



Another forecasting tool is scrapped

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Courier News

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Court overturns murder conviction

Mother was sentenced to life in prison without parole for killing 4-year-old son

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SOMERVILLE - The murder conviction of a South Bound Brook woman who killed her four-year-old son has been overturned by a state Appellate Court.

Elina Gutti, 42, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole on Jan. 31 for stabbing her four-year-old son to death while he slept on Feb. 6, 2021.

Gutti had been found guilty in a two-week bench trial before Somerset County Superior Court Judge Julie Marino, since retired, in December.



Gutti

Marino, court papers say, found that the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office had proven beyond a reasonable doubt that Gutti was not legally insane at the time of the killing.

Gutti, who did not deny that she had killed her son by stabbing him multiple times, presented a defense that she was not guilty by reason of insanity.

The Appellate Court overturned the conviction because Marino did not con-

duct a colloquy with Gutti about her decision to waive a right to a jury trial.

The Somerset County Prosecutor's Office is reviewing the decision and has no further comment at this time.

The Appellate Court ruled that the certification of Gutti's defense lawyer that she wanted a bench trial was "insufficient" for the judge to grant the request.

Gutti had requested a bench trial in October 2023, but the trial did not occur

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A different kind of nun



Salesian Sister Guerline Joseph in the chapel at Mary Help of Christians Academy in North Haledon. She helps create content for her order's social media page, posting photos and videos of her fellow sisters on Instagram.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS PEDOTA/NORTHJERSEY.COM

From NJ influencers to Brazilian beatboxers, nuns take over pop culture

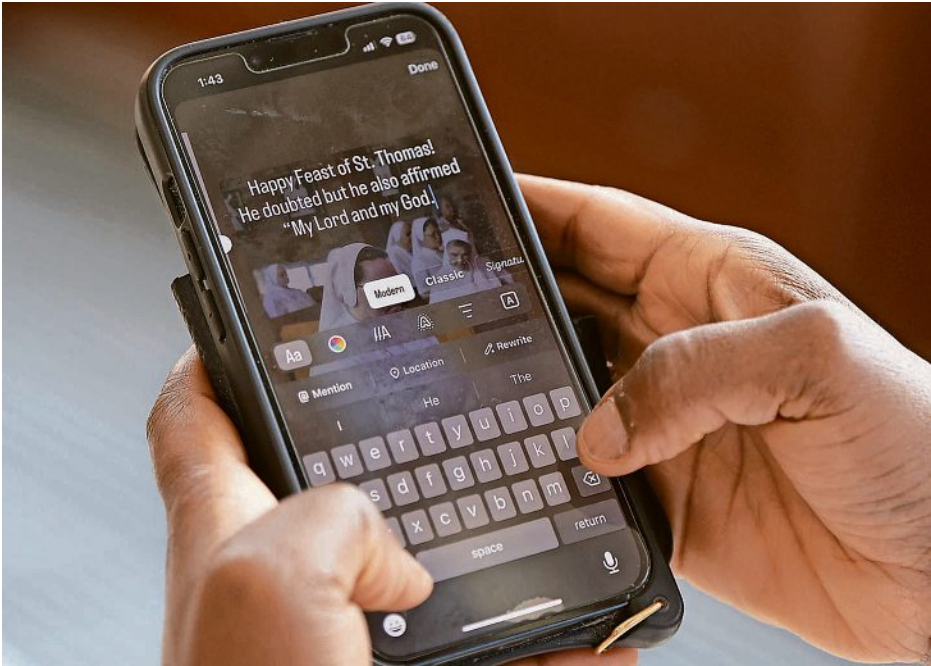
Deena Yellin
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It was the beatbox heard round the world.

In May, a pair of Brazilian nuns were on a local Catholic TV show discussing a vocational retreat when it happened. Suddenly, the duo — in matching powder-blue skirts and white habits — broke into a joyous beatbox and dance routine.

Sister Marizele Cassiano provided the drumbeat soundtrack on her microphone as Sister Marisa Paula de Neves strutted for the camera. The viral video racked up hundreds of thousands of views.

They're not the only nuns turning heads and raising eyebrows lately. A swath of TikTok sisters, known collectively as #NunTok, have earned



Salesian Sister Guerline Joseph in the chapel at Mary Help of Christians Academy in North Haledon posting on Instagram.

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Woman rescued from roof of burning home

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NORTH PLAINFIELD – Borough first responders rescued a 27-year-old woman from a fire at her Richard Way home early July 11.

Police responded around 1:25 a.m. where they reported the residence engulfed in flames with several residents on the front lawn and were told that one female resident was still inside, on the roof, authorities said.

Officers tried to rescue the last resident, Yaritza Perez, from the roof, but firefighters were able to extend a large

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Foreclosures on the rise in Central Jersey

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Somerset County saw the sharpest rise in first-time foreclosures in the 12 New Jersey counties in the metropolitan New York City area during the second quarter of 2025, according to a study by Property Shark.

The number of first-time foreclosures in Somerset County grew by 54% in a year-over-year rise.

However, Somerset had the third smallest number of foreclosures in the study, 37.

Overall, the study found the number of first-time foreclosures in the 12 northern, central and shore New Jersey counties in the metropolitan area totaled 804. That was a 23% year-over-year increase after nine quarters of nearly consecutive declines.

Only two counties, Union and Passaic, showed declines.

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