

Advanced Newswriting Samples

Leads And First Story

Christina Rodriguez

Eng. 18.16 –Exercise – Class 1

1. The student assembly of Hapsville State College held a meeting tonight in Ryan auditorium. The first item on the agenda was a request to create a new club for kayaking. The student assembly approved the request. The second item involved a discussion of the school's \$10 increase in the annual campus parking fee. The student assembly passed a resolution condemning the increase, saying it "adds to the financial burden many students now face." The student assembly then began a debate on the annual student government budget. The meeting adjourned early when all members of the URL Party got up from their seats at the same time and walked out in protest. The URL Party holds 40 percent of the seats in the Assembly; the rest belong to the STP Party. Caitlin Gleason, minority whip of the URL Party, said all 18 of the URL delegates walked out "to protest a sexist remark by the Assembly speaker, Bill Moody. He said that the Women's Alliance shouldn't get anymore funding because its members 'go on a shopping spree every year.' That's a negative stereotype, and he refused to apologize." Bill Moody said: "Without the URL members, we don't have a quorum. So now we don't have a budget. Student government is unable to act. None of the activities can get any money until we pass a budget. But I'll never apologize for using an everyday phrase like that." Caitlin Gleason responded: "It's true that student government will be paralyzed, and it's all Bill Moody's fault." Write for the next day's newspaper.

Student assembly meeting at Hapsville State College ends with URL Party walk out, in protest of a sexist comment made last night by Assembly speaker Bill Moody, who refuses to apologize while the student government remains without a budget.

2. Battalion Chief Bob Burns of the New York City Fire Department reported the following in a telephone interview: "We got the first call at 8:10 p.m. and arrived at Lefrak City projects in Elmhurst, Queens, to find there was a fire in the upper floors of an 18-story apartment building. It was a tough blaze, not only because it was so far upstairs, but because of the strong winds. The wind and fire combined to create a blowtorch that just roared through the building, going down a hallway. We called in extra units right away. We have three fatalities. So far they're unidentified. Also, we have 22 injured, taken to area hospitals. No word on their condition yet. It's still not under control. Gotta go. Call me in an hour." Write for the newspaper's Web site.

At 8:10 p.m. in the Lefrak City projects in Elmhursts, Queens, a fire was reported on the upper floors of the 18-story apartment building, where three have been reported dead and 22 injured, taken to area hospitals while the blaze remains out of control.

3. Tom Cocola, spokesman for the city Department of Transportation, gave this account: Walter Rogers, 46, of North Babylon, was pronounced dead today at the

city asphalt plant in Willets Point, Queens, near Shea Stadium, at 2:30 a.m. Rogers had been a DOT highway repair worker since 1988. Rogers was walking a path between two trucks. One of the vehicles was moved, and Rogers was crushed between the two vehicles. Richard Delaney, the plant manager, said that Rogers was walking back to his truck after getting a receipt for the asphalt he had just loaded onto it. He was planning to pave a stretch of road in southeast Queens, Delaney said. He said he heard a scream before Rogers was struck. Write two paragraphs for the newspaper's Web site.

Forty-six year-old North Babylon resident, Walter Rogers was crushed to death between two vehicles while walking back to his truck while on the job at the city asphalt plant in Willets Point, Queens at 2:30 this morning.

4. Maurice Charles, executive director of The Hapsville Poll, conducted by the Center for Polling at Hapsville State College, issued this statement: "In a poll of 638 registered voters in Hapsville taken from Aug. 28 to Sept. 1, 42 percent of the respondents said they would vote to re-elect Democrat Frank Sylvan as mayor and 41 percent said they would vote for his Republican opponent, City Comptroller Mary Sansiviero. The remaining voters were undecided. In our last poll, taken June 1-3, Mayor Sylvan led with 56 percent to 35 percent for Ms. Sansiviero, with the remainder undecided. Both polls have a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. The race is currently in a statistical dead heat. It is worth noting that concern about the environment, once a low priority of voters, now polls as the top priority for voters in Hapsville. This may reflect voter concern that the purity of the city's water supply is in question and that a new \$800 million filtration plant may be necessary. This issue emerged in news coverage in July. We found that 32 percent of the voters listed the environment as their major concern, up from 3 percent in the previous poll. Among those voters, Ms. Sansiviero led Mr. Sylvan, 62 percent to 24 percent. Mayor Sylvan will need to address this issue more convincingly."

Republican City Comptroller Mary Sansiviero is neck and neck with Mayor Frank Sylvan in the Hapsville Mayoral race, leading the polls in environmental issues by 62 percent.

Hitchhiker Story:

It never pays to pick up hitchhikers as Scott Pinchal found out last night. At around 8 P.M., the Queens auto mechanic got stabbed and robbed on State Route 17. The assailant was a blonde female in her twenties. Pinchal had picked up his assailant along Route 17 on his way home from work. She had been walking along the road in the rain. When he was about to drop her off at the edge of town, the assailant pulled out a knife and demanded for money.

When the assailant discovered that Pinchal only had two dollars, she stabbed him out of anger, five times, in his right arm, side and abdomen. She then takes off leaving, Pinchal severely wounded. Pinchal was discovered in his blue '78 Skylark Buick Sedan at 3:40 this morning by police and he was taken to Memorial Hospital where he is said to be in fair condition.

Swine Flu News Bulletin:

The President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology released a report today on the preparations for the 2009 H1N1 flu, also known as the Swine flu for this fall season. This report from Washington hopes to outline the steps needed to make sure that these upcoming weeks and months are filled with less people affected by the H1N1 flu.

The main recommendations made in this report involve not only the cooperation of private and public sectors, but also of every American in the country. It is recommended to frequently wash your hands and make sure to stay home when you are feeling sick with flu-like symptoms. Plans are being made to rush the preparation of the flu vaccine for distribution and guidelines are being clarified about the use of antiviral medicines.

The use of Web-based social networks are being included in the development of communication about the H1N1 virus awareness. There are also suggestions for adjustment of policies in school and work environments to encourage people to reduce the risk of infecting of others like adjusting the rules on not coming into work when feeling sick so employees won't feel pressured to come in even when sick or finding alternate ways to distribute lunch to sick school children who might only come into school while they are sick to have enough food for the day. The concentration on this and other behaviors that could reduce the risk is the key to making the plans in this report work.

Hostage

Christina Rodriguez
EN 18.16

Web Story:

An innocent bystander in his 50's was taken hostage and killed, along with his killer earlier this evening in Corona, Queens. The man was shot in the head while trying to escape, a police source said.

The tragedy started when five men attempted to rob a cleaning crew at the Corona Social Club, located at 101-17 43rd Ave. at about 6:22 p.m. There were three men and three women in the cleaning crew. One of the women, 19-years-old and pregnant, managed to escape and alert a passing police patrol car. Another one of the group also managed to escape.

When the robbers realize that their attempt was going astray, two of the masked men leave the club. They grab a bystander outside of the club. The two robbers tried to escape onto a passing bus that had stopped, with the unidentified hostage, when police officers confronted the group.

When the robbers were within five feet of the bus, the unknown hostage tried to escape from them. During the struggle, one of the robbers shot the hostage in the head, which instantly killed him. The police then open fire on the two robbers, killing the one and wounding the other.

Tomorrow's Paper:

An innocent bystander in his 50's was taken hostage and killed during the early evening yesterday in Corona, Queens. The man was shot in the head while trying to escape, a police source said.

The whole tragedy started out as a normal work day for a cleaning crew at the Corona Social Club located at 101-17 43rd Ave. at around 6:22 p.m. When the group, which consisted of three men and three women, arrived, they were greeted by five men who proceeded to try to rob them.

One of the women, a 19-year-old pregnant woman, managed to escape the scene and alert a passing patrol car. Another woman from the group also managed to escape from the scene.

When it was realized that their robbery attempt was going sour, two of the men left the building and grabbed a bystander outside of the club . The two robbers tried to escape onto a passing bus that had stopped, with the unidentified hostage, when police officers confronted the group.

When the group was within five feet of the bus, the unidentified man tried to escape from the robbers. During the struggle, one of the masked men shot the victim in the back of the head which instantly killed him.

The police then opened fire on the two robbers. Both robbers got shot, killing one instantly, the one who has shot the victim, and putting the other in critical condition. The wounded perp was sent to Elmhurst Hospital Center.

Adam Dume, 27, a witness, describes the scene as he and his mother saw it from their apartment window. "We looked out the window. I saw one guy holding another in a chokehold and they were backing up toward the bus," said Dume.

"There were police officers, about five, with their guns drawn. They kept telling the criminals to drop the gun, drop the gun. The criminals and the hostage got behind the bus." He then lost sight of the scene when the group went behind the bus.

Florence Ellmann, 62, of Flushing was surprised when she heard gunshots while driving by in her car a block away. "I heard what sounded like gunshots. I was really surprised, even though I should know better because of all the crime you read about in the papers," said Ellmann. "I pulled over in my car and ducked, because you can't be too careful."

A scared Deborah Urbaez, 17, was inside of the John 3:16 Church at 102nd Street and 43rd Avenue. She watched as the robbers demanded that they board the bus. "We all prayed. We were scared. It was like the movies," said Urbaez when the whole horrid scene was over.

Felix Jiminez, 48, jumped behind a tree when the whole incident began. From his post, he saw one of the two masked men hold a pistol to the head of the unidentified hostage. He heard the robber with the gun say very loudly to his victim "motherfucker," and then saw him shot the unfortunate man in the head.

The bus driver of the Q23, Glenn Fortsch, 35, a driver for Triboro Coach Corp was driving the bus on 43rd Ave. when the robbers tried to escape on his bus.

"One guy had a guy around the neck with a gun. One guy was in back. They were coming toward us, backing up toward the bus. They had a .45 revolver," said Fortsch.

"I told the passengers to get down and get to the side of the bus. I locked the back door and then the front and then I went under the seat."

He looked up after the shooting had stopped. "Then I saw the men dead."

Jerome Cummings, 18, tried to guess why the men were trying to rob the cleaning crew at the Corona Social Club in the first place. "There's a lot of kids who hang out

around here, getting stoned all the time, and they come up with these crazy schemes to get paid for it. I bet that's what happened here," said Cummings.

"They never wanted it to get out of hand like this."

What got out of hand instead took out two lives for no reason other than being at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Tombstone

Christina Rodriguez
EN 18.16

Brief:

A tombstone cutter was shot more than 20 times at tombstone shop in the Lower East Side earlier tonight, found by his son who was on a three-day pass from the Air Force, said authorities.

Morris Ternen, 57, was pronounced dead at the scene by the emergency medical technician on the scene. Ternen lived right above the shop he worked at for the past 30 years. His 19 year-old son, airman Max Ternen, came to the shop at about 9:30 p.m, to find neighbors trying to look into the shop like something had happened. When the young Ternen tried the door, he tripped over the body of his dead father.

Authorities suspect that a bunch of neighborhood kids that the deceased Ternen used to chase away from the shop maybe behind the crime. There is also speculation that two unidentified people who were seen driving away from the scene in a black Volkswagen Jetta may hold the key to who may have done this to Ternen.

Story:

Who cuts the tombstone for those who cut tombstones? That's an answer that young Max Ternen will have to find out on his own. Last night, his father, Morris Ternen, 57, was found dead at his longtime home and workplace in the Lower East Side. Who had found him? He did.

The young Ternen, 19, was on a three day pass from his station at the Otis Air Force Base in Massachusetts. Ternen, who has been an airman for six months, came to visit his only parent on a rainy, winter night at the East Houston street shop and also home of his late father. This is what Ternen told the Daily News last night:

“I got here about 9:30 tonight, and there were people all trying to look into the shop. They must have heard something. I knew my dad used to go down there at night to lock up, but when I tried the door, it wasn't locked. The lights were off; it was dark as hell. I stumbled just inside the door.” He bites his lip. “It was my dad. That's where he fell, just inside the door,” said Ternen.

“ I ... I thought maybe he'd just fallen and knocked his head and got knocked out,” the airman continues. “I called for help. One of the neighbors sent for the cops. And when the cops came, they told me he'd been shot and killed.”

According to emergency personnel on the scene, the deceased Ternen was shot more than 20 times. Morris Ternen had worked at Malmuth, Inc., Makers of Fine Tombstones as a tombstone cutter for the past 30 years. He lived above the shop in a two-room apartment.

According to witnesses, two unidentified people were seen driving away from the scene in a black Volkswagen Jetta. Later on last night, a car with the same description was found wrecked in Brooklyn, at the corner of Tillary and Adams Streets. The two men who had been in the car had ran away, according to police sources.

That car is registered to Otto J. Klagenfurt, the owner of Klagenfurt Auto Supply Stores, a shop not too far away from Malmuth on East Houston Street. There were no reports of the car being stolen. Klagenfurt is also a Brooklyn resident, where the car was found. A call to his home said that he was not at home, but in Manhattan, according to sources.

There is an alert out for the two men involved in the Brooklyn wreck. There is also suspicion of this crime being committed by neighborhood kids who Ternen used to chase away from in front of the shop. Either way, hopes for answers for the young airman Ternen are hoped to be found soon as pieces of chipped tombstones sit on the floor of Morris Ternen's former work and home.

Fire

Christina Rodriguez

Web Story:

Two toddlers were killed in an ongoing three-alarm fire earlier this evening on Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn, also leaving two women in serious condition, according to firefighter officials.

The fire started at 298 Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn at about 8:56 p.m. The four-story walk up was engulfed in the fast moving flames upon the firemen's arrival. One of the women had jumped from the building and appeared to be seriously injured, according to firefighter Frank McCabe.

The victims were all taken to Kings County Hospital. The children, ages 2 and 3, died from smoke inhalation. The two women are said to be in serious condition, according to hospital officials. Four firefighters were also taken to Kings County and are being treated for smoke inhalation and are all in good condition.

News Story:

Two toddlers and their mother were killed in a three-alarm fire earlier last night on Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn, which also left another woman in serious condition, according to firefighter officials.

The Santos children, which were Juan Santos, age 2 and Manuel Santos age 3, were dead at the scene from smoke inhalation and burns. Their mother, Alicia Santos, 26, was declared dead upon her arrival at Kings County Hospital. Edna Corodova, 45, is at Kings County in serious condition with burns, smoke inhalation and fractured legs, according to officials.

The fire started at the basement of the V & J Discount Store, 298 Flatbush Ave. in Brooklyn at 8:56 p.m. last night. It traveled up the air shaft to the fourth floor, where the Santos family lived. Some people reported smelling an accelerant during the fast-moving fire. The fire is considered to be of suspicious origin at this time, according to Deputy Chief Richard Smyth.

Four firefighters from Ladder Co. 349 battled their way through the front windows on the fourth floor and pulled the two children and their mother out, despite the heavy flames and smoke. They are being treated for smoke inhalation at Kings County and are said to be in good condition, according to the chief.

"The building itself was heavily damaged, mostly in the basement, first floor and fourth floor. There was a lot of paper and boxes stored in the basement, and that fed the fire. The roof was destroyed. The fourth floor was completely gutted. The story on the first floor had heavy water damage," said Smyth.

"We had to evacuate the whole block, about 60 families. There's structural damage and we'll have to determine if it poses a threat to the adjoining buildings."

The fire finally got under control at around 10:25 p.m.

Edna Corodova was found on the ground at the firefighters' arrival with burns and fractured legs. "We think she may have hung out from the venetian blinds," the chief said. "The flames were intense. She was holding on for her life and apparently the blinds broke and she fell to the ground. We found her and the blinds on the ground when we got here."

"Alicia Santos, the mother of the two boys, had to be dragged out of there. She wouldn't leave. She was burned real, real bad," said Smyth.

Wilfred Taylor was one of the firefighters who went inside of burning building and helped with the rescue efforts. He recounts what he went through in the heavy blaze. "When we got here, we could see the flames were real intense. They were billowing out the windows and the roof in the back of the house. Smoke was coming out of the basement windows too, thick and black," said Taylor.

The fire had traveled up the airshaft adjunct to the bathroom were the two kids were taking a bath, with the bathroom door closed.

"From what I could pick up from the mother, she was apparently across the hall with the windows open, maybe having coffee or something in the other apartment on the floor," said Taylor.

By the time Santos got back into the apartment, the fire had flashed through the bathroom and burned up the shower curtain.

"It was all plastic stuff. The fumes probably got to the kids before the flames did. These kids were gone, but she wouldn't leave. She kept trying to get down the hall to the bathroom, but the flames were overwhelming," said Taylor.

Two of the other firefighters, Bill Kelly and Kevin Lunney, went in there once the flames were down and each one took one of the children's bodies. "By then, I had forced the mother to leave. I carried her down the ladder. The husband had just come home from work. He was a wreck outside, crying. It was awful," Taylor said.

Ann Johnson, 74, who lives across the street at 299 Flatbush Ave., said that it happened so fast, from one minute to the next. "Flames all over the roof, the top floor, and in the windows. This one woman, she hung from the venetian blinds, just hung there, the flames coming out the window, and the blinds snapped and she come down and land on the sidewalk," said Johnson.

"It was like only two minutes before the fire truck got here. You could hear it coming."

Andrew King, 48, who lives down the block, across the street at 293 Flatbush Ave., saw smoke coming out the basement and started running up and down the street, yelling out

that there was a fire. “People came streaming out the building. But it moved fast, man, too fast. I thought I smelled something like lighter fluid, too,” said King.

“I hope they check that out, because we can’t have the landlords start burning down the neighborhood. They’re building an office building down the street, you know, so this land is going to be worth something,” King said.

Hector Winnick, 32, the Santos family’s downstairs neighbor, spoke of the husband Ramon Santos, who had left the scene to see his family at the hospital. “He works evenings at the Brooklyn Marriott hotel as a bartender. I was the one who called him and said he had to get here,” said Winnick.

“I didn’t have the nerve to tell him, so he was just finding out when he got here. It’s a heartbreak.”

Lawsuit

Christina Rodriguez

Six workers from a Long Island City garment factory filed a suit yesterday against their former employers for alleged abuse, involving 60 to 100 hour work weeks without overtime and for failing to pay them the federal minimum wage.

The lawsuit was filed yesterday by the Urban Justice Center, a Manhattan-based advocacy group, at the Brooklyn federal court. The plaintiffs, Hui Lin, 23, Pin Yun Zhang, 52, Wen Ming Lin, 44, Huang Chen, 21, Ai Yi Lin, 18, and Yu Jiao Lin, 57 have claimed that Ping Nen Lin, the chief executive officer of Great Wall Corp., along with his associates, have been making illegal deductions from their pay, plus not paying them minimum or overtime since 2005.

They also charge in the suit that they were subjected to unlawful retaliatory conduct and fired shortly after filing a complaint with management.

According to the suit, instead of being paid per hour for their work, the former workers were paid per piece of clothing made, amounts ranging from one cent to ten cents per piece. They earned no more than \$300 a week, working seven days a week for 12 to 24 hours a day, claimed the suit.

The Great Wall Corp., located at 47-23 36th St. Long Island City, Queens, withheld 2% of the workers overall pay and 3% from any amount of garments that help them go over the \$300 mark, according to the suit.

“More than a hundred years ago, Jacob Riis wrote about exploitive conditions like these,” said Jeffery Mishkin, an attorney for the plaintiffs. “They still exist today, and they are illegal.”

The workers are asking, in the suit, payment for all the hours they were paid less than the minimum wage and unpaid overtime. They also demand all improperly deducted amounts from their pay.

Web Stories

Christina Rodriguez
EN 18.16

Web Story 1:

Suspicious Fire turns Memorial Park Chapel into a Crime Scene

A suspicious fire broke out in the chapel of Memorial Park just before nine o'clock today, with fire damage to the building and items inside the chapel.

Memorial Park is the temporary resting place for the remains of Sept. 11th victims and a special place for their family members to gather. The fire was quickly extinguished by firefighters, who were called in to put out the fire. There was no damage to 9/11 remains, but there was damage to the chapel. Mementos and candles left by family members were either destroyed or possibly stolen. The damage will be repaired by the Chief Medical Examiner.

Fire Marshals have determined that the fire was intentionally set, turning the chapel into a temporary crime scene, according to Mayor Mike Bloomberg. "Anyone who would set fire to the inviolable Memorial Park chapel is craven and contemptible. Fire Marshals and Police will investigate this aggressively and bring whoever is responsible to justice," said Mayor Bloomberg in a statement released by his office earlier today.

"Family members who visit the Memorial Park chapel and have already gone through such enormous loss have my sympathy."

Web Story 1 Update:

Arrest made in Memorial Park Chapel Fire

A recent Harvard Law school graduate has been arrested for the fire set on the Memorial Park Chapel earlier today.

Brian Schroeder, 26, has been charged with criminal mischief, according to the police. Schroeder is a recent Harvard Law School grad who did this as a drunken prank according to police sources.

The fire, which damaged the Memorial Park chapel, destroyed mementos and candles left by family members of 9/11 victims. There was no damage to the 9/11 remains that are in Memorial Park, which is a temporary resting place for the remains until they are moved to the permanent memorial at Ground Zero.

Web Story 2:

Madoff's Accountant Pleas Guilty

The accountant for Bernard Madoff pleads guilty in court today for fraud and tax charges and has agreed to help out in the investigation of Madoff's fraud.

David Friehling, 49, pleaded guilty in Manhattan federal court for nine counts of security and tax fraud and will face a maximum sentence of 114 years in prison. Friehling also has to pay twice the gross gain or loss from the time the crime took place and \$3,183,000 worth of compensation received from his service to Madoff's company. Friehling has also agreed to help authorities in the ongoing investigation of Bernard Madoff.

United States Attorney Preet Bharara said in a court document that, "David Friehling was one of the key enablers of Bernard Madoff's historic fraud."

"With his guilty plea, Friehling has taken responsibility for his crimes and will now assist us in holding others accountable for their involvement in Madoff's epic fraud against so many victims."

Friehling was released on a \$2.5 million bond after the plea on the condition that the bond would be co-signed by eight individuals with five properties valuing between \$1 million and \$1.2 million in equity. His travel will be limited to the Southern and Eastern districts of New York and he would have to use mainline telephone services only. Friehling will have continued pretrial supervision and his wife will have to surrender her passport to authorities who already have Friehling's passport which was obtained at the time of his arrest.

Friehling is set to have a sentencing date in late February of next year.

Web Story 3:

Dirty Air can Lower a Child's IQ before Birth

A recent study about the IQ of young children has concluded that the exposure to polluted air can affect their IQ from prenatal stages.

A [study](#) done by the Columbia Center for Children's Environmental Health at the Mailman School of Public Health reported that prenatal exposure to polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in urban areas can lower a child's intelligent quotient (IQ).

PAHs are chemicals from environmental pollutants such as the burning of coal, diesel, oil and gas, or other organic substances such as tobacco.

The [study](#) was conducted on children born to Black and Dominican women, ranging from the ages of 18 to 35, in Washington Heights, Harlem and the South Bronx of New York. The children were monitored from in utero to the age of five, where the mothers wore air monitors during pregnancy and answered questionnaires. Other factors such as second-hand smoke exposure, lead, mother's education and the quality of the home caretaking environment were taken into account.

At the age of five, 249 children were given an intelligence test known as the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of the Intelligence, which covers verbal, performance and full-scale IQ scores. The results concluded that 140 of the children who ended up being exposed to high levels of PAHs had full scale and verbal IQ scores that were 4.31 and 4.67 points lower, respectively than those of less exposed children.

“These findings are of concern because these decreases in IQ could be educationally meaningful in terms of school performance,” said Frederica Perera, Dr.PH, a professor of Environmental Health Sciences, the director of the center at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and the [study's](#) lead author.

"Fortunately, airborne PAH concentrations can be reduced through currently available controls, alternative energy sources and policy interventions.”