

Nassau bans cigs in parks

BY PAUL LAROCCO
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Nassau County has joined Suffolk in banning smoking in its parks.

The Nassau ban surfaced Monday when the County Legislature voted unanimously to accept a \$4,000 donation of new signs to alert park users to the restriction and point them to parking lots and other designated areas where they still may smoke.

In a summary of the measure, officials noted that County Executive Edward Mangano "has authorized the acting parks commissioner to ban smoking in all Nassau County parks."

The administration said legislation passed last month raising county fees on a variety of services also reinstated the parks commissioner's power to set rules and regulations "as is deemed necessary and proper."

Smoking will be prohibited in playgrounds and other family recreation areas in county parks, and on athletic fields and throughout county preserves. Parking lots at county parks and public golf courses will not be affected.

"Both legislators and many residents advocated for non-smoking areas in our parks," Mangano spokesman Brian Nevin said, adding that the ad-

ministration wants to "advance a healthier environment."

Suffolk County in 2012 passed a local law that covers most of its parkland, but exempts parking lots, campgrounds and golf courses, similar to Nassau.

Neither county's restrictions include fines for violators.

Nassau Legis. Rose Walker (R-Hicksville), chairwoman of the Health and Social Services Committee, said it was important to leave some clearly marked areas for smokers.

"To have an outright ban would be very, very difficult, but to have those designated areas where people can smoke and not disturb others is what

we're aiming for," Walker said.

The \$4,000 in signage comes from the Tobacco Action Coalition of Long Island. Carol Meschkow, the group's Nassau director, called the parks smoking ban "a necessity. We really need to change the societal norm."

But Legis. Judy Jacobs (D-Woodbury) said she wants Mangano and GOP lawmakers to also support raising the tobacco purchase age to 21, as Suffolk and New York City have.

"It's a tiny step forward, but shame on Nassau for not being willing to step up to the plate like their neighbors have," Jacobs said.



The fire-damaged Commack home of Marc and Doreen Kimmel, who were unharmed.

chia-Sawmill Intermediate, that black smoke means a fire — call 911 right away.

"In my mind I was panicking completely. . . . I tried to keep calm, which I think I did OK at," Christopher said yesterday.

Kimmel, a luxury car salesman, said he usually works Mondays but came home early to be with his wife, who is due Aug. 4 and nursing a bad back.

When the fire started at 2:13 p.m., the couple was in a bedroom watching "The Wiggles" children's TV show with their son Anthony, Marc Kimmel said.

Russell Schneider, 44, said he banged on the neighbors' door, screaming that the house was on fire.

Said Kimmel: "I was about to fall asleep when the doorbell rang, and there was incessant knocking on the door like . . . I've never heard before."

Hours before the fire, Christopher learned that his grandfather, Anthony Putignano, 71, an electrician who had worked in the World Trade Center for more than 30 years, had died from lung cancer.

The boy penned a farewell note to place in the coffin, so "Poppy" could read it, said Christopher's mother, Lisa Putignano, 44.

The last line reads: "You're my Super Man! Love, Christopher."

DINO FOSSIL SHEDS LIGHT ON FLIGHT

BY DELTHIA RICKS
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A four-winged, meat-eating dinosaur with long tail feathers apparently glided through the air, and its fossil is providing new insights into prehistoric flight, scientists reported yesterday.

The creature is a microraptor, a small cousin to the ferocious and fleet-footed Velociraptor, which quickly made meals out of slower dinosaurs when Earth was a young and very different place.

Alan Turner, an assistant professor of anatomical sciences at Stony Brook University's medical school, collaborated with an international team to provide a unique glimpse into primordial flight.

The scientists reported their findings on the new species they've named *Changyuraptor yangi* in yesterday's edition of *Nature Communications*.

"We know it had feathers because the feathers were preserved on the fossil," said Turner, who called that discovery "remarkable."

Now he and his colleagues are trying to definitively determine how a 4-foot-long, 9-pound animal circumnavigated the air 125 million years ago.



Newly discovered feathery dinosaur *Changyuraptor yangi*.

Changyuraptor yangi was found last year in a rich fossil site in the Liaoning province of northeastern China, Turner said, underscoring that the location has seen a surge in discoveries of feathered dinosaurs over the past decade.

When it was unearthed, the entire *Changyuraptor* fossil was cloaked in a full set of feathers, including foot-long tail plumes that apparently played into the way it moved through space, scientists said.

The creature gets its name from the Chinese words "chang yu," which mean long feathers.

"The hallmark of this fossil are these massively long feathers coming off its tail," said Turner, who was trained as a paleontologist but teaches human anatomy at Stony Brook.

"A femur is still a femur and

a tibia, a tibia," Turner said of bones that make up the legs in Cretaceous-era dinosaurs as well as modern humans.

Paleontologist Luis Chiappe of the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles, the project's lead investigator, suggests the tail feathers were instrumental for decreasing descent speed and navigating safe landings. No one, however, knows for sure.

The hope is to construct a simulated version of the beast to determine whether *Changyuraptor* launched itself and flew or dropped into the wind and glided. The latter scenario so far has the strongest scientific support.

"The amazing tail feathers of *Changyuraptor* are by far the longest of any feathered dinosaur," Chiappe said. "Clearly far

more evidence is needed to understand the nuances of dinosaur flight."

In addition to Turner and Chiappe, the team of investigators includes Anusuya Chinsamy of the University of Cape Town in South Africa, who analyzed the animal's bones with the aim of determining its age. The conclusion: *Changyuraptor* was an adult.

Mike Habib of the University of Southern California worked on aerodynamic analysis.

Turner, who specialized in finding where *Changyuraptor* fits in dinosaurs' evolutionary tree, believes it's distant kin to modern birds but lacked the finesse of modern birds in flight.

"Flying in modern birds is a very complex behavior," Turner said.