



Village of Flower Hill Mayor Elaine Phillips

Flower Hill aims to curb substance abuse

Village, Women's Club to host awareness lecture

BY SARAH MINKIEWICZ

The Village of Flower Hill and the Women's Club of Flower Hill are teaming up to educate residents on heroin and substance abuse.

"The Nassau County Police Department is reaching out to many villages, schools and organizations across the county to introduce and offer its substance abuse outreach program," village Mayor Elaine Phillips said. "The village decided to take advantage of this offer, while enhancing the program by incorporating a discussion with families impacted by substance abuse. The Village of Flower Hill along with the Women's Club of Flower Hill and Manhasset Casa are dedicated to bringing knowledge and compassion to the growing need for awareness, prevention

and recovery assistance."

The village, along with Nassau County Detective Pamela Stark, will host a "Family Community Event" to discuss the rise of heroin and substance abuse at 7 p.m. on June 8 at Village Hall, located at 1 Bonnie Heights Road in Manhasset.

Officials said the community event is to encourage conversation, promote awareness and find solutions to a growing problem facing Long Island.

"Collaboration across all communities is essential to combat the prescription drug and heroin epidemic," said Caryn Sawyer, executive director of the Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse. "The Village of Flower Hill is commended for its substance abuse education awareness initiative that will encourage family discussion on this important issue."

Officials said Stark will also discuss how to keep your home and communities safe due to the increase in crime that some local areas are encountering.

Village Treasurer and Deputy Clerk Kathy Wade said there hasn't been an apparent increase in substance abuse, but the village wants to educate residents.

"For us at this point we're just trying to focus on getting the knowledge out that it's not so much about the facts but more on the understanding that this affects all of us," she said.

Guest speakers at the event will include Kings Park resident Linda Ventura, who will share her story of the loss of her son, and Anthony Rizutto from Seaford Addiction Facility.

Refreshments will be served and free ice cream will be given out by the local ice cream truck after the event.

Charges 'unusual' in woman's death

Lawyer reviewing accusations

BY JOE NIKIC

The attorney for the HBO producer connected with the 2015 overdose death of Manhasset dermatologist Kiersten Cerveney said last week the charges against his client were "unusual."

Marc Henry Johnson was arrested last Wednesday and faces one charge of attempting to sell cocaine and one charge of accessory-after-the-fact for his role in relocating Cerveney's body after she had a drug overdose at a cocaine dealer's apartment.

"It's an unusual set of charges that we've just begun looking at," Lee Ginsburg, who is representing Johnson, told Newsday.

Efforts by Blank Slate Media to reach Ginsburg for comment were unavailing.

Johnson and James Holder, who is charged with selling narcotics, brought Cerveney's body into the lobby of an apartment building in New York City's Chelsea neighborhood after she died of a cocaine overdose on Oct. 4, 2015, according to the criminal complaint filed last Wednesday.

The charges against Johnson and Holder stemmed from a seven-month investigation into the death of the 38-year-old doctor, according to the criminal complaint.

Cerveney, who practiced at Prohealth Care Associates LLP at

2 Hillside Ave. in Williston Park, had reportedly gone out with friends earlier in the evening but later met with Johnson, the 51-year-old HBO producer.

The two went to a 16th Street address, allegedly where Holder lived, and the producer reportedly called 911 to notify authorities of Cerveney's death before fleeing the scene toward Eighth Avenue.

Cerveney was discovered unconscious and unresponsive around 8:30 a.m. in the vestibule of the building, located at West 16th Street near Seventh Avenue, according to published reports.

She was later pronounced dead at Lenox Health Greenwich Hospital.

Cerveney died from "acute cocaine and alcohol intoxication," according to the New York City Medical Examiner's office.

Ginsburg said that Johnson felt "awful from the moment that it happened."

Johnson was released on a \$300,000 bond and is due back in court on June 24.

Holder was detained without bail and is also due back in court on June 24.

According to the criminal complaint, Holder sold at least five kilograms of cocaine from 2003 until October 2015.

Neither of the two men have been charged with Cerveney's death.



Kiersten Cerveney

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