



PAGE 5

AMID GRIEF AND A PANDEMIC - THE WORLD REMEMBERS 9/11

Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. (center) hosted a virtual ceremony to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the September 11th tragedies in New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Laying a memorial wreath with DiVincenzo after the ceremony are (from left) emcee Stephen Aduabato; St. Benedict's Prep Headmaster Father Ed Leahy; Imam W. Deen Shareef from Masjid Waarith ud Deen; Freeholder Vice President Wayne Richardson; Freeholder President Brendan Gill; Congressman Donald Payne Jr.; Helman Correa, father of Danny Correa who lost his life at the World Trade Center; Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Sheriff Armando Fontoura and Deputy Chief of Staff William Payne. (Photo courtesy of Essex County)

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LOCAL TALK

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INDEX

Editorial & Weather	02
Town Watch	04
World News	06
From The Pastor's Heart	10
The Doctor Is In	12
Parents Beware	13
Sports Wrap	14

ROCK THE VOTE AT THE ROCK



NEWARK - Mayor Ras J. Baraka, Los Angeles Lakers star J.R. Smith, NBPA Executive Director Michele Roberts, New Jersey Devils President Jake Reynolds, New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way, and Essex County Board of Elections Clerk Linda Von Nessi announced in a virtual press conference Sept. 14 that

the Prudential Center will serve as a "Super Polling Site" for the upcoming 2020 Presidential election pending final vote by the Essex County Board of Elections. It would accept ballots on Election Day, provide residents with opportunities to register to vote in September, and serve as a

(Continued on page 15)

JOHN THOMAS: A REFLECTION



By Dhiren Shah

On March 6, 1966, the first "Crispus Attucks Day Parade," (named in recognition and honor of the historic

(Continued on page 3)

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Turn to
PAGE 9



Editorial

Dhiren Shah
Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Wildfires in California, Oregon, and Washington have taken at least three dozen lives. In Oregon, 10% of the population has been evacuated. This is an ongoing situation. The US is known as one of the richest and most powerful countries in the world. However, they cannot solve this problem. I do not blame President Trump. The states are more involved in demanding funding from the federal government. However, this problem has been going on for decades. How come the state administrations are not looking harder for solutions?

I am an Indian. There was a huge problem in the state of Guj-

rat. Every year, floods were taking the lives of hundreds and disrupting the livelihood of poor people. Since they have built the Narmada Dam, the problem not only cleared up, but the state of Gujarat has flourished and became one of the best states in India. Except for seeking money, the administrators are not looking to solve the problem.

It is not the central government's problem; it is the state government's problem and they have to find solutions and then ask for whatever money is required. California, the largest state in the country has the most billionaires (170). New York has 144 billionaires. Most of the tech companies' headquarters are in California. They must find the solutions. Otherwise, they do not deserve to run the show.

Election season will be in full swing by next week. It will be the first debate between presidential candidates, incumbent

Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden. For the first time, one of the polls (Rasmussen Reports) shows that Trump is leading by 1 point. According to realclearpolitics.com, Joe Biden had a lead of 7.4 over Donald Trump on Sept. 15. Today, the average lead has been reduced from 8 percentage points on Sept. 11 to 6.2 on Sept. 16.

These have shifted despite Trump's comments to Bob Woodward about the real situation of the coronavirus. He knew back in February that the virus was deadly and dangerous. In the interview he said that he played down the virus to avoid creating a panic. He has also been non-committal about masks, which experts say are very helpful in curtailing COVID-19. At the same time, the Democrats have failed to support any suggestions made by the president and his

administration. So, both sides are to be blamed.

Being a democrat, I want to see another democrat on the top post. However, Biden must prove his ability and capability. I have heard many arguments from the democrats that he will pick a good team and they will run the best show. Sorry, I do not agree with them. We are electing the president to serve at the most powerful post in the world. I cannot let him pass without a good test of his mental condition. If he has dementia, I don't want him to run the show. So, he has to prove himself at the first debate on Sept. 29 at 9:00 to 10:30, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. "Fox News Sunday" anchor Chris Wallace will serve as moderator.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy	Windy and Cool	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny
HI 79	HI 68	HI 65	HI 66	HI 68	HI 73	HI 79
LO 59	LO 48	LO 48	LO 48	LO 50	LO 54	LO 58

THOMAS

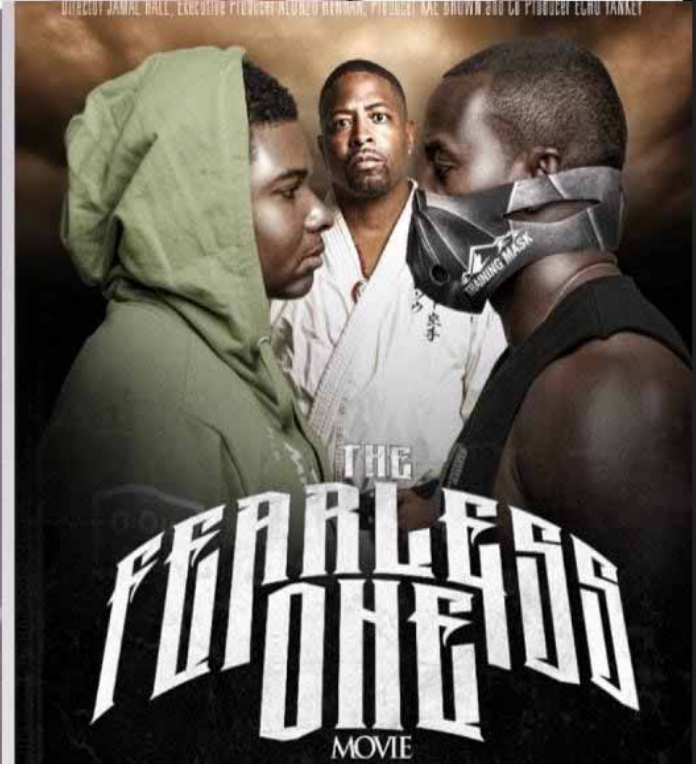
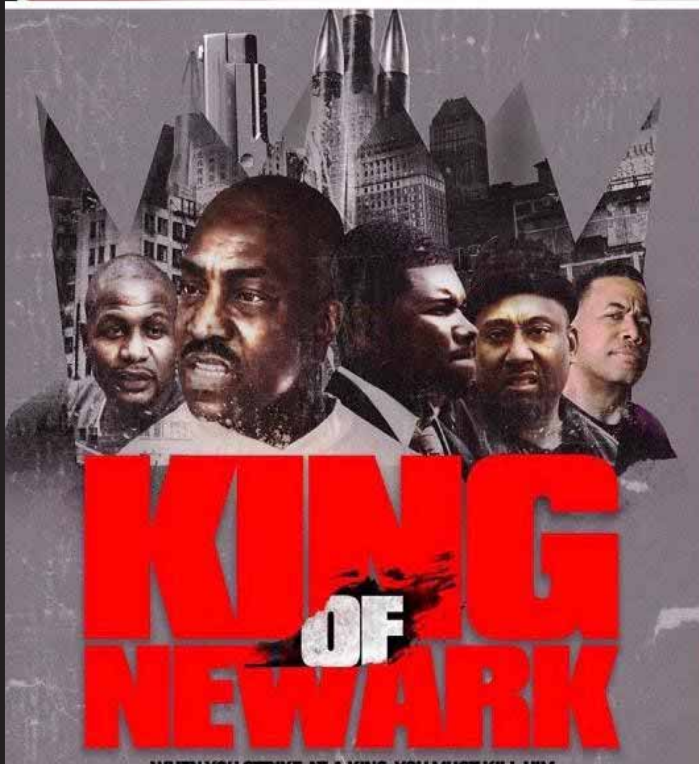
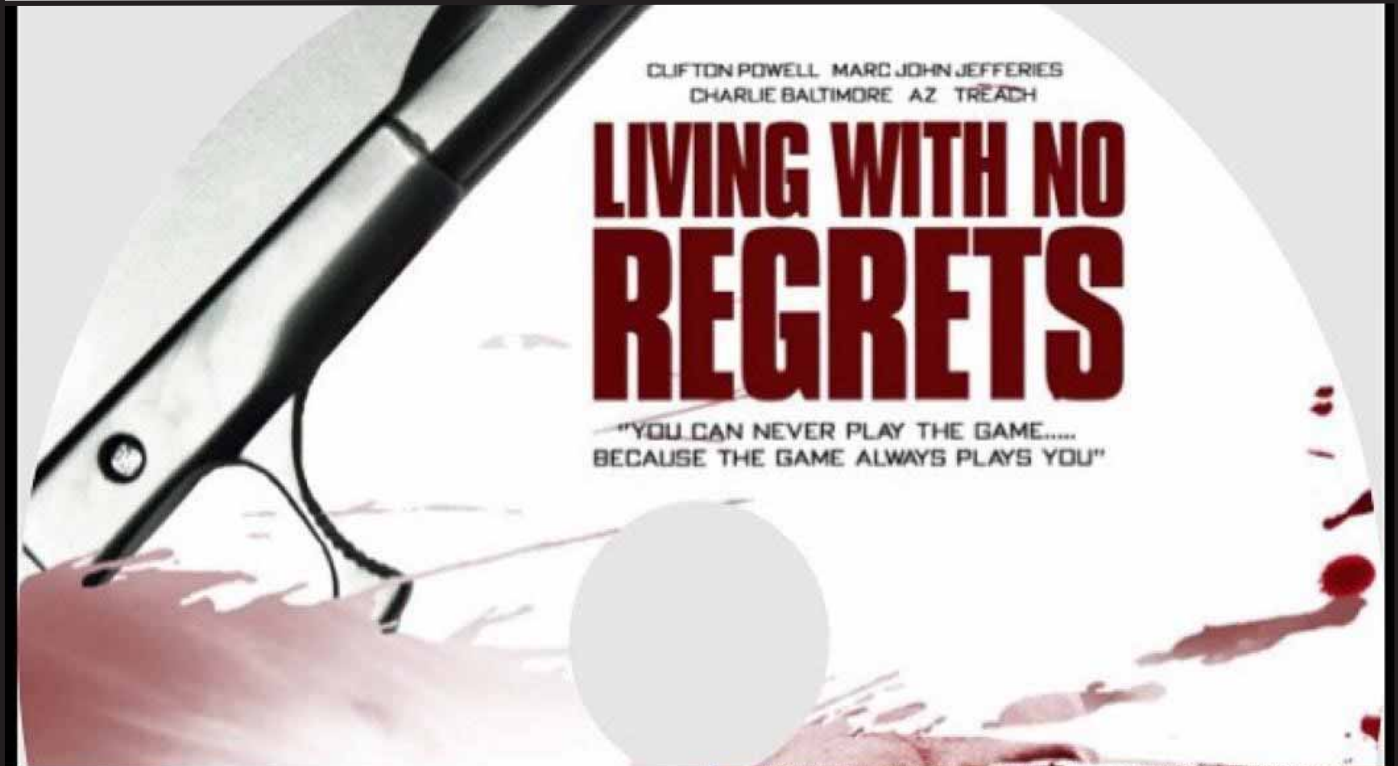
(Cont. from page 1)

African American who was the first to die at the Boston Massacre in 1770), was held in the City of Newark, New Jersey. According to Parade founder, John Thomas, the idea of the first parade evolved while he was teaching history at Central High School, Newark. Students were discussing how various ethnic groups in the United States celebrated their heritage. After reviewing St. Patrick's Day (Irish Americans), Columbus Day (Italian Americans), Pulaski Day (Polish Americans), and Dekalb Day (German Americans), one of Mr. Thomas's students remarked, "Mr. T., we don't have a day!

For over 50 years, the African American Heritage Statewide Parade has galvanized thousands of participants, marchers, students and spectators to line Broad Street in Newark, New Jersey to celebrate and to make certain that the glorious heritage and contributions of Africans and African American people are not forgotten. The name of the Parade has been changed several times; in 1970, it became "The Attucks-King Parade," to honor Rev. Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. In 1979, it became "The Black Heritage Day Parade," with varying themes focused on remaining cognizant of the many evolutionary social concerns of the day, but also committed to preserving the traditions of past parades.

Thomas was a longtime member of the Democratic Committee of Essex County. He served as the Statewide Deputy Director of Constituent Services and Deputy Campaign Manager for United State Senator Frank Lautenberg.

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On December 6, 1926, John Arthur Thomas was born in the city of Newark, New Jersey. He lived a great life while serving the African American Community and left this world on September 1, 2020 at the age of 93. He served in the United States Army and was honorably discharged in 1946. After his return, he enrolled in Rutgers University and got his Bachelor's degree in 1950. He then worked with the Newark Board of Education as a teacher and he was the seventh

African American teacher in the city of Newark.

In 1952, John Arthur Thomas married the love of his life, Elizabeth Lee Nowlin. In 2013, after 61 years of marriage, the royal couple proved only death could separate John the King from Elizabeth his queen. Their union was blessed by the birth of two daughters, Patricia and Pamela.

John counted his grandchildren as a blessing to his life, and passes on a legacy of service to his triplet granddaughters, Sarah, Patricia, and Victoria; and to his

two grandsons, Jacques and Giovanni; and two goddaughters Angel Hicks and Maria Johnson. Thomas' life, service, and contributions will be remembered by many who benefited from his efforts.

Charles Hall, the current President of African American Heritage Parades Organization, said that he will honor John Thomas in the next Statewide African American Parade in Newark, New Jersey, Memorial Day weekend in 2021.

TOWN WATCH

DISCLAIMER: The following items are primarily drawn from first responders. Responders' accounts may not be their full activity range. Grand juries hand down indictments when evidence presented them warrant a trial. Named suspects/defendants are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

NEWARK - Two Newark police officers, accused of stealing household items from a scene they were investigating, have been suspended without pay until city and county internal affairs units have finished their inquiries.

Off. Taisha Wright and Off. Bianca White, said Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore Stephens II and Newark Public Safety Director Anthony Ambrose Sept. 5, are facing burglary and theft charges plus related conspiracy counts.

Wright and White, said Stephens and Ambrose, were on motor patrol duty when they responded to a suspicious activity call from a Sunset Avenue apartment Aug. 31.

After securing and investigating the scene, Wright allegedly took a charger and a case of bottled water from the first floor apartment and placed the objects into the squad car.

Wright and White returned later that Monday, they added, so that White could pry open the front door and take a Bluetooth speaker.

Stephens thanked The NPD Office of Professional Standards for bringing the incident up to the ECPO Professional Standards Office.

What happened Aug. 31 came about a week after two other NPD officers were put on administrative duty after allegedly turning off their body cameras and failing to report on the car pursuit they had engaged in.

IRVINGTON - ECPO's Homicide/Major Crimes Task Force detectives are probing the Sept. 12 fatal shooting of a man here in the township's Olympic Park section.

Irvington police officers, responding to calls of gunfire before Midnight, found 37-year-old Maurice Stevens, Jr. lying along the 50-block of Prospect Avenue. Stevens, who was rushed to Newark's University Hospital died in the early hours of Sept. 13.

IPD and ECPO detectives spent Sunday's predawn hours investigating on-site at Prospect Avenue and 39th Street. Further details of the incident and Mr. Stevens were not available as of Noon Sept. 15.

Prospect and 39th are in a largely residential neighborhood a block east of the former Olympic Park amusement area-now industrial zone.

EAST ORANGE - City Council President Christopher James has an additional task, from the Democratic Municipal Officers group, until past the Nov. 3 General Election.

The DMO leadership has named the First Ward Councilman as president of its revived New Jersey Chapter Sept. 5. James will act as a liaison between Garden State municipal officials who identify as Democrats and the Democratic National Committee.

DMO-NJ is among 20 chapters across the U.S. who bring their local level issues to the national party and visa-versa. Three of those chapter presidents have seats with the DNC leadership.

DMO's priority into Nov. 3 is to have state voter registration application forms available to the public.

ORANGE - City police officers have been looking for the four men who robbed a fifth at a major city intersection here since Sept. 2.

A man told responding OPD officers and detectives that he was accosted by the quartet at South Essex Street and Freeway Drive East at about 11:10 p.m. that Sunday.

Three held the victim while a fourth went through his pockets. They took \$200, a New Jersey MVC driver's license and two TD Bank cards before fleeing.

WEST ORANGE - Township native Gary Odendhal, Sr., who retired from 53 years' service to Fairfield Sept. 10, may have re-

invented himself yet again while you read this.

Odendhal, who officially ended his career as a Fairfield Township employee Sept. 1, was given an outdoor reception by Business Administrator Joseph Catenaro and councilmen John LaForgia and Joseph Cifelli. They bestowed him a service plaque in the company of his three sons, daughter-in-law and grandson.

Odendhal was sworn into the police department here Jan. 1, 1967, retiring as Sgt. Odendhal in 1982. The Caldwell High School graduate had been a Fairfield resident since his family's 1956 move.

Ptl./Sgt Odendahl became known as "G" or "The Duke" - the latter for his tattoo honoring John Wayne. He became an avid motorcycle rider, joining the Blue Knights club in the 1980s.

Sgt. Odendhal, after 64 days' retirement, returned as FPD's dispatcher. He took a 24-hour leave in 1993 to become the DPW's Supervisor of Maintenance.

One reception guest, noting Ohendahl's daily work on Fairfield's municipal buildings, asked, "How are we going to find anything when G's gone?" A FPD Facebook posting sent him off with, "Come back any time (but just to visit)."

SOUTH ORANGE - Essex County's contractors will have begun its Irvington Avenue streetscape work - and have detoured traffic - by when you read this.

The county told the village's elders Sept. 11 that it will start work on South Orange's portion of the avenue Sept. 14. The affected intersections include Tichenor Avenue and Riggs Place, Fairview and West Fairview avenues and College and Wesley places. (The avenue's Ward Place intersection, despite the Village Board of Trustees' request, is excluded.)

Work along "Seton Village's Main Street" includes sidewalk improvements, new street lighting and trash cans, highlighted street crosswalks, a bicycle lane and street milling and repaving. The village's section is being paid by a 2019 county \$1.062 million grant.

The first of two phases are to continue until the weather turns

cold in mid-November and resume next spring.

This project will work its way to Maplewood and Newark-Ivy Hill's parts of the avenue until it reaches "Maplewood Corners" - where Maplewood's Irvington and Parker Avenues and Irvington's Clinton Avenues meet. There will also be local improvements for Clinton and Parker avenues.

The Irvington Avenue streetscaping is the result of 10 years' study, planning, grant and contract awarding.

MAPLEWOOD - The Township Committee's inquest on sexual harassment and assault claims from the Maplewood Community Pool continues past the facility's seasonal Sept. 7 closing.

Mayor Frank McGehee and his committee colleagues, as of Sept. 15, have installed new hiring practices at the pool towards the 2021 season. At least one employee had been reprimanded as of Sept. 1.

It is not clear whether the reprimanded employee was the same one named by a 20-year-old worker on an Aug. 17 MCPJustice Instagram account. The worker, who said she had been subjected to sexual harassment since starting her job five years earlier, said that the man in question "is not the only predator."

McGehee and the committee held an emergency Aug. 17 meeting on the matter after 12 lifeguards and other staff members walked out that morning; several employees also resigned that day, leaving the pool short-staffed until Sept. 7.

MONTCLAIR - Those 1,086 to 1,101 Vote By Mail ballots left over from Montclair's May 12 nonpartisan municipal election will remain uncounted.

That was New Jersey Superior Court Judge Thomas Vena's ruling from his Newark bench Sept. 11. His ruling in the McNeil vs. Way case denies Mr. McNeil, Dr. Renee Baskerville and 13 other Montclarions' injunction to have the Essex County Clerk's Election Division and Board of Elections include them in a final count.

Those ballots, which would make up nine percent of the township's May 12-14 vote

(Continued on page 10)

RWJBARNABAS HEALTH EMPLOYEES OFFERED ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Associate Degree at No Cost Through NJ Community College Opportunity Grant Program

Credential-Building Program is a partnership between RWJBarnabas Health's HR Workforce Development Division and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges

West Orange, NJ, September 14, 2020 - Through a unique partnership, RWJBarnabas Health, with the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, is proud to announce its participation in a \$5 million Community College Opportunity Grant Program. Beginning this fall semester, the program offers RWJBarnabas Health employees who meet certain criteria the chance to attain an Associate Degree in any field at no cost to them.

The Community College Opportunity Grant Program is the first of its kind in the state of New Jersey and is mutually beneficial for all parties involved. Not only will the program allow RWJBarnabas Health to build a pipeline of highly-trained workers, but it supports the state's objective to significantly increase the percentage of residents with post-secondary credentials and thus improve quality of life through increased career opportunities. By enrolling additional students in Associate Degree programs, the Community College Opportunity Grant Program also generates revenue for New Jersey's community colleges and supports higher education within the state.

The funding for this program is supplied by the New Jersey state budget for 2020. Governor Phil Murphy's proposed state budget for 2021 has \$10 million appropriated for the Community College Opportunity Grant Program, the legislature has bills under consideration to ultimately establish the tuition free grant program permanently in the law, and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges plans to partner with

other employers to offer this tuition free grant to employees throughout the state.

Some of the criteria for RWJBarnabas Health employees to participate in the Community College Opportunity Grant Program include an adjusted gross household income of \$65,000 or less and no previous degree attained. Employees may work with the system on a full time, part time, or per diem basis and must enroll for a minimum of six credits per semester. The Council has created a dedicated webpage for RWJBarnabas Health employees and has assigned personal navigators from each college in order to provide guidance through the enrollment process. Likewise, RWJBarnabas Health has created an employee landing page for access to the same information along with the internal resources available to them through the system's Strategic Workforce Development division.

"The Community College Opportunity Grant Program is a meaningful and substantial benefit to employees of our system," said Lourdes Valdes, Director of Workforce Development and Grants at RWJBarnabas Health. "The impact will be significant in terms of supporting career advancement for frontline workers within the system and fostering equity and opportunity across the state."

"As the largest employer in the state of New Jersey, working with RWJBarnabas Health as a partner to pilot the Community College Opportunity Grant Program made perfect sense," added Catherine Stargill, Director, Strategy, Outreach and Communications at the New Jersey Council of County Colleges. "We value our partnership and look forward to working with Lourdes and her team to refine and expand this program to its maximum impact."

To date, 400 RWJBarnabas Health employees have applied to participate in the Community College Opportunity Grant Program for the fall 2020 semester.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Orange Board of Education Public School District

The Orange Board of Education has in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 and 10:4-13, has scheduled a Special Virtual Closed Policy Review Meeting for Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

AMID GRIEF AND A PANDEMIC - THE WORLD REMEMBERS 9/11

As the world faces the onslaught of the Novel Coronavirus, it took a moment collectively to remember a solemn occasion.

Nineteen years after the cruel and cowardly terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, people held ceremonies and tributes to remember the fallen. However, this year saw smaller gatherings, with people wearing face coverings due to the global pandemic.

Despite nearly two decades having passed, the scene is still fresh in mind. That fateful day, 19 hijackers were a part of an attack that targeted the financial, military, and legislative centers of the United States. Two planes hit the World Trade Center, toppling the twin towers in under

two hours. One plane hit the Pentagon, while another was supposedly headed for the Capitol Building, or perhaps even the White House. However, thanks to the bravery of its passengers, United 93 was downed in a field in Shanksville, Pa. The plane emanated from Newark Liberty International Airport, with "Liberty" added to commemorate their sacrifice.

On May 1, 2011, Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the attacks, was eliminated by Navy SEAL Team Six in Pakistan. The person who gave the go for the operation was former U.S. President Barack Obama.

We mourn. We remember. We live on.



UNITED STATES **Merger Monday**

As Main Street continues its COVID-19 struggles, Wall Street is plowing ahead with its money moves.

Three big tech players took action on Sept. 14, leading to a “Merger Monday” of sorts. First, Oracle outbid Microsoft in its quest to add TikTok to its corporate profile. The popular social media company was ordered to sell its U.S. assets by the Trump Administration due to its ties to China and being dubbed a security risk to American interests. ByteDance, TikTok’s current owner, is referring to Oracle as a “trusted technology provider” and not necessarily calling the move a “sale” of the app. Shares of Oracle rose upon the news.

Next, computer graphics giant Nvidia announced a \$40 billion deal to buy British chip designer Arm Holdings via Japanese parent company SoftBank. Its microprocessor tech will complement Nvidia’s core technologies, and prevent Arm from “Arming” competitors in the near future.

TikTok’s software and Nvidia’s hardware might end up on your Verizon networked phone. That company announced it was buying Tracfone from Mexico-based America Movil. This will be likely accomplished by a \$6.25 billion half-cash, half-stock purchase. The move puts Verizon in the thick of the “discount phone market” and adds Tracfone’s 21 million users to its stronghold.

Finally, stepping outside of tech, biopharmaceutical company Gilead is looking to shell out \$21 billion for Immunomedics, a cancer-drug company based out of Morris Plains, New Jersey. When news broke concerning the deal, shares in Immunomed-

ics promptly jumped up over 100%.

AFRICA **More Ebola Worries**

Ebola is spreading in a western province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), raising fears that the disease could reach neighboring Republic of Congo and even the capital, Kinshasa, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Sept. 11.

An outbreak in Equateur Province emerged in early June and has now spread into another of its 17 health zones, bringing the total number of affected zones to 12. So far, there have been 113 cases and 48 deaths.

“The most recently affected area, Bomongo, is the second affected health zone that borders the Republic of Congo, which heightens the chances of this outbreak to spread into another country,” said WHO Spokesperson, Fadéla Chaib, underlining the need for cross-border collaboration and coordination.

The risk of the disease spreading as far as Kinshasa is also a very real concern for the UN agency. One of the affected areas, Mbandaka, is connected to the capital by a busy river route used by thousands every week.

This is the second Ebola outbreak in Equateur Province and the 11th overall in the DRC, which recently defeated the disease in its volatile eastern region after a two-year battle.

This latest western outbreak first surfaced in the city of Mbandaka, home to more than one million people, and subsequently spread to 11 health zones, with active transmission currently occurring in eight.

The health zones all border each other and cover a large and remote area often only accessible by helicopter or boat.

Managing response logistics in Equateur is difficult as communities are very scattered. Many are in deeply forested areas and reaching them requires travelling long distances.

In some areas, community

resistance is also a challenge, Ms. Chaib added.

“We learned over years of working on Ebola in DRC how important it is to engage and mobilize communities. WHO is working with UNICEF in engaging religious, youth and community leaders to raise awareness about Ebola,” she said.

The situation has been further complicated by a health worker strike that has affected key response activities for nearly four weeks.

Locally based Ebola responders have been protesting against low salaries as well as non-payment since the start of the outbreak.

Although some activities have resumed, many are still on hold, making it difficult to get an accurate picture of how the epidemic is evolving and which areas need the most attention.

ASIA **Peace on the Horizon?**

The first ever direct talks between Afghan Government representatives and the Taliban which began on Saturday, present “a major opportunity” to finally realize the “long-held aspirations” of the people, for a peaceful future, the UN chief has said.

In a special video message released as the historic negotiations got underway in Doha, António Guterres thanked the Qatari hosts for facilitating, and said the “consistent calls for an end to violence” by Afghans themselves.

“Afghans themselves must determine the content and nature of the negotiations,” added the UN chief. “An inclusive peace process, in which women, youth and victims of conflict are meaningfully represented, offers the best hope of a sustainable solution.”

The country has seen four decades of conflict, with thousands killed, but up until now, there have never been face-to-face talks between the militant group which controlled the country before being toppled by

a US-led coalition in 2001, and the democratically-elected Afghan Government.

The Sept. 12 first meeting comes in the wake of a security agreement inked between the United States and Taliban representatives in February, which paved the way. Continued near-record violence and satisfying the complex preconditions, including prisoner exchanges, had jeopardized the talks throughout recent weeks.

Stressing the importance of women’s involvement, Mr. Guterres said all parties “must do their part to ensure that women participate in a variety of roles, and that the peace process reflects the experiences and expertise of Afghan women in all their diversity.”

Guterres said the two temporary ceasefires that took place earlier in the year, offered an encouraging sign, but with negotiations now underway, “I urge the redoubling of efforts to protect civilians and to deescalate the conflict, in order to save lives and to create a conducive environment for the talks.

“It is my hope that progress toward peace can lead to the return of millions of Afghans displaced internally and across borders, to their homes in a safe, dignified and orderly manner.”

The UN chief said it was crucial that all Afghan leaders together with the international community, “do everything possible to make peace a reality. Please be assured of the readiness of the United Nations to support the process of intra-Afghan peace negotiations, and the sustainable development of the country.”

EUROPE **Settlement Reached with Automaker**

The U.S. Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and California Air Resources Board (CARB) announced Sept. 14 a proposed settlement with German au-

(Continued on page 7)

WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 6)

tomaker Daimler AG and its American subsidiary Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC (collectively, "Daimler") resolving alleged violations of the Clean Air Act and California law associated with emissions cheating.

Under the proposed settlement, lodged with the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, Daimler will recall and repair the emissions systems in Mercedes-Benz diesel vehicles sold in the United States between 2009 and 2016 and pay \$875,000,000 in civil penalties and roughly \$70,300,000 in other penalties. The company will also extend the warranty period for certain parts in the repaired vehicles, perform projects to mitigate excess ozone-creating nitrogen oxides (NOx) emitted from the vehicles, and implement new internal audit procedures designed to prevent future emissions cheating.

The recall program and federal mitigation project are expected to cost the company about \$436,000,000. The company will pay another \$110,000,000 to fund mitigation projects in California. Taken together, the settlement is valued at about \$1.5 billion.

Vehicle manufacturers are required by the Clean Air Act and federal regulations to apply for and receive a certificate of conformity from EPA before selling a new model year vehicle in the United States. As part of the application process, manufacturers must demonstrate through testing that a vehicle meets applicable emissions standards and disclose to EPA all auxiliary emission control devices (AECDs) and any defeat devices installed in the vehicle.

The settlement addresses allegations made in separate civil complaints filed by the United States and CARB in the District of Columbia that, from 2009 to 2016, Daimler manufactured, imported, and sold

more than 250,000 diesel Sprinter vans and passenger cars with undisclosed AECDs and defeat devices programmed into the vehicles' complex emissions control software. These devices cause the vehicles to produce compliant results during emissions testing. But when not running a test, the vehicles' emissions controls perform differently, and less effectively, resulting in an increase in NOx emissions above compliant levels.

NOx emissions from vehicles play a key role in ground-level ozone production and negatively impact human health. Indeed, studies have indicated that breathing ozone may cause damage to lung tissue in children and adults, and it may worsen conditions like asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. The pollutant has also been linked to cardiac disease.

EPA and CARB discovered the defeat devices through testing conducted in the wake of the Volkswagen scandal at EPA's National Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Laboratory in Michigan and at CARB's test laboratory in El Monte, California.

The settlement requires Daimler to implement a recall and repair program to remove all defeat devices from the affected vehicles at no cost to consumers and bring the vehicles into compliance with applicable emissions standards under the Clean Air Act. The repair will consist of a software update and replacement of select hardware, which differs across models and model years.

Daimler must repair at least 85 percent of the affected passenger cars within two years and at least 85 percent of the affected vans within three years. The company must also offer an extended warranty covering all updated software and hardware, and it must test repaired vehicles each year for the next five years to ensure the vehicles continue to meet emissions standards over time. Daimler will face stiff penalties

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if any category of updated vehicles fails to meet applicable emissions standards or if it fails to meet the 85 percent recall rate for passenger cars or vans.

The settlement further requires Daimler to implement systemic corporate reforms to detect and try to eliminate violations in the future. This includes conducting significant testing on new diesel and gasoline motor vehicles using a portable emissions measurement system to assess

compliance under real-world conditions, installing a robust whistleblower program, enhancing annual AECD and defeat device training for its employees, and performing internal audits subject to review and critique by an external compliance consultant.

Daimler must also replace 15 old locomotive engines with new, less-polluting engines to offset excess NOx emitted from its vehicles.

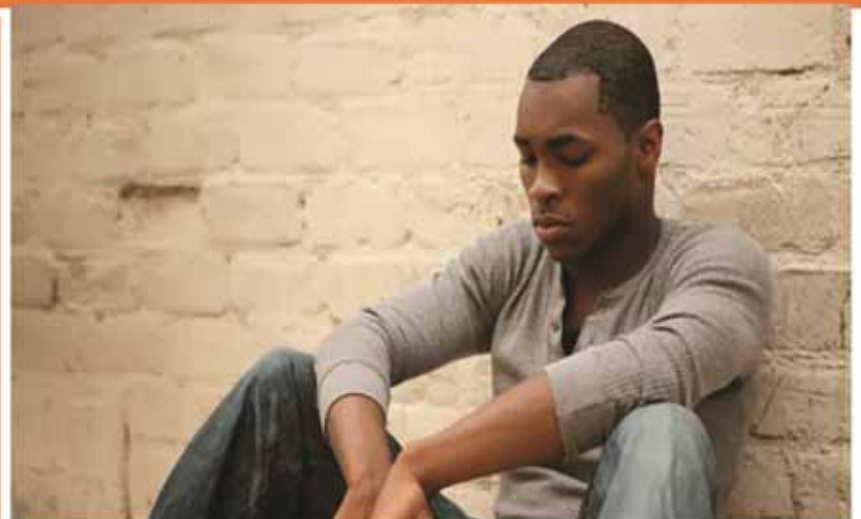


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East Orange General Hospital is offering confidential, no cost, telephonic Depression Screenings to members of the community on Wednesday September 23, 2020 from 9 am to 6 pm

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Newark:	202 Stuyvesant Ave.	Tel. 973-374-8807
West Orange:	77 Main Street *	Tel. 973-324-2090
West Orange:	92 Old Northfield Road *	Tel. 973-736-5552
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From The Pastor's Heart

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

The Need For Spiritual Discernment At This Time

While driving the other day and checking the radio dial, I paused at a station because I heard an interview that arrested my curiosity. The host was interviewing Ralph Reed, the founder of the "Faith and Freedom Coalition," who had just released a book titled, "For God and Country: The Christian case for Trump."

I was struck by the fact that the book's previous title was "Render to God and Trump." From his perspective, Ralph Reed argued that what he had seen from President Trump's accomplishments in recognition of Israel and bringing peace to the Middle East was sufficient for him to call all Evangelical Christians to give their allegiance to Trump the 2020 election. However, more striking to me was when I heard Ralph Reed saying that President Trump was comparable to King Cyrus. I have heard it before when Israel's Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu said the same when the President ordered the American Embassy moved to Jerusalem.

In the past, I heard the same comparison with David Koresh, and other messianic figures who thought of themselves, or their followers thought of them as Cyrus. If you do not know, please read your histories of how the lives of these Cyruses and those who have given their loyalties to them have ended. I am not ridiculing, but I am just reciting the reality of history.

If you wish to know more who King Cyrus was, read the Bible where it notes that Cyrus was the Persian king under whom the Babylonian captivity ended (cf. Ezra 1:1-11). The record is that in the first year of his reign (538 BCE), Cyrus was prompted by God to decree that the Temple in Jerusalem should be rebuilt and that such Jews as cared to might return to their land for this purpose. Jewish tradition has been consistent in treating Cyrus as a pagan agent of God's divine plan for Jews to return to the Land of Israel from their exile in Babylon (modern-day Iraq). Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, credits Cyrus with freeing the Jews from captivity and helping them rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

My reason for doing this reflection is not to get in a contest

with Ralph Reed, but to ask anyone who reads my reflection not to get caught up in accepting the comparison of President Trump or some of the other individuals that have been identified with King Cyrus. When we make such comparisons, we subject ourselves to blindness and deception. I do not doubt that God sets up kings and rulers and takes them down.

What is concerning me is the fact that so many are accepting the comparisons and giving endorsements to some charismatic figures and political leaders without the kind of critique that will allow them to reject the evil that such leaders are perpetuating. It is being said that we are at an "inflection point" in the history of the United States and the world. And in this, we need to pray for God to give us divine wisdom so that we do not depend on our feeble intuition and reason to lead us out of our mess. Our human wisdom is leading us in the wrong direction.

What I am saying might not make sense to many persons in the land, for it seems that the discernment of many has been dimmed. I am struck that the prophet Isaiah who spoke of the role of Cyrus (Isaiah 44:24-45:13), also spoke of the darkness that would cover the eyes of people at the coming of the Mes-

siah. The prophet said, "Look, darkness is covering the earth and gross darkness the people." (Isaiah 60:2). So I note that what happened at the first coming of Christ when, as a babe, his parents took him to the Jerusalem temple for his dedication, the religious leaders did not recognize him. Only Simeon, the old priest, and Anna, the old prophetess recognized him (Read it in Luke 2). Is it possible that such darkness is coming upon us again? What we see in the gathering clouds of darkness is a precursor to the second coming of Christ.

Yes, the phrase that we are at an "inflection point" in our nation's history and the world is not to be taken lightly. While the challenge is for us to go out and vote, it needs more than voting. We need divine wisdom to discern what more we must do. Many savior figures will arise who might want to be called and are being called Cyrus. However, we need to know the true Cyrus and the real Savior. It must be made clear that the consequences of giving any allegiance to political leaders who are fascinated by messianic labels can be very dangerous and destructive.

In effect, let us not be hoodwinked. Let us not be presumptuous. Let us not be prideful or self-sufficient. Let us ask God for wisdom. .

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 4)

count, were rejected because they arrived at the county's Hall of Records in Newark past the May 14 deadline and/or had signatures that did not match what was on their registered voters rolls.

The petitioners, who named N.J. Secretary of State Tahesha Way, Essex County Clerk Chris Durkin, County Elections Board President Linda von Nessi and Township Clerk Juliette Lee as respondents - assert that the rejected ballots could have changed the outcome of the race for mayor and four of the township council races.

The petitioners said that the May 12 election was being held during a pandemic and Gov. Phil Murphy's "shelter in place" executive order. The election had

no mechanism for registered voters to resolve any signature problems.

These petitioners further asserted that the USPS Montclair Main Post office had closed its public office at 3 p.m., four hours earlier than regularly posted, due to staff shortages.

Vena cited Murphy's Executive Order 105, which set the May 12-14 48 hour delivery race period for denying the ballot in question to be counted. Murphy, in a later order for the July 7 party primary and Nov. 3 general elections, has extended the grace period to seven days.

BLOOMFIELD - Township Police Director Samuel DeMaio has posted photos of a man wanted for a Sept. 5 robbery from an Ampere strip mall store.

Officers responded to a call from Sally Beauty Supply at 135 Bloomfield Ave. that Saturday.

The manager there said a man had just taken two flat irons, worth an overall \$157, and left.

A Bloomfield/Staples Plaza security camera captured the image of the suspect, who is described as "a younger Hispanic man."

He is shown as wearing a black-and-white backwards, a black t-shirt, a grey backpack, light blue knee-length jeans and black shoes. He was using a silver folding kick scooter in one photo.

Bloomfield Plaza, on the old Erie Newark Branch freight yard, became Staples Plaza when it welcomed its new anchor store.

BELLEVILLE - A call from township officers here to their Newark colleagues to the latter's canvassing of one of their North Newark border neighborhoods here early Sept. 12.

BPD officers, responding to a call made from the RWJBarnabas Clara Maass Medical Center here, found a seriously injured man there in the wee hours Saturday morning.

The man told hospital workers and police that he had just walked from the intersection of Newark's Broadway and Verona Avenue - where several other men had just beaten him "around Midnight."

While the man had walked into Clara Maass' emergency ward, it is not known how he otherwise made the 30-min. walk from Broadway and Verona. NPD's 2nd Precinct officers combed the area for suspects in the predawn hours.

The intersection's northwest corner features a now-closed ARCO gasoline station and the site of the Boonton Line's North Newark station.



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The Doctor Is In



Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

Direct Primary Care: The Not-So- Unsurprising Hero America Needs

You ever heard the saying, ‘if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it?’ Well, I’m not sure it applies to our healthcare system. In fact, the opposite is applicable because our healthcare system is clearly broke. Some may even say beyond repair, but I wouldn’t go that far. Yet.

Every time I write about the American healthcare system, I very rarely get a positive feeling. So much so, that I have to think and think before getting to anything that will make me happy in the slightest. And sadly, I’m not the only one who feels that way; there are thousands of other physicians in this elite category.

Am I talking about physician burnout? Of course, I’m talking about physician burnout. The number keeps increasing with every passing day. And can you blame them? There is no one large reason for the burnout, just a million little reasons. Okay, maybe they aren’t so little.

Still, you get my point - from the electronic health records, which just keeps getting more frustrating to all of the burdensome administrative tasks undermining the encounter of physicians with patients. Saying the

future of America’s healthcare system is bleak is understating it, especially the primary care services.

Fewer and fewer doctors are moving into the primary care field, particularly DOs, and this is creating a shortage that is only going to get worse. Right now, according to the United Health Group, close to thirteen percent of the population of the United States live in a county with too little primary care physicians. The number stands at one PCP per two thousand people. That’s bad, right? Wait till you hear that by 2030, that number could stand at one per six thousand if urgent actions are not taken. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but right now, that’s all we have.

Fortunately for America, there is still hope. A hero that emerged in the mid-2000s, one that can solve the problem of ridiculous costs and keep physicians happy. It goes by the name of direct primary care. I called it not-so-surprising, and you’re about to find out why.

Before I continue, let me share a brief overview of direct primary care. I promise not to bore you. Direct primary care is a financial agreement made directly between a patient and a healthcare provider. It essentially removes the need for insurance companies and all the other baggage that comes with them, particularly for primary care services. If you follow my writing, you’ll know my view on insurance companies, but I’ll state it again as clearly as possible - they are ruining our healthcare system. With that said, patients under direct primary care don’t pay monthly insurance premiums and all of that. They pay directly to their healthcare providers. That alone is enough to sell this idea to many, but this model goes far beyond just cutting insurance companies. I cannot possibly oversell this idea even if I tried. But I’ll try anyway.

Direct primary care fosters



enduring relationships between doctors and patients, which improves the quality of healthcare. The reason doctors are doctors is to care for a patient’s needs, and that is one of the first things direct primary care brings to the table. It allows doctors to spend more time with their patients, which corresponds to better healthcare.

Typically, a DPC practice will have six hundred patients or thereabouts. A fee-for-service practice, on the other hand, averages over two thousand patients. This means the number of patients these practices attend to is usually very high, as much as thirty a day, meaning less time with their patients, and the end is a reduction in the quality of healthcare and an increase in headaches of doctors. With the DPC practice, physicians can attend to ten, maybe twenty patients a day, and properly attend to them at that. When the patients a doctor attends to are few, the relationships between the patients and the doctor develops, and this leads to better healthcare.

Many DPC practices are also open throughout the week. Doctors can attend to their patients at any time of the day, if not by appointments, by audio and video calls, emails, texts, and through other telecommunication means. Not to mention that there’s the opportunity for same-day and next-day visits. This level of accessibility is rarely found in traditional fee-for-

service practices.

DPC is a doctor’s friend as much as it is a patient’s. Medicine generally aims at enhancing the experience of the patient, improving the general health of the population, and lowering healthcare costs. These three are what has been heralded as the triple aim of medicine. But there’s one factor that is often neglected, and it is the fact that the success of all these hinges on the physicians - the happier and more satisfied the physician, the better the healthcare service. Trust me when I say this, you do not want to be a patient under an emotionally, physically, and mentally burned-out doctor. Just take my word for it. DPC makes doctors happier, and that will only cause better healthcare services.

This article will not be complete if I don’t talk about how much better DPC is financial-wise. When we talk about the financial state of the healthcare system, you just know health insurance companies are implicated. They always are. With DPC, there’s financial transparency because of the upfront pricing system.

Financial transparency is something you can rarely ever get with insurance companies. Rather than just visit physicians and not know the details of what and many times how much you are paying for, the upfront pricing system will tell you how much you’ll pay before-hand.

(Continued on page 14)

PARENTS BEWARE

By Thomas Ellis II

This month, virtual learning started in the state of New Jersey for many of students attending school this 2020 school year. With the COVID-19 pandemic still ongoing, parents and children have to be online to complete work, since the Newark Public Schools buildings are closed.

There have been several reports of children posting obscene photos during class time, some smoking cigarettes, some laying down in bed trying to do their work, parents cussing and screaming at their children while they are online.

Parents Beware: Others are watching and listening to what you are saying when doing the virtual classes. Also, please make sure that your children have on the proper attire, and not loose and revealing clothing.

We understand that these first few months are going to be very challenging, since this is a first-time learning experience for many. But you should always remember that you and your child are not the only ones online for remote learning.

I have been spoke to several parents during these first couple days of school, and while there may not be a problem for some, others are really beginning to get upset because of the behavior of parents and children that's online.

It's hard to believe that grown people are online doing whatever while they are supposed to be assisting their young children and others. There is no focus, and loud music playing in the background, people wearing pajamas, and drinking. This has to stop, as it has become a distraction for the children, and is creating a serious problem for those who want to learn.

We all hope that traditional school as we know it will resume in November 2020, which is at the end of the first quarter of the school year. Hopefully, after a few quirks and obstacles everyone will have a full understanding on how remote learning will operate. Until then, parents and children, be very careful what you say and do during your time in the virtual classroom, because you never know who's watching.



NJ TRANSIT INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with Section 5 of P.L. 1984 c.578 of SCDRTAP, The New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJ TRANSIT) is conducting a public hearing in order to gather information and receive comments from interested parties concerning programs developed pursuant to the Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP) Act. Due to COVID-19, this year's hearing will be conducted virtually in order to comply with social distancing guidelines. This virtual informational hearing will have three sessions which will cover the southern, central, and northern regions of New Jersey.

The Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program funds capital, operating, and/or administrative expenses for locally coordinated paratransit services for senior citizens and people with disabilities. The program also funds accessibility improvements to NJ TRANSIT's fixed route bus and rail system, the provision of technical assistance to the counties, and the administration of the statewide program.

All materials to be reviewed at this hearing are available in accessible formats upon request. Closed captioning is available for hearing impaired individuals. Individuals requesting language support should contact Customer Service at 973-275-5555 at least ten (10) business days prior to the hearing date. **If you plan to speak at this virtual hearing, please contact erestaino@njtransit.com or leave your contact information via voicemail at 973-491-7372 by September 25, 2020.**

The public is invited to the **October** hearing below at which time they will have a full opportunity to express their views regarding the Senior Citizen & Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program. In order to assure that all members of the public are given an opportunity to be heard, comments will be limited to three (3) minutes. **Written comments for the record may be sent to Public Hearing Comments 2020, NJ TRANSIT, Local Programs & Community Transportation, One Penn Plaza East, 4th Floor, Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246, or via email at publichearings@njtransit.com by October 23, 2020.**

SENIOR CITIZENS & DISABLED RESIDENTS TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC HEARING

DATE: **Tuesday, October 13, 2020**

Session 1: 5:00 pm – Southern Region
 Session 2: 6:00 pm – Central Region
 Session 3: 7:00 pm – Northern Region

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#) (right click & open hyperlink)

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Conference ID: 796 569 771#

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For those who **have** access to E-mail, please contact erestaino@njtransit.com by **September 25, 2020** and you will be emailed the link to join the meeting via video teleconference. For those who do **not** have access to a PC, Laptop, I-pad, Tablet, or Smart Phone with E-mail, please use the telephone number and conference ID access code listed above to call in via telephone.

With this annual notice we also invite the public to review and comment on the State Management Plans (SMPs) for the following Federal grant programs administered by NJ TRANSIT.

- FTA Section 5310 The Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program
- FTA Section 5311 Non-urbanized Area Formula Program for Rural Areas

These are available for review and comment on the S-Rides website at <https://s-rides.njtransit.com>. (Click on the *Documents* link). Copies of the state management plans are also available upon request by calling 973-491-7372 or writing to NJ TRANSIT, Local Programs & Minibus Support Department, 4th floor, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, NJ 07105-2246. All comments can be submitted via the address above or by sending an email to SRIDES@njtransit.com.

An Access Link paratransit update will NOT be provided at this hearing. Access Link holds separate Customer Forums. If you have any questions regarding Access Link forums or service, please email adaservices@njtransit.com or call Access Link at 1-800-955-2321, choose option #5 for Customer Service, or call TT 1- 800-955-6765.

To obtain a translated copy of this notice, contact Customer Service at 973-275-5555.

Title VI: NJ TRANSIT's Notice to Beneficiaries: NJ TRANSIT operates its programs and services without regard to race, color, or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, or wishing to obtain additional information regarding NJ TRANSIT's Title VI obligations, may contact NJ TRANSIT Customer Service at 973-275-5555. A complaint or inquiry may also be filed by writing to NJ TRANSIT Customer Service – Title VI, One Penn Plaza East, Newark, NJ 07105. A complaint must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

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SPORTS WRAP



By William Hathaway

The National Football League has kicked off the 2020 season with no major issues so far with COVID-19. This season will be played with little to no fans in the stands. Several players across the league staged protests for social justice and equality.

This season gets off to a humbling start for the New York Jets, who started their season with a tough loss at the Buffalo Bills in Orchard Park 27-17. Jets quarterback Sam Darnold completed 21 of his 35 passes for 215 yards. Bills QB Josh Allen had a much better game, going 33-46 for 312 yards, two touchdowns passing and one rushing.

In other Sunday action, New England was led by former Carolina Panthers QB Cam Newton, who ran 15 times for 75 yards and two TDs in a 21-11 win over the Miami Dolphins. The Washington Football Team beat the Eagles 27-17 in a comeback victory at home. The Green Bay Packers beat the Minnesota Vikings 43-34, while a costly penalty caused the Dallas Cowboys to lose on the road to the Los Angeles Rams 20-17 in the new SoFi Stadium. Tom

Brady's debut with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers did not go as planned, as the Bucs lost at the Superdome to the New Orleans Saints 34-23.

The season premiere of Monday Night Football saw no fans at MetLife Stadium, and no luck for Big Blue either. The Giants lost to the Pittsburgh Steelers 26-16, behind a 21-32 229 yard performance from Ben Roethlisberger, and 19 carriers for 113 yards from running back Benny Snell, Jr. QB Daniel Jones went a respectable 26-41 for 279 yards with 2 TDs, but 2 INTs as well. However, RB Saquon Barkley was shut down, netting only 6 yards on 15 carries. In the late MNF game, Tennessee Titans kicker Stephen Gostkowski survived three missed field goals and an extra point to hit a game winner, giving his squad a 16-14 win against the Denver Broncos.

Last week, the Big Ten Conference mulled over whether to play football in October due to COVID-19 concerns. Now, the Conference announced that a nine-game conference run will start Oct. 24. This will include Rutgers, and their old / new head coach Greg Schiano.

service model of our healthcare system. People couldn't make appointments, and many practices tried, hastily and shoddily, to string a few things together to make providing healthcare easy, but rather expectedly, it proved largely futile. Many DPC practices didn't feel the effect as much because means were already in place to cope with situations where appointments aren't possible. DPC delivers, pandemic or not. I can't say the same for our traditional fee-for-service insurance-laden healthcare system.

We need a change now. If we continue like this, our healthcare is only going to get worse, and that's a colossally scary sight to imagine.

This article was written by

ESSEX COUNTY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Weekly Statistics from September 9-16, 2020

Municipality	9-9-2020	Deaths	9-16-2020	Deaths
Belleville	1,022	62	1,126	66
Bloomfield	1,205	66	1,219	69
Caldwell	130	11	133	11
Cedar Grove	509	110	493	112
East Orange	2,064	231	2,083	231
Essex Fells	35	2	33	2
Fairfield	154	16	158	17
Glen Ridge	50	8	50	9
Irvington	1,488	161	1,580	162
Livingston	553	69	536	70
Maplewood	351	27	367	27
Millburn	174	6	172	6
Montclair	527	51	510	52
Newark	8,449	646	8,474	663
North Caldwell	52	4	57	4
Nutley	552	35	564	36
Orange	1,051	89	1,099	92
Roseland	85	13	92	14
South Orange	127	6	127	5
Verona	155	14	157	14
West Caldwell	305	44	300	48
West Orange	1,333	187	1,357	187
Total	20,371	1,858	20,687	1,897

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of 9-16-2020)

New Jersey: 197,792 cases / 14,263 deaths (Plus 1,791 probable)

United States (approx.): 6.616 Million / 196,400 deaths

Worldwide (approx.): 29.67 Million / 937,100 deaths

The NJ Mandatory Quarantine Travel List has been revised to include: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Iowa, Idaho, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.

THE DCOTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 12)

No hidden charges. No cloud whatsoever. Everything is out in the open, and why wouldn't it be? You are going to be dealing with people that actually care more about your health than their profits. The fee is usually around 85 dollars a month. It's similar to that of your gym membership or Netflix. You use it as much as you want or need.

This pandemic has exposed America as a nation. You cannot exactly prepare for a pandemic of this nature, but still. The damage this virus has caused to us and our economy is simply staggering. A lot of people lacked access to basic healthcare services because of the fee-for-

Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board Certified Internist & Board Eligible Pediatrician, who works as a Hospitalist, and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless. He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice Mobile Medicine NJ.

References

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ROCK THE VOTE (Continued from page 1)

location to assist Newark residents with filling out and returning 2020 US Census forms by the September 30 deadline.

Upon approval of the Essex County Board of Elections, the Prudential Center, located at Mulberry and Lafayette Streets, will host a ballot drop box, and serve as a location for voters to apply for a mail-in ballot and vote early. The Prudential Center will also host a voter registration and Census event on Tuesday, September 22, National Voter Registration Day. On Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, the Prudential Center's main floor is planning to serve as a polling place for Newark residents from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. The parking deck presented by Ford, located at 15 Lafayette Street, will provide free parking to voters on Election Day.

"The 2020 Presidential Election is going to be one of the most critical events in our nation's history," Mayor Baraka said. "COVID-19 has created great challenges for this election, but we want to ensure every single resident is able to cast their vote, so that their voices are heard in determining the direction of our country. I thank the State, Essex County, the National Basketball Players Association, J.R. Smith, the New Jersey Devils, and the Prudential Center for this collaborative effort and commitment to the democratic process."

"Every day, my office and the state's Division of Elections work closely with our county election officials and community partners to ensure that New Jersey conducts fair and safe elections, especially during this pandemic," said New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way. "Between now and October 5 your ballot will be sent to you; you have until October 13 to register to vote; and if you are on parole or on probation in New Jersey you can register to vote without paying any fine. Our vote is our voice in our democracy, and we are making sure that every voter can make themselves heard in 2020. We also expect that our voting sites incorporate the social distancing needed during COVID-19."

The Essex County Board of Elections is working to organize all the logistics and arrangements around the super polling site initiative. Ballots dropped off at the Prudential Center will be accessed and processed solely by election officials. That will diminish the risk of ballots not being counted due to lags in mail delivery. Remember to vote, sign, seal, and return

your ballot.

"I am proud and happy to be teaming up with Mayor Ras J. Baraka in his efforts to make Prudential Center a super polling site as well as helping to bring change in our community. I'm looking forward to growing the partnership with the Mayor and encouraging residents in the city and state to exercise their right to vote in every election," said Mr. Smith, a New Jersey native and NBA star who played a key role in creating this extraordinary collaboration.

NBPA Executive Director Michele Roberts concurred, saying: "Our players have been unequivocal in their support and promotion of easy access to voting throughout their communities. This initiative is just one example of the direct actions being taken by our members, including J.R. We are delighted with this latest partnership."

The Super Polling Site planned for the Prudential Center will be able to fit more voting districts in this one site to allow for social distancing and easy crowd flow when casting ballots. It will have a satellite office for the Essex County Board of Elections to process ballots.

"Ahead of the upcoming election, we are proud to partner with the City of Newark and State of New Jersey to make the Prudential Center available as a safe, easily accessible option for citizens in our community to exercise their right to vote," said Josh Harris and David Blitzer, HBSE Managing Partners-New Jersey Devils and Prudential Center.

"These events are a great opportunity for voters to cast their ballots, and the presence of the boxes will make it possible for ballots to be picked up in advance of Election Day. This will be an exciting experience and everyone at the Prudential Center was more than accommodating," said Linda Von Nessi, Clerk of the Essex County Board of Elections.

"The sports and entertainment platforms that we have through the Devils and Prudential Center allow us the opportunity and availability to serve our community," said Devils' President Jake Reynolds. "No matter who you cast your ballot for, we all have the ability to exercise that fundamental right to go vote. We are proud to have our group help organize, educate and serve as a civic location in the process."

For more information on the initiative and how to vote, please visit: <https://prucenter.com/vote>. To register to vote online, please visit: <https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/register>.

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