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'DOMESTIC VIOLENCE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES'



TANIA SAVAYAN/THE JOURNAL NEWS

Mourners leave the funeral of Robin Goldman at Young Israel of Scarsdale in New Rochelle Thursday. Goldman, who was a pediatrician in Scarsdale, was found stabbed to death in her home Wednesday. Her husband, Julius "Jules" Reich, has been charged in her murder.



SCARSDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Tax attorney Jules Reich has been charged with fatally stabbing his wife, Robin Goldman.



MONTEFIORE MEDICAL CENTER

Robin Goldman, a pediatrician, was found dead in her Scarsdale home Wednesday.

Inside
Robin Goldman mourned, remembered as "a woman of valor." **Page 5A**

Husband Jules Reich charged in Goldman's murder. **Page 5A**

Fearing social stigma or professional loss, the well-to-do often stay silent

ADRIENNE SANDERS ASANDERS@LOHUD.COM

Those familiar with the patterns of domestic violence are sadly not surprised that another victim resided in a tony Westchester town. ♦ Forget the stereotypes. ♦ Even in the Westchester's most well-to-do corners, family violence plagues our neighbors, sisters and friends.

"Domestic violence knows no socioeconomic boundaries. It can happen in the wealthiest families and in the most financially stressed," said Pound Ridge Police Chief David Ryan, who is an active member of the North East Westchester Domestic Abuse Alliance (New DAA).

A horrific case in point: successful tax attorney Julius "Jules" Reich is

charged with fatally stabbing his wife, respected Scarsdale pediatrician Robin Goldman, during a domestic dispute on Wednesday.

In the last five years, 38 domestic violence victims from Scarsdale have sought help from Pleasantville-based nonprofit, Hope's Door, said Executive

See **VIOLENCE, Page 5A**

Break-in at Building Dept. amid grant probe

Peekskill mayor assured records are preserved

LEE HIGGINS
LHIGGINS2@LOHUD.COM

PEEKSKILL - Police are investigating a reported break-in at the city Building Department, a day after the mayor ordered the city manager to preserve records in a criminal investigation into a state grant Deputy Mayor Drew Claxton received from a local nonprofit to fix up a home she co-owns with her son.

Mayor Frank Catalina said the city's facilities manager, Joseph Minnerly, told him a door was forced open, apparently with a screwdriver.

Police Chief Eric Johansen

See **PROBE, Page 4A**

DiFiore becomes chief judge of NY Court of Appeals

JON CAMPBELL
JCAMPBELL1@GANNETT.COM

ALBANY - Janet DiFiore officially took over Thursday as New York's top judge, a powerful post she's set to hold for the next decade.

DiFiore, the now-former Westchester County district attorney, became the chief judge of the state Court of Appeals after the Senate voted to confirm her early Thursday afternoon, three weeks after its legal deadline to act and seven

See **DIFIORE, Page 4A**

INDEX » BUSINESS 5B » CLASSIFIED 8C » COMICS, CROSSWORD, DEAR ABBY, TELEVISION Weekend » LOTTERIES 2A » MARKETS 6B » OBITUARIES 10A » SCOREBOARD 3C

WEATHER » 2A

Today: Partly sunny
HIGH: 31 LOW: 21

Tomorrow: Snow
HIGH: 31 LOW: 22



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McCarty a veteran prosecutor

New acting DA worked on Warmus, Baxter cases

JONATHAN BANDLER
JBANDLER@LOHUD.COM

One of Westchester County's top trial prosecutors will run the District Attorney's Office now that Janet DiFiore has become chief judge of the state Court of Appeals.

James McCarty, who successfully prosecuted Carolyn Warmus in the 'Fatal Attraction' murder case and serial killer Patrick Baxter in a trio of sex murders, became acting District Attorney following DiFiore's confirmation by the state Senate.

Unless Gov. Andrew Cuomo appoints DiFiore's interim successor, McCarty will serve until January, when the winner of a November election takes over.

A native of Harrison who now lives in Mamaroneck, McCarty is a registered Republican who does not intend to run in the election.

"I plan to just keep pointing (the office) in the same direction Janet DiFiore had it pointed in," McCarty said. "I see this as a challenge I really look forward to and a fantastic opportunity."

He joined the DA's Office in 1980 after graduating from Albany Law School and worked for three DA's - Carl Vergari, Jeanine Pirro and DiFiore.

When DiFiore took office in 1996, she named McCarty, Maryanne Luciano and John George as First Deputy District Attorneys. Luciano was the immediate successor but is expected to leave the office to join DiFiore's staff at the Court of Appeals.

McCarty, 62, handled dozens of murder trials in his career but is best known for his work on the Warmus and Baxter cases.

It took two trials to convict Warmus in the January 1989 shooting death of her lover's wife, Betty Jean Solomon, in Greenburgh. Warmus was a school teacher who had an affair with Solomon's husband, Paul.

The first trial ended in a hung jury but Warmus was convicted of second-degree murder after the second. She is serving 25-years to life in Bedford Hills Correctional Facility and is eligible for parole a year from now.

In 2000, Baxter was linked by DNA to the 1987 slaying of a 14-year-old neighbor in Yonkers, Michele Walker; the New Year's Day slaying of Patricia England in 1988; and the 1990 fatal shooting of Lisa Gibbens in Tuckahoe. He was convicted and is serving a life sentence.

John D'Alessandro, now a criminal-defense lawyer, was one of the Yonkers



Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore listens to a question Wednesday during a Senate judiciary hearing on her nomination as chief judge of the New York Court of Appeals at the Capitol in Albany. DiFiore was confirmed as the state's top judge Thursday.

DiFiore

Continued from Page 1A

weeks after Gov. Andrew Cuomo first nominated her.

The Republican-led Senate approved DiFiore, a Democrat, with a voice vote as she watched from the chamber's gallery, where she was joined by her husband and three adult children.

A former state and county judge, DiFiore, 60, had been Westchester district attorney since 2006. As chief judge, DiFiore will serve as leader of the state's extensive court system, in addition to helping decide cases on the seven-member Court of Appeals, the state's highest court.

"It's a high honor and privilege to serve as the chief judge of the Court of Appeals and of the state of New York, and I am honored and obviously feel very privileged to be able to continue my service to the people of the state of

New York in this new capacity," DiFiore told reporters after the vote.

DiFiore becomes the second woman to hold the title of chief judge, following the late Judith Kaye, who served from 1993 to 2008. Her term is technically for 14 years, but the state constitution forces Court of Appeals judges to retire at the end of the year they turn 70, meaning DiFiore will be forced to step down at the end of 2025.

She replaces Jonathan Lippman, who turned 70 last year.

DiFiore was given final approval a day after the Senate Judiciary Committee recommended her. Cuomo on Wednesday also nominated Republican Michael Garcia for another vacant Court of Appeals post.

DiFiore had near-unanimous support from the Senate, save for one senator — Sen. Tony Avella, D-Queens — who abstained. Avella is the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit that may ultimately end up before the Court of Appeals, he said.

Sen. John Bonacic, R-Mt. Hope, Orange County, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, highlighted DiFiore's credentials, pointing to her experience as

both a judge and a prosecutor. Lawmakers heaped praise on her.

"I think Gov. Cuomo has nominated a very impressive judicial nominee who has expressed commitment to judicial independence and is eager to bring a fresh approach as the leader of the third branch of government," Bonacic said from the Senate floor.

Her nomination was opposed by Jeffrey Deskovic, who wrongfully served 16 years in prison for the 1989 rape and murder of a Peekskill High School classmate.

In a three-page letter to senators, Deskovic — who was freed after DiFiore's office did not object to testing DNA evidence shortly after she took office in 2006 — criticized DiFiore's overall record on wrongful convictions, questioning why she didn't do more to push for changes in the interrogation process, including mandatory videotaping.

DiFiore declined to respond directly to Deskovic's letter, but said she is "very proud of my record and my work on wrongful conviction."

detectives who worked the Baxter case. He had worked with McCarty on several other homicides and their respectful, working relationship grew into a close

friendship in recent years, he said.

"Whether you're on his side or against him you know where you stand. He's thoroughly professional, an incredible lawyer and an ultimate gentleman," D'Alessandro said. "He's the perfect person to lead that office. He's got the respect of the entire office and probably all of the defense bar also."

When DiFiore took office, McCarty told The Journal News he felt like the Yankees clubhouse guy in the 1950s, having already worked for Vergari and Pirro.

"I worked with Babe Ruth. I worked with Joe DiMaggio. And Mickey Mantle just walked in," he said then.

D'Alessandro said McCarty would be the Derek Jeter in that analogy, that he "fits right into the pantheon" of strong Westchester prosecutors.

McCarty called it an "absolute honor" to work for DiFiore and said there was "no one in the public sector" that he respected more. He will also continue DiFiore's homage to their mentor and leave Vergari's portrait up in the executive office.

He saw far less of the courtroom than he wanted in the past decade as he took on a more administrative role. One courtroom appearance involved the exoneration of Jeffrey Deskovic in 2006.

He was not the prosecutor who

won a conviction against the teenager in the 1989 rape and murder of a Peekskill High School classmate. But 17 years later, after Deskovic had been freed from prison, it was McCarty who stood in a courtroom and moved to formally dismiss the case, not because of any legal technicality but because "Deskovic is actually innocent."

He looked over to Deskovic and offered "the most sincere apologies we can muster on behalf of the Westchester District Attorney's Office and the Peekskill police."

Gov. Andrew Cuomo could still appoint DiFiore's interim replacement. But in similar cases in recent years in Staten Island and Nassau County he declined to fill the vacancy.

One Republican who has expressed interest in running is Bruce Bendish, a criminal defense lawyer and former prosecutor who was DiFiore's supervisor in the DA's office in the 1980s. Dan Schorr, who lost to DiFiore in the 2009 election, opted not to run again.

George Fufidio, another former Westchester prosecutor and longtime criminal defense lawyer, is the only Democrat who has publicly entered the race, and plans to register a campaign committee with the state Board of Elections in the coming days.

Reginald Lafayette and Douglas Colety, the Democratic and Republican party chairmen, respectively, said they expect other candidates to announce in the coming weeks.

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Probe

Continued from Page 1A

confirmed it was reported to him Wednesday afternoon, but declined to discuss details.

So far, he said, nothing has been reported missing. All Building Department records and other documents associated with the Claxton investigation have been copied and preserved by the city manager and city attorney, Catalina said.

"They assured me that those files are under lock and key," the mayor said.

An investigation by The Journal News published Sunday revealed that Claxton and her son, Fredrick Claxton, received a \$15,000 state grant from The Preservation Co. in 2007 despite being disqualified from the program because she is an elected official. The grant was designated to repair a home on Fremont Street.

In that report, the state Affordable Housing Corp. admitted it was missing required records from the nonprofit documenting the home-improvement work completed at Claxton's home, as well as the homes of five others, under a \$75,000 grant it awarded the organization.

The Journal News article sparked a



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Police said there was an attempted break-in at the Peekskill Building Department.

criminal investigation by the Westchester County District Attorney's Office and prompted Catalina to request a report on all transactions between the Peekskill-based nonprofit and the city over the past 10 years.

Claxton has said she didn't know she was ineligible and the nonprofit's executive director, Jeannette Phillips, has said it was an oversight.

Both have pledged to repay whatever is required.