is in no way reflective of our company, its ownership, its management team nor its employees."

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Eid Holiday

by Sara Siddiqui

Assalam Alaikum (Peace Be Upon You and Greetings Everyone),



We are currently at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan where over 1.2 billion Muslims across the globe fast from dawn until dusk daily for 30 days. There are exemptions, like being sick, elderly, young, and others. Ramadan is also notable for the spiritual gains one makes by sacrificing food and water, prayers at the mosque, while also donating to charity, and helping those around you. Most Muslims take this opportunity to abundantly gather good deeds. The Islamic calendar follows the lunar months which moves approximately 10 days earlier every year.

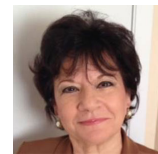
The end of the month is signified by a feast and celebration called Eid-Al-Fitr, in which families gather with loved ones at the local mosque in their finest clothing and perform prayers followed by celebrations, and plenty of food. It is the mark of the end of Ramadan and the beginning of a new month.

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## Local School Board Elections are Very Important

by Denise Ham



School Budget Votes and Trustee Elections have taken place throughout New York State on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, with polls open from 7 AM to 10 PM. Local school districts have the specific election locations.

This basic civic engagement and participation in the process is essential to ensure that your tax dollars are appropriately allotted to meet the needs of all the children in our community in the most cost-effective way.

Your school Board Trustees approve curriculum, employ the Superintendent, and submit the proposed budget to the community for approval. They provide oversight with the objective of improving student achievement.

Voters should look for School Board candidates that are non-political, who advocate for the best interests of the students they represent.

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Hope in a Time of Covid

by Rabbi Howard Buechler



"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

Charles Dickens published his masterful A Tale of Two Cities in 1859. Great writers and poets, literary masterpieces from the Bible to gifted orators, often artfully capture in finite words the infinite range of emotions of the human condition. I ask that you pause and reread these words penned by Dickens as we reflect upon two years of our Covid-19 pandemic. Our pandemic realities have shifted from the virulence of the Delta Variant to the extraordinary contagion of Omicron, and we rapidly approach the grievous death toll in the USA from the pandemic of nearing 900,000 precious lives lost.

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## Social Justice Ambassadors Program Connects and Empowers Students

by David Pinkowitz



An innovative partnership between the Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center (SYJCC) and the Huntington Anti-Bias Task Force (HABTF) is connecting and empowering local high school students interested in learning about social justice.

The 2021-2022 Social Justice Ambassadors Program brings together high school students in the Town of Huntington and equips them with the tools and knowledge they need to be leaders and agents of positive change in their schools and communities, explained program director Jane Pashman.

[Click here to see photo album of Ambassadors Program](#)

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## January 2022 HABTF Meeting Summary

by Rabbi Lina Zerbarini

HABTF Guest Speaker: Dr. Gregson Pigott -- Suffolk County Health Commissioner

He started his position on February 28, 2020. He spoke about the work of his Department in dealing with COVID and caring for people in need.



The current COVID situation: Yesterday there were 1372 positive cases, significantly diminishing. Over 300 fatalities this month in Suffolk County in facilities. He's concerned about relaxation of mitigation measures -- now is not the time to do that.

When the percent positivity is 1%, and fewer hospitalized patients, etc., and the weather warms up. COVID is still disproportionately affecting communities of color.

What can we do now? Wear a good, well-fitting mask, like a KN95 or N95. Cristian Marcario, SC Community Recovery Operations Manager, is coordinating mask distribution to agencies and school districts:  
[cristian.macario@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:cristian.macario@suffolkcountyny.gov).

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## Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Month

by Helen Boxwill



May is Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month. This is an opportunity to acknowledge the many contributions the Asian community has made to our country. At the same time, there has been an increase in hate incidents around the country and in our state against Asian Americans. The advocacy group Stop AAPI Hate confirms a total of 10,905 hate incidents were reported between March 19, 2020, and the end of December 2021, according to the group's new national report. Almost 40% more incidents had occurred in 2021 than in the roughly nine-month period of 2020.

The HABTF was fortunate to have Lucy Lu, a representative of the Long Island Chinese American Association, come to speak at one of our meetings. You can see her moving presentation here.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qzfw59OltzZMeXE4v-6hi8BQI0i0CMH7/view>

Ms. Lu recommended that schools need to intentionally work to support their AAPI students and to educate all students and staff about the history and accomplishments of this community. She recommended that school districts do the following:

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Yom Hashoah Reminds Us of the Cost of Hate

by Eve Krief



On this Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, I think of the family that I never met, my grandparents Charlotte and Jacob. and my two aunts Annette and Marie. We say we must remember on this day, but I cannot. With them vanished the potential for any memories, laughter or tears I could ever have shared with one set of grandparents and aunts and the uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins that were never to be. I was just left with a void.

But my mother somehow filled that void with love and wisdom after surviving being left alone in the world at only five-years-old. So on this day of Remembrance I remember my mother that I buried just three weeks ago today, for she too was a victim, likely plagued her whole life with thoughts of wondering how they died, feeling guilty wondering why she survived, why she was hidden in safety while they perished. This pain she surely felt was never shared.

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## Town of Huntington News

by Carmen Kasper



[Huntington Holds Town's First Cultural Celebration of Eid](#)

[Smyth Co-Hosts Cultural Celebration of Holi, the Festival of Colors, Spring and Unity with Huntington's First Indian-American Town Attorney](#)

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