

Sabres to retire
Ryan Miller's jersey

SPORTS, PAGE C1



Caregivers crisis hits
home health field

REFRESH, PAGE 6

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FINAL EDITION

Langworthy, Paladino set for primary showdown

Cenedella quits GOP race in new 23rd district

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — Manhattan businessman Marc Cenedella on Friday dropped out of the race for Congress in New York's 23rd district, meaning Republicans in southern and eastern Erie County and the Southern Tier will likely choose a new Western Buffalo businessman, Carl P. Paladino, and State GOP Chairman Nicholas A. Langworthy in an Aug. 23 primary.

Cenedella, a Fredonia native who went on to found the career services company called Ladders Inc., originally entered the race in hopes of offering a more conservative alternative to Rep. Cheri Bustos of Orchard Park. But then on May 27, Jacobs announced a change of heart, saying he would withdraw.

Cenedella is an other gun control measures favored by Democrats — a move that prompted Republican leaders to push Jacobs out of the race just one week later.

Jacobs' decision made Cenedella rethink his campaign, even though he said he collected enough signatures to appear on the primary ballot. Friday was the deadline for filing petitions to the state.

"I am very gratified by the work of so many in helping me to successfully qualify for the August 23rd ballot," Cenedella said in a statement. "However, I got into the race to ensure there was a conservative in the Erie County and the Southern Tier in D.C. We now have multiple conservative voices in the race, so my effort has been successful, and I will not be a candidate for N.Y.'s 23rd Congressional District in the upcoming election."

These conservative voices are Paladino and Langworthy. Both of their campaigns said they, too, filed enough signatures to qualify for the ballot.

See 23rd on Page A5

CITY & REGION

ALLEGHENY ART FESTIVALS RETURN THIS WEEKEND



Minh Connors/Buffalo News

After a two-year sabbatical, the Art Festival and Allen West Art festivals are back. Organizers and city officials say the ongoing pandemic in the neighborhood shouldn't affect the exhibitions. Story on Page B1

By MIKE PETRO
AND LEAH CLARK
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS

At the end, the decision by Tops Markets to renovate a removed store at the site of the mass shooting on Jefferson Avenue was a matter of time.

Renovating the store would allow it to open by the end of July, restoring an important neighborhood gathering place to a neighborhood that

has few other options. Building a new store — an option preferred by some in the neighborhood because of the trauma associated with the site and takeovers.

"For us, or anybody, to open a new store in that area would be years," said John Persons, Tops' president, in an interview Thursday. "We now believe it is the best option for us to be able to provide that community again and do it successfully is by us reopening that store."

And that's what the Williams-

has few other options. Building a new store — an option preferred by some in the neighborhood because of the trauma associated with the site and takeovers.

"For us, or anybody, to open a new store in that area would be years," said John Persons, Tops' president, in an interview Thursday. "We now believe it is the best option for us to be able to provide that community again and do it successfully is by us reopening that store."

And that's what the Williams-

See Tops on Page A4

Those who lost their loved ones to join D.C. gun control march

By JERRY ZREMSKI

NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

WASHINGTON — Four weeks to the day since his 86-year-old mother, Edith Williams, and nine others were gunned down in a racist attack on the Tops on Buffalo's East Side, Garnell Whitfield Jr. will stand before a crowd of up to 50,000 on the National Mall on Saturday and call for gun safety measures aimed at preventing such attacks from happening again.

Twenty-five days after the Tops gunman left her son, Zaine Goodwin, with deep wounds in his neck, his back and his left leg, Zeneta Everhart sat stone-faced before a congressional committee, just as Whitfield had a day before, and described the horrors of the attack and the racism played in it. And on that very same day, Pamela Pritchett — whose mother, Pearl Young, was slain in that attack — repeated the mantra she coined at a news conference a day earlier: "Justice" could well serve as the motto for the families of the Tops slaughter.

"Every tear I cry is going to be a fuel for action," she said.

Plans of tear gas have been shed since a shoplifter clad in body armor took aim at defenseless shoppers on that sunup Saturday afternoon in Buffalo — and judging by what those who lost loved ones in the attack said this past week, there's plenty of fuel for action. Several of those family members were omnipresent on Capitol Hill and in the

See Relatives on Page A4

Find complete coverage
of the mass shooting by
scanning the code with
your mobile device

Renovating instead of building anew restores Tops to Jefferson Avenue faster

New store estimated to take years to build

By MIKE PETRO
AND LEAH CLARK
NEWS STAFF REPORTERS



Tops Markets President John Persons calls renovating the Jefferson store the best option.

Robert Workman/Buffalo News

After a bruising hearing on Jan. 6 rioting, Tenney and Stefanik try to change the subject

WASHINGTON — Americans who watched Thursday night's congressional hearing on the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol — and former Donald Trump's attorney general dismiss his claim that the 2020 presidential election was stolen, calling it well, cattle dung. They learned that what was once the rioting was nothing but "hang Mike Pence," he replied that maybe his vice president "deserves it" for refusing to

play along with his plot to stay in office. And they saw how longfooting the president's lawyer in the Capitol, where a police officer recalled getting knocked unconscious and later slipping the spilled blood of his colleagues. But it is as though some

top Republicans in New York didn't see or hear any of that.

Rep. Claudia Tenney, a conservative Rep. from upstate New York who's running to represent a red district stretching from Oneida County to the Watertown area, issued a statement dismissing the work of the House

Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol.

"It is partisan performance art," Tenney said. "Rep. Stefanik, a conservative Rep. from upstate New York who's running to represent a red district stretching from Oneida County to the Watertown area, issued a statement dismissing the work of the House

See Hearing on Page A5

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WEATHER

Cloudy, showers. High 74, low 61.

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CONTINUED FROM THE COVER

Families aim to confront 'myth of white supremacy'

RELATIVES • from A1

national media. And to hear them tell it, they will be omnipresent activists for as long as it takes to reform the nation's gun laws and confine racism to history's dustbin.

"Our family made a conscious decision upon the death of our mother not to go quietly into the night, not to just be a victim, but to use the internet, and social media, as a positive way to advocate for justice for her and the other victims as well as for impactful change," said Whitfield, who will return to Washington to speak at today's "March for Our Lives" rally for stronger gun safety measures.

Whitfield said he sees the united families from Buffalo's East Side as the latest in a long line of American activists who sought change, from the abolitionists to those who joined the civil rights movement to the Flight 3407 families to the gun safety advocates from Parkland, Fla.

"We are the revolutionaries here," said Whitfield, a former Buffalo fire commissioner. "We certainly are trying to model ourselves after those precedents who have successfully advocated for change."

Whitfield and several others who lost loved ones in the attack described themselves as fundamentally changed — and moved to act to try to prevent others from suffering losses such as they have.

Kimberly Salter said she felt she had to work for change to honor her husband, Aaron Salter Jr., the Tops security guard killed in the massacre.

"He made the ultimate sacrifice for everybody and for me, and I'm making the same for him," she said.

Similarly, Michelle Spight was moved to come to Washington after losing two family members: her aunt, Pearl Young, and her cousin Marcus D. Morris.

"It has fueled my life in a way that I never thought would be," she said of the shooting.

And Pritchett spoke with an unexpected, unbridled passion at two news conferences.

"Listen to me," she said after breaking in on nearly an hour at the second of those two press conferences. "I sound like I'm preaching, y'all."

All three are Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer's New York Democrat, who praised the families as "saint-like."

"Those deaths, as horrible as they



Garnell Whitfield, Jr. of Buffalo, whose mother, Ruth Whitfield, was killed in the Tops supermarket mass shooting, testifies at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on domestic terrorism on Tuesday.



Kimberly Salter, wife of slain Tops security guard Aaron Salter Jr., cries during the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Wednesday. She and her family are advocating for everybody and for me, and I'm making the sacrifice for him," she said of working for change.



Zeneta Everhart, whose son Zaire Goodman, 20, was shot in the neck during the Buffalo Tops mass shooting, testifies during a House Oversight and Reform hearing on gun violence on Wednesday. She vows to work hard for change.

were, as searing as they are in our hearts, we are making sure they will not have died in vain," he told the families last week. "We will join in that effort until we succeed. Thank you and God bless you."

The change the families are seeking starts with the nation's gun laws. They're pressuring for comprehensive background checks for all gun buyers,

ers, thereby closing loopholes that now exist for guns sold online and at gun shows, as well as for moving the minimum age for buying rifles from 18 to 21 and other reforms.

"Lawmakers who continuously allow these mass shootings to continue by not passing stricter gun laws should be voted out," Everhart told the House Oversight and Reform Committee last week.

At the same time, a group of senators is trying to negotiate a deal on guns, but even if one passes, it will likely fall short of what many activists want: a ban on the kind of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines used in the recent attacks.

The family members stressed, though, that their advocacy is not just about gun safety.

"The march is all about gun violence in America, but really, we are talking about a stain of a stain violence of gun violence," said Raymond Whitfield, Garnell Whitfield's brother, who will also attend today's march. "But our particular angle is a slightly different one in that we are all about shining a light on the myth of white supremacy as it relates to that gun violence."

That point came particularly clear in Everhart's testimony at that House hearing on the proliferation of guns in America.

Everhart combined her thoughts on guns with comments on race that seemed to make some Republicans uncomfortable. Amid a time when Republicans are trying to downplay the history of race in America in the nation's schools, Everhart repeatedly described herself as a descendant of slaves and as "We Americans" to whom "we wash education, creating generations of children to believe that one race of people are better than the other."

Later that same day, Everhart returned to speak at a press conference with House members and further spread her message on interviews on several national television networks.

She expects to be doing plenty more of the same, for a very long time, she said, knowing that the problems she's trying to fix often seem intractable.

"This is a table that we don't ever get up from," Everhart said on Friday before boarding another plane bound for the nation's capital to speak for Our Lives. "I have to stay at the table as long as I possibly can until I keel over. I am optimistic, extremely optimistic, but I'm also a realist. I'm a logical optimist. I believe in the real world. So it's going to take some hard work. But I promise that I'm not going to stop until I see some sort of change."

Tops diverts materials from other stores for Jefferson remodel

TOPS • from A1

vile-based grocer intends to do. Persons said the supermarket chain hopes to have its Jefferson Avenue location refurbished and reopened by the end of July.

Top's officials say that the best approach if the highest priority for Buffalo's East Side is to provide the community with fresh food options as soon as possible.

The store has been closed since the rally-motivated mass shooting on May 14 by a white supremacist that killed 10 people and injured three others.

Tops opened its Jefferson Avenue supermarket 19 years ago after residents for more than a decade had been calling for a full-service grocery store in a neighborhood once considered a food desert. The community is facing that same issue again now that the store has been closed.

"We sort of internally concluded that we thought early on," Persons said.

Persons said he understands the concern from some community activists and civic leaders, as well as from East Side Tops. To be built at another location so that people don't have to go back to where the carnage of that mass shooting occurred.

"In practical terms, that's just a very complicated endeavor if we want to serve the community quickly," he said.

Master Council Member Ulysses O. Wingo Sr. said he is pleased with Tops' decision to remain in the neighborhood. He has met with community members opposed to the reopening of the store at that location. Wingo said he and others they should neither "bulldoze the legacy" of the work put in to this Tops built, nor allow a white supremacist's actions to make



A painter in a lift works on the facade of the Tops Friendly Markets on Jefferson Avenue on Wednesday. In the future, the store will incorporate community-oriented elements at the site, such as murals by local artists.

them tear it down. He said it took nearly a decade of work by many East Side advocates to get that store built.

"We cannot negate or neglect the work that was put in to that store," Persons said. "People sacrificed to ensure that store was built there through their blood, sweat and tears, fighting for this community. We have to honor that as well as the work that was done."

Ann Eason of Buffalo believes the repainting of the Jefferson Avenue Tops could be part of the healing that the community needs.

"We need it in this area," Eason

said. "We're just going to go day by day and do what we've got to do (to heal), but they've definitely need to open it back up and we need more."

However, the local resident, his daughter Neveah, would like to see Tops move to a different location in the community or a different grocer or market come to Jefferson Avenue.

"I don't think it should open back up because of the memories. Not because of the memorabilia," Neveah Taylor said. "Maybe if it was at a different location, that would be part of the healing that the community needs."

Persons said the best Tops

could have done in opening a new store is getting it completed in about two-and-a-half to three years, and that would be "doing it pretty quick." In some places, it has taken Tops as long as seven to eight years to complete a new store project, he added.

"For us, it was an easy decision," he said.

Before even presenting a site plan to then building's new store, Persons said Tops would need to undertake studying potential sites and evaluating them for potential customer traffic.

Then it would have to acquire the pieces of property necessary to build a new store and sell them that just one parcel with

a lone owner to negotiate with.

There would also be planning work, environmental reviews and other city approvals that would be required.

"All of that stuff needs to happen months before you begin construction of building a facility," he said. "It is a considerably long timeline."

And then there's the expense. Building a new store would cost more than reopening the existing one. Persons wouldn't say how much more. But building new would be a different project, for sure," he said.

"It is certainly a different scope of a project so there would be different costs associated with it," Persons said.

The Jefferson Avenue store remodel has been off to a quick start thanks to Tops being able to update many of its stores in the Buffalo market where the grocer originated 60 years ago. The several-year project includes 35 of Tops' 35 Western New York stores.

That includes flooring,

new registers and updated displays.

Tops is in the midst of a \$125 million capital project to update many of its stores in the Buffalo market where the grocer originated 60 years ago. The several-year project includes 35 of Tops' 35 Western New York stores.

Twenty-five of them have al-

ready been completed or are

being finished soon.

"That had helped us expedite the process," Persons said. "The store will take on a similar style reminiscent of our current remodel program and will have much of the same elements."

Once the store is built, the store will also incorporate community-oriented elements at the site in collaboration with the City of Buffalo and the community.

That could include the work of local artists creating murals and a more sophisticated memorial than what will be there at the reopening.

"Ultimately, we want this store being representative of the community," Persons said.

"We want to try to have some sort of respectful memorial by the time we open, but given the timeline, some of these elements will likely take considerably longer."

Wingo believes it's possible to both memorialize the tragic events of that day while reopening the store. He'd like to see a memorial that is also a gathering place.

"Tops is going to reopen the store by the end of July and that is great, but the community can also have a say on what a memorial would look like for the 10 victims of this heinous crime," he said.