

JUNETEENTH NOW A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

*June 19 will be formally recognized as
"Juneteenth National Independence Day"*

President Biden and others celebrate Juneteenth being recognized as a national holiday. Photo Courtesy White House



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INDEX

Editorial & Weather	02
World News	04
Sports Wrap	05
Finance At Your Fingertips	06
The Doctor Is In	10
Town Watch	11
From The Pastor's Heart	12
Legally Speaking	14

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LOCAL TALK AREA CELEBRATES JUNETEENTH

AAHPO & LOCAL 108 CELEBRATES AND RALLIES FOR JUNETEENTH

EAST ORANGE CELEBRATES JUNETEENTH WITH FLAG CEREMONY

RWJBARNABAS HEALTH COMMEMORATES JUNETEENTH



Part of the Juneteenth observance included a fun day in Hillside. Photo Courtesy Local 108

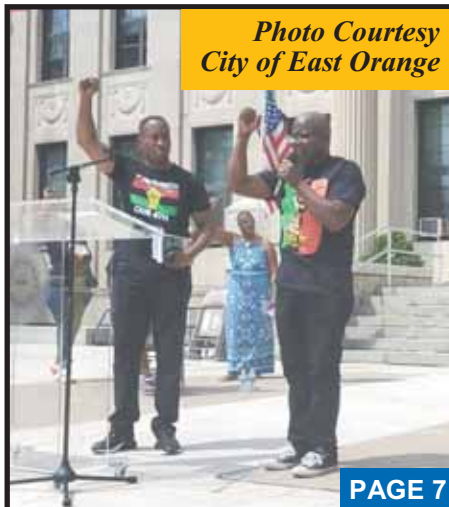


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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Some of you might be wondering, why was Juneteenth passed in the congress and senate and signed off on by President Biden to be observed as a national holiday? This is a question asked of me by one citizen, an African American, who said that this was more like politics, and that there was not a real need for the holiday.

I told him that the significance of this holiday is very huge. However, the impact of the holiday will take between 5 to 15 years to be truly felt.

1. This will tell people that African Americans hold an importance in society.

2. African Americans have been suppressed for centuries. By the way of declaring Juneteenth a holiday, it will remind people that African Americans are human beings.
3. The best impact of the holiday might take some time, but it will remind everyone that African Americans are equal to others in society.
4. It shows that African Americans will not tolerate injustice from now onwards.

I read that Vice President Kamala Harris will visit the border after 90 days of the announcement of being at the forefront of the most critical issue of border control. She was under heavy criticism by Republicans, and lately by some Democrats as well. However, she has made the right move. As a leader, one has to understand the situation and make a tentative plan even before a visit.

The visit is to make sure that whatever plan they are finalizing, it will remain the same as discussed in their committees of experts. She is a shrewd politician and administrator, and that's why she led the largest police force in the United States of America as attorney general of California.

According to Intelligencer: "Eric Adams has a wide preliminary lead over his Democratic opponents in the ranked-choice primary election for New York City mayor. Adams is the first choice of more than 31 percent of Democratic voters, with the vast majority of Election Day ballots counted, according to the Board of Elections. Maya Wiley is more than nine points behind at about 22 percent, and Kathryn Garcia is at about 20 percent.

"Andrew Yang, who conceded on Tuesday evening, trailed well behind them in fourth place, and Scott Stringer ended a distant fifth. But absentee ballots

will not be counted for days, and nor will voters' second, third, fourth, and fifth preferences. Though Adams's lead looks difficult to surmount, the winner may not be known for weeks. The next round of voting calculations will begin on June 29."

This was the primary election, and Adams will have to face Republican challenger Curtis Sliwa in the November election. However, New York is a strong democratic city. The Democrats are about 56%, the Republicans are 26% and the Independents are about 18%. So, whoever wins the primary election will likely be the mayor of the capital city of the world, New York City.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<p>THURSDAY Sunny HI 79 LO 60</p>	<p>FRIDAY Partly Cloudy HI 80 LO 68</p>	<p>SATURDAY Mostly Cloudy HI 85 LO 72</p>	<p>SUNDAY Clouds Off & On HI 89 LO 73</p>	<p>MONDAY Partly Cloudy HI 87 LO 72</p>	<p>TUESDAY Isolated T-Storms HI 88 LO 72</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Scattered T-Storms HI 87 LO 70</p>
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RWJBARNABAS HEALTH COMMEMORATES JUNETEENTH

West Orange, NJ - To commemorate the significance of Juneteenth and recognize our nation's strides toward equity, hospitals and health care facilities across RWJBarnabas Health, the most comprehensive academic health care system in New Jersey, hosted a variety of events for employees. Juneteenth, also called Emancipation Day, honors the effective end of slavery in the United States.

"Our valued colleagues of all races bring to their roles the best of themselves, tirelessly caring for our patients with skill and kindness. As we strive to recognize important holidays for all members of the richly diverse communities we serve, we acknowledge that Juneteenth marks a pivotal moment in American history for African Americans in particular," said Barry H. Ostrowsky, President and Chief Executive Officer, RWJBarnabas Health.

"We observe Juneteenth, which is extremely significant to

the people we work alongside every day, in the spirit of allyship, in honor of our friends, colleagues and other stakeholders who are descendants of slaves, and because we must continually remind ourselves that while slavery might have been declared over, its legacy continues and therefore our commitment to equity must not falter."

RWJBarnabas Health's observation of Juneteenth began on Friday, June 18, and ended on Sunday, June 20. Planned events included:

- Commemorative programs and events at Saint Barnabas Medical Center and Jersey City Medical Center
- Artwork displays and educational information at the RWJBarnabas Health Behavioral Health Center and at RWJUH-Rahway, which included a Juneteenth Challenge Quiz
- Sponsorship of the Juneteenth Weekend Cele-

- bration in Trenton. In addition, at its annual Project We vs C Tree of Life event on June 19, RWJUH-Hamilton invited Dr. Joseph E. Woods, Pastor of St. Phillips Baptist Church, to speak about the importance of Juneteenth. The event also included a performance by the St. Phillips Baptist Church Choir, whose work is focused on arts and culture for healing
- The Black Professionals' Network at RWJUH-Somerset hosted a celebration with music and poetry, with a special Juneteenth-inspired menu in the dining room with free dessert for employees
- Clara Maass Medical Center held a celebration for employees with dessert and music by DJ Rich; the Medical Center also illuminated the building in red throughout the weekend to commemorate the holiday
- A Juneteenth-inspired menu

was offered at Children's Specialized Hospital locations in Mountainside and New Brunswick

- An artwork display organized by students affiliated with the New Jersey Division of Civil Rights' Youth Bias Task Force Student Competition was at Community Medical Center
- Educational presentations on the historical significance of Juneteenth took place at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center entitled, "Juneteenth: the History Explained" moderated by Dr. DeLacy Davis, activist, author and community leader, with Spoken Word by Fajr Kegler, Newark Resident, 2nd Year Scholar, Hampton University and Community Activist, and an educational activity hosted by the POWER Social Justice Business Resource group for employees and visitors.

(Continued on page 5)

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UNITED STATES

Juneteenth Becomes A National Holiday

A day representing the true end of slavery in America has finally received its full recognition.

On June 17, President Joe Biden signed into law a measure recognizing June 19 of every year as National Independence Day, commonly known as “Juneteenth” among the black community.

Here now are Biden’s remarks in honor of the occasion:

“One hundred and fifty-six years ago - one hundred and fifty-six years - June 19th, 1865 - a major general of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation and free the last enslaved Americans in Texas from bondage. A day, as you all know - I’m going to repeat some of what was said - that became known as Juneteenth. You all know that. A day that reflects what the Psalm tell us: ‘Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’

“Juneteenth marks both the long, hard night of slavery and subjugation, and a promise of a brighter morning to come. This is a day of profound - in my view - profound weight and profound power.

“A day in which we remember the moral stain, the terrible toll that slavery took on the country and continues to take - what I’ve long called ‘America’s original sin.’

“At the same time, I also remember the extraordinary capacity to heal, and to hope, and to emerge from the most painful moments and a bitter, bitter version of ourselves, but to make a better version of ourselves.

“You know, today, we consecrate Juneteenth for what it

ought to be, what it must be: a national holiday. As the Vice President noted, a holiday that will join the others of our national celebrations: our independence, our laborers who built this nation, our servicemen and women who served and died in its defense. And the first new national holiday since the creation of Martin Luther King Holiday nearly four decades ago.

“I am grateful to the members of Congress here today - in particular, the Congressional Black Caucus, who did so much to make this day possible.

“I’m especially pleased that we showed the nation that we can come together as Democrats and Republicans to commemorate this day with the overwhelming bipartisan support of the Congress. I hope this is the beginning of a change in the way we deal with one another.

“And we’re blessed - we’re blessed to mark the day in the presence of Ms. Opal Lee. As my mother would say, ‘God love her.’

“I had the honor of meeting her in Nevada more than a year ago. She told me she loved me, and I believed it. I wanted to believe it. Ms. Opal, you’re incredible. A daughter of Texas. Grandmother of the movement to make Juneteenth a federal holiday...

“...As a child growing up in Texas, she and her family would celebrate Juneteenth. On Juneteenth, 1939, when she was 12 years old, the white - a white mob torched her family home. But such hate never stopped her any more than it stopped the vast majority of you I’m looking at from this podium.

“Over the course of decades, she’s made it her mission to see that this day came. It was almost a singular mission. She’s walked for miles and miles, literally and figuratively, to bring attention to Juneteenth, to make this day possible...

“...By making Juneteenth a federal holiday, all Americans can feel the power of this day, and learn from our history, and celebrate progress, and grapple

with the distance we’ve come but the distance we have to travel.

“You know, I said a few weeks ago, marking the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre, great nations don’t ignore their most painful moments. Great nations don’t ignore their most painful moments. They don’t ignore those moments of the past. They embrace them. Great nations don’t walk away. We come to terms with the mistakes we made. And in remembering those moments, we begin to heal and grow stronger.

“The truth is, it’s not - simply not enough just to commemorate Juneteenth. After all, the emancipation of enslaved Black Americans didn’t mark the end of America’s work to deliver on the promise of equality; it only marked the beginning.

“To honor the true meaning of Juneteenth, we have to continue toward that promise because we’ve not gotten there yet. The Vice President and I and our entire administration and all of you in this room are committed to doing just that...

“...I wish all Americans a happy Juneteenth. I am shortly going to - in a moment, going to sign into law, making it a federal holiday.

“And I have to say to you, I’ve only been President for several months, but I think this will go down, for me, as one of the greatest honors I will have had as President, not because I did it; you did it - Democrats and Republicans. But it’s an enormous, enormous honor.

“Thank you for what you’ve done. And, by the way, typical of most of us in Congress and the Senate, I went down to the other end of the hall first and thanked your staffs because I know who does the hard work. They’re down there. They’re at the other end, but I thanked them as well.

“May God bless you all. And may God protect our troops. Thank you.”

AFRICA

Tech Being Used to Fight COVID-19

The World Health Organization (WHO) is supporting a South African consortium in establishing the first COVID-19 mRNA vaccine technology transfer hub, the UN agency announced on June 21. The facility will allow manufacturers from developing countries to receive training in how to produce vaccines, and the relevant licenses to do so, as part of global efforts to scale-up access to lifesaving treatments.

The development follows WHO’s call in April for public and private companies to express their interest in creating technology transfer hubs so that low and middle-income countries could meet their urgent need for vaccines, amid critical shortages.

“Today’s announcement is a great step forward for South Africa, and for the world. I hope this will be a key moment for increasing production capacity in Africa for COVID-19 vaccines, but also for future vaccines,” said WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, speaking during his bi-weekly media briefing from Geneva.

Messenger RNA, or mRNA technology, instructs cells to make a protein that generates an immune response in the body, thus producing the antibodies that provide protection against a disease.

It is the basis for the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines being used by governments worldwide, and in the UN-supported COVAX global vaccine solidarity initiative.

“It’s potentially easier to scale than other vaccine technologies and could be faster and easier to adapt to variants of concern,” Tedros said.

The South African consortium involves a biotech company called Afrigen Biologics and Vaccines, which will act as the hub by manufacturing mRNA vaccines and providing training

(Continued on page 5)

RWJBARNABAS HEALTH

COMMEMORATES JUNETEENTH

(Continued from page 3)

Launched in December, RWJBarnabas Health’s antiracism initiative, Ending Racism Together, focuses on creating racial, ethnic and cultural equity within the health system and supporting communities that are the most disenfranchised and experience poor health, social, economic, and educational outcomes due to the generational effects of racism. The system’s journey to ensuring an antiracist enterprise with equitable policies and behavior includes transforming standard practices.

“We can’t begin to change our behavior until we recognize the ways we are causing harm,” added Mr. Ostrowsky. “In that same vein, we can’t celebrate Juneteenth or become true allies with our Black community until we study our history, flaws and all, to put into perspective why this date must be commemorated.”

“As a culture, we have allowed the structural racism born out of the legacy of slavery to exist for far too long,” said DeAnna Minus-Vincent, Senior Vice President and Chief Social Integration and Health Equity Strategist at RWJBarnabas Health. She spearheads Ending Racism Together.

“Taking time to properly mark the end of slavery is one step toward becoming a society that honors every community’s history and values. I will joyously celebrate Juneteenth alongside my colleagues of all races, and together we’ll continue our work bringing into fruition a cohesive community that supports and provides opportunities to disenfranchised populations so that equity for all may one day actually become a possibility.”

WORLD NEWS *(Continued from page 4)*

to another manufacturer called Biovac.

WHO’s role includes establishing the criteria for the technology transfer, assessing applications and developing standards, while the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will provide guidance through the Partnership for African Vaccines Manufacturing.

AUSTRALIA

Concerns Over Great Barrier Reef

A United Nations body is recommending that Australia’s Great Barrier Reef be included on a list of world heritage in danger, according to a draft report issued on June 21, a move which has been heavily criticized by the Australian Government.

The World Heritage Committee, con-



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SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

The New Jersey high school baseball season came to the end of the road this past week, with the local Montclair Mounties taking a tough loss in the Group 4 championship game. The #15 Mounties were shut-out by Middletown South 6-0. Nick Levine got Montclair’s only extra base hit, as Middletown’s Ben Schild fired a two hit shut

out at Veterans Park. Meanwhile, the Livingston softball team made program history, winning their first ever Group 4 championship 3-2 against Hillsborough this past week.

In other sports news, the New York Giants have welcomed legend Eli Manning back to the organization, in a business operations and fan engagement role. The team also said that Manning’s name will be put in the ring of honor and his #10 jersey will be retired in a ceremony during their Week 3 game against the Atlanta Falcons.

vened under the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), said the country has not done enough to protect the world’s largest coral reef system from the impacts of climate change.

Despite commitments and progress under a long-term sustainability plan known as Reef 2050, the Great Barrier Reef continues to deteriorate, according to the report, and has suffered significant coral bleaching over the past five years.

“It can be concluded that, despite many positive achievements by the State Party, progress has been insufficient in meeting key targets of the Reef 2050 Plan,” the draft report said.

The UN committee consists of representatives from 21 countries and its next meeting will be held virtually from China in July.

“The Plan requires stronger and clearer commitments, in particular towards urgently countering the effects of climate change, but

also towards accelerating water quality improvement and land management measures,” the report continued. “The widespread effects of the consecutive coral bleaching events further add to the significant concerns regarding the future of the property.”

As the reef “is facing ascertained danger,” the report calls for inscribing it on the on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Australia will challenge the proposed recommendation, according to a statement published on the website of the country’s Environment Minister, Susan Ley.

It said authorities “have been stunned by a back flip on previous assurances from UN officials that the Reef would not face such a recommendation prior to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting hosted by China in July, and are concerned about a deviation from normal process in assessing World Heritage Property Conservation status.”

Finance At Your Fingertips



Moses Ayiku, Jr. MBA OP/ED

Increasing Your Income - Part 3

Over the past four decades, the American economy has changed. One major issue that stands out is that the American Dream seems to be more distant than ever. The income growth of workers has stagnated as employers took advantage of a market that favored them. Employers were offering less and demanding more of workers. Unions have been decimated and they no longer play the role of pushing management to increase incomes and improve work conditions.

Today, the labor market has changed. We now have a market where workers have the power. In April, The Labor Department reported that 4 million Americans quit their jobs! Employers are now offering higher wages and incentives. A number of reasons can be given for why workers have quit their jobs. During the pandemic some of these workers were able to save money and are resigning from jobs that gave them little satisfaction. Others are quitting their jobs because they have grown accustomed to working from home while their employers are disinclined to continue this trend.

This is the time for workers to assess the market and determine whether they can increase their financial situation by changing employers. In terms of

increasing income streams, many people have options to do so. One does not even need to set up a business to increase one's income. There are several sites online that allow people to sell their services for a fee.

An example is Fiverr.com. Web designers, artists and other professionals are able to provide their services on a project-by-project basis. Another site is Freelancer.com. This site allows various professionals to register and bid for contracts. Upworks.com is also another site for freelancers to obtain contracts. Most of these sites have systems in place to take care of contract management, payments, work submissions etc.

To create a second income stream, an ideal starting point is to sit down with a pen and paper and outline the various skills that you possess. After completing this list, one can then research each of them and determine whether there is already an existing market for them. If a market is available, then one can register and bid for contracts. Joining various networks and obtaining contracts will generate income. In addition, the experience would enhance your overall competency level as you complete one project after another.

Your success in selling your services will depend on you making the effort to conduct quality research. Information that you should be seeking include the following:

- How big the market is for your skill(s)
- The nature of the contracts (what is demanded of you the service provider)
- The amounts being paid for the services; the going rates
- The typical duration of the contracts

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ESSEX COUNTY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

Weekly Statistics from June 16 - June 23, 2021

Municipality	6-16-2021	Deaths	6-23-2021	Deaths
Belleville	5657	115	5671	115
Bloomfield	5334	122	5341	122
Caldwell	622	16	623	16
Cedar Grove	1549	120	1550	120
East Orange	7157	313	7162	313
Essex Fells	191	2	191	2
Fairfield	885	31	886	31
Glen Ridge	391	13	390	13
Irvington	4709	233	4724	233
Livingston	1831	88	1831	88
Maplewood	1310	36	1308	36
Millburn	822	10	825	10
Montclair	2268	72	2274	72
Newark	36949	1001	36961	1005
North Caldwell	495	6	496	6
Nutley	3034	66	3038	66
Orange	3551	133	3554	133
Roseland	477	16	477	16
South Orange	864	16	864	16
Verona	994	18	996	18
West Caldwell	1056	53	1058	53
West Orange	4580	230	4586	231
Total	84726	2710	84806	2715

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of June 23, 2021)

NJ: 891,840 cases / 23,712 deaths (Plus 2,698 probable)
United States (approx.): 33.57 Million / 602,700 deaths
Worldwide (approx.): 179.321 Million / 3.885 Million deaths

The U.S. is unlikely to reach President Biden's vaccination goal of 70 percent by July 4.

fort zone. While initially scary, this is a doable option. For example, many opportunities online will require one to improve upon your computer skills. These days there are many options for increasing

one's competency online. Social media videos for example are in abundance on YouTube. Take the time to research and learn as much as you can to support your new areas of interest.

(Continued on page 7)

FINANCE (Continued from page 6)

If you put in the time and effort, you will get the results that you are looking for! There are options to increase your income readily available. For example, if you are comfortable with driving, one could consider Door Dash or UberEATS. These sites allow you to register in a relatively quick amount of time. From day one your bank account is set up and those working for these sites get paid weekly, without any delay. The more you work the more you earn.

These sites have attracted people from all walks of life, from young people to retired folks. Some parents even work for Door Dash with their children! While the parent drives and takes the orders, the children go to the restaurants to collect the items for pickup and deliver those items to the customers! One major reason why people gravitate towards UberEATS and Door Dash is because you

control when you want to work. Also, many existing jobs are providing such low wages that people find these sites more lucrative.

As mentioned earlier, one does not need to set up a business to increase one's income. In fact, statistics show that quite a number of people register businesses every year that they never actually follow through with. Such people are simply donating money to the various states where they register their businesses. You do not have to waste money in that manner. Assess your skills and market yourself to obtain contracts and a second income!

Please feel free to share with me your questions and experiences on stocks and investments. I will do my best to respond, and, in some cases, I will write on some of these questions.

Your questions and comments can be sent to localtalk-news@gmail.com.

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EAST ORANGE CELEBRATES JUNETEENTH WITH FLAG CEREMONY



Photos Courtesy City of East Orange

East Orange, NJ - Mayor Ted R. Green, the East Orange City Council and the Department of Recreation & Cultural Affairs, in conjunction with The Oranges and Maplewood NAACP, commemorated Juneteenth with a Flag Raising featuring Noted Historian and Pan African Educator Dr. Leonard Jeffries.

The event took place on Saturday, June 19, 2021 at 1 pm at East Orange City Hall Plaza.

COVID-19 protocols were enforced and attendees were asked to wear masks.

"We are so proud to celebrate and honor the legacy of Juneteenth. The holiday is symbolic, but the intent behind it is to celebrate the achievements and progress of African American everywhere," said Mayor Green. "In the words of the great poet Maya Angelou, 'And Still We Rise.' The history of African

American people in this country is one that is filled with stories of resilience, perseverance and beating the odds when the cards are stacked against you. I am excited to have Dr. Jeffries as our guest speaker who I know will provide insight and knowledge that many of us never learned in school."

Dr. Jeffries is a former professor of Black Studies at the City College of New York, part of the City University of New York (CUNY). Born and raised

in Newark, NJ, Dr. Jeffries is known for his Pan-African Afrocentrism views that the role of African people in history and the accomplishments of African Americans are far more important than commonly held.

In June 2020, the East Orange City Council, under the leadership of Chairman Christopher James and sponsored by Third Ward Councilman Vernon Pullins, Jr., passed legislation

(Continued on page 15)

AAHPO & LOCAL 108 CELEBRATES AND RALLIES FOR JUNETEENTH



Scores of people took to the streets in Newark to demand equality on Juneteenth. Photos Courtesy Local 108

The Juneteenth holiday here and elsewhere in and around "Local Talk" territory, some for their first time, blossomed like never before during the June 19 weekend.

Hillside Township, for example, held its Juneteenth festival here at its Paul Korlesky Park - for the first time in its 104-year history.

Although the township held its second annual Juneteenth flag raising at Hillside High School Noon June 19, the township's focus this year was on an afternoon of entertainment, education, food and community commerce some six blocks to the school's southeast.

Several hundred people came to the park 1-7 p.m. to see the likes of Newark's Floyd's Double Dutch Elite perform and "Blue Angel" sing with the accompaniment of DJ Antione Qua from the park's two basketball courts.

They listened early in the Mayor Dahlia O. Verteese-MC'd program to the likes of speakers of Dr. Akil Khalfani, Lawrence Hamm and Harry Paden about the basics of Juneteenth and how we got from "there" to "here."

Many took breaks to head in two directions. One direction was southeast to the park's field-house for free grilled food and

some shade.

Another direction, to the east and northwest of the park's Central Avenue entrance, was towards 18 to 20 vendors' tables and/or tents. While Hillside's public library and firefighters were present, most were of pop-up style neighborhood merchants.

"I was talking with Tasia Brown, who is in my office, two months ago and she asked why don't we have a Juneteenth festival," said Verteese. "We hadn't had one before. We started making phone calls."

Mayor Verteese introduced Charles Hall as the first of special guest speakers who had helped make this event possible during its progression. Hall appeared in two roles - as chairman of the African American Heritage Parades Organization and as president Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union Local 108 - both of Maplewood.

Verteese and the Juneteenth Festival Committee had approached Hall and his organizations during the two months' lead time about being two of its underwriters and participants. They had collaborated before on "A Joint Black History Celebration" at the Walter O. Krumbiegel School Feb. 29.

"I'm glad to see the turnout here," said Hall. "This holiday has been a long time coming."

It had been a long time coming since when Union Army Gen. Gordon Granger announced to slaves in Galveston, Texas June 19, 1865 that they were free. Granger read General Order No. 3 to the last institutionalized slaves 70 days after the Civil War had ended with Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's surrender to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

Gordon's general order was read 29 months after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation took effect Jan. 1, 1863. Lincoln's proclamation emancipated slaves held within the 11 Confederate States of America except for territory already in Union hands.

"The slaveholders in Galveston didn't tell them for two years," said People's Organization for Progress Hamm. "They didn't want to release them. But June 19, 1865 was the first Juneteenth celebration, which continued to grow among the Southern states."

Juneteenth - also called Freedom Day, Emancipation Day, Jubilee Day or Liberation Day - was brought north and west with the Great Migration from the

1920s. What was celebrated among African Americans did not become a state holiday until Texas first recognized it by proclamation in 1938 and by legislation in 1979.

"Juneteenth didn't happen overnight," added Hamm. "It took Texas legislator Al Edwards, who died last year, 40 years to get that state to make it an official holiday."

While Juneteenth's observances and celebrations became more prevalent in the "Local Talk" area, New Jersey remained among five states who had not made it an official holiday entering 2020. Then last year's events - including George Floyd's murder and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement against the COVID-19 pandemic background - put Juneteenth over the top.

Many Garden State institutions who had not joined into Juneteenth's celebrations were planning to do so this year in the wake of Gov. Phil Murphy designating the third Friday in June as its official holiday.

Then Congress, with mostly bipartisan institutional lightning speed, passed a bill making Juneteenth the 12th federal holiday. President Joseph Biden

(Continued on page 9)

KHALID BRANCH - AN ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE GRADUATION INSPIRATIONAL SUCCESS STORY



Photo Courtesy Essex County College

He is Flying High to Reach His Goal

When the name and photo of Khalid Branch was displayed during Essex County College's 2021 Virtual Commencement on June 4, it brought a flood of joyful tears from his mother, Kyisha. "Khalid worked so hard for this. It's such an inspirational

moment," she said. To get to this point in his young life, Khalid has had to overcome a series of obstacles as a special needs student. At Montclair High School, where he played football, Khalid was part of the district's Community Based Instruction for special need students.

A Montclair resident, Khalid

earned his Associate degree in Physical Education and is headed to Montclair State University. "My goal is to become an elementary school gym teacher," said the soft-spoken Khalid.

"Khalid worked very hard to achieve his goal, which was to attend college," said Leslie Wallace, Transition Teacher in the Montclair School District. She said he was able to intern at a local elementary school to help achieve his goal of becoming a gym teacher. "He was very focused on his goals," Ms. Wallace added.

Khalid is the only student from the Montclair district's Community Based Instruction program to earn an Associate degree. He is currently employed at the YMCA of Montclair.

"This is such an outstanding achievement. Khalid's success is in no small part due to the excellent support he has received from Essex County College," said Dr. Mamie Bridgeforth, Chair of the College's Humanities, Bilingual Students and Social Sciences Division. The

Physical Education major is under Social Sciences.

"Khalid has been a wonderful student, overcoming so much to get this far," said ECC Disabilities Services Coordinator Maria Mercado. She said Khalid had an aide to help with some of the College writing assignments. "He has made me so proud," she added.

"Congratulations to Khalid for such an outstanding achievement. Essex County College is proud of him," said ECC Interim President Dr. Augustine A. Boakye.

While justifiably proud of her son, Kyisha Branch said she wants his story to encourage other students "to push through any and all adversity."

To celebrate Khalid's graduation in Physical Education from ECC, the family headed to iFly World, in Paramus, for indoor skydiving. "Keep flying high and reaching for the stars, there are no limits to what you do. You have definitely beat the odds," Kyisha Branch said of her son.



AAHPO, LOCAL 108

(Continued from page 8)

signed the designation into law 3:30 p.m. Eastern time June 17 - effective June 18.

"Great nations don't ignore their most painful moments - they embrace them," said Biden upon his signing. "This day doesn't just celebrate the past - it calls for action today."

Most, if not all, "Local Talk" towns held one form or another recognition and celebration this weekend. All local through federal offices closed Friday - except for the United States Postal Service, who needed more scheduling lead time.

Many held raisings of the Juneteenth flag over the holiday weekend and around office closings and Sunday being Father's Day. South Orange rose theirs June 14. and Irvington closed Civic Square for theirs June 20.

Organizers in Bloomfield, Newark and West Orange held panel discussions about Juneteenth's place in history and in the context of today's issues. West Orange added a Valley Arts gallery reception.

Many added block parties and/or marches Orange and West Orange held separate picnics in their respective Colgate Parks.

Other groups held their own



observances. "Local Talk" noticed 20 uniformed runners flanked by the African-American flag heading east on Newark's Springfield Avenue 8:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Juneteenth Leadership Coalition ran a "Drive to Justice:" motorcade in Newark - from 206 Springfield Ave to Military Park via the Peter Rodino Federal Building and City Hall - Friday. (206 Springfield, the ShopRite of Newark's parking lot, is a block away from the 1967 Newark Riots/Rebellion memorial.)

The abundance of local Juneteenth activities made the likes of Hamm and Essex Coun-

ty College Africana Institute Director Khalifani speakers in demand. They were arriving here from an earlier POP demonstration by 2 p.m.

Khalifani, of West Orange, officially opened Korleski Park's program with an African libation ceremony to honor our ancestors. He and Hamm stayed under the 90-degree sunshine for some 30 minutes until they had to leave for another Juneteenth function in Newark.

"Local Talk," before leaving, noticed more visitors arriving with the advancing cloud cover. The forecasted scattered rain showers did not appear.

The Doctor Is In



Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

It's Time For Children To Get Back To Normal Life, Finally

The coronavirus pandemic has been tough on all of us; no one can deny that. As a Physician, there were times I had to spend tons of hours in the hospital, attending to patients - crazy times. This isn't just Physicians, too, as nurses, pharmacists, mid-level providers, and other health workers had to go through the same thing.

Essential workers had to put in even more hours and effort to keep people sane because I can only imagine the kind of horror show that would have been on display if essential workers too couldn't work.

Teachers have had to adjust their whole schedule and even learn how to go about online teaching in the most effective way possible. I could go on and on, but you get my point. Everyone has been affected by the pandemic and the lockdown imposed last year.

But one of the most overlooked aspects of this is the effect on children. Yes, the same kids you were stuck with for eight months thereabouts. Parents may want to argue that they went through more because they

had to find a way to provide for their kids in such trying times while still keeping their homes together. I get this; trust me, I do. But this isn't enough to dismiss what these children went through.

You may think, "all they had to do was stay at home; how hard could it be?" The answer - very. You can't possibly imagine how challenging it would have been for kids to adapt to all the changes around us. I'm certain it wasn't a roller-coaster for you, and you're an adult, meaning you are more flexible to change and can rationalize better.

Kids literally had to leave school, which at this stage is 90% of their entire social life. You know how hard that must have been? Probably not. Not only that, children had to get used to online learning. I must admit here that I probably feel a lot more for the teachers because imagine spending hours minutes just trying to get kids to learn and unlearn what the mute button does. It's very easy to get frustrated with them and all, but they were having it hard too. I mean, this is the first time they are going through changes as radical as in this pandemic.

Then schools finally resumed. All problems solved, right? Well, no. There was mask-wearing, social distancing, regular testing, among others. Again, all of these weren't easy for you, so how much more them? I'm sure the changes must have been overwhelming for many of these young, adorable creatures. They really don't deserve to have their childhood messed up; no one does.

This is why getting children back to their normal lives has to be one of our priorities as a state. And, fortunately, it seems this administration understands that too. Vaccines have been approved for kids aged 12 and



above. This was after rigorous tests, studies, and trials, so no need to be alarmed.

America is leading the way in vaccinations, and it's nice to know we are leading the way in studies and tests too. Even the UK hasn't approved the vaccine for children. It's not a competition, of course, but it speaks a lot that we are always finding ways to get out of this mess.

Of course, caution is required when dealing with issues like this. Children, generally, are at very low risk of getting the virus. Therefore, it made much sense that the CDC prefers to go through an overly cautious approach. But we also need to realize that time is passing, and their childhood is slipping away. This is the part that everyone just seems to ignore.

This damn virus shouldn't be the reason they don't have their normal lives, which they are entirely entitled to. Go back to the title, did I say, "is it time for children to get back to their normal lives?" Of course not! It's not up for debate anymore. Every kid in America needs to have their normal life back, not the one where they can't even interact comfortably with friends.

On this note, I must say, please get the vaccine for yourself and your kid, if they are of age, that is. You may think being extremely conservative is doing

them a favor, but stop to think of the implication of their lives. The vaccines are safe and still our only bet on beating this virus. Stay safe.

This article was written by 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.

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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 - The Supreme Court of New Jersey, in a June 15 ruling from their Trenton bench, threw out the 2017 conviction of a teenager at the center of a local contractor and restaurateur's 2013 murder and ordered a new trial for him because Newark police had failed to read him his Miranda rights.

Miranda rights or warning is a notification made by law enforcement to suspects under custody but prior to their interrogation. It is information that the suspect has the right to remain silent, anything that is said can be used against one in a court of law, that one has the right to an attorney and that one will be appointed if hiring one is unaffordable.

The notification, based on the Constitution's Fifth and Sixth Amendments, became standard law enforcement procedure since the U.S. Supreme Court's 1966 *Miranda vs. Arizona* ruling. Their ruling overturned Ernesto Miranda's conviction on armed robbery, kidnapping and rape because the defendant was not told of his rights. The notification also became commonly used in crime dramas to where a man arrested by Belgian police in the 1990s asked for his Miranda rights - which is not Belgium law.

The state's high court came to its conclusion after reviewing records, recordings and testimony of Zakariyya Ahmad's interactions with NPD officers. Ahmad, who was 17 in 2013, said he was shot and wounded by Daryl Cline while stepping off a Chancellor Avenue bus and flagged a driver to take him to a

local hospital.

Ahmad's mother ended NPD detectives' interview of him at the hospital when an officer brought in a forensic evidence collection kit. Investigators then prevented Ahmad from leaving the hospital and drove him to the Fifth Precinct house in a squad car.

Ahmad, Cline and a third youth were accused of shooting dead Joseph Flagg, 41, of Union in an Oct. 27, 2013 robbery attempt at his cafe at 282 Chancellor Ave. Flagg ran that and his Flagg World contracting business. "Local Talk" remembers Flagg telling the Municipal Council that he hires ex-convicts for his businesses while making his appeals to be considered for city contracts.

Cline, who was convicted, is serving time. The third suspect confessed to a related charge and turned state's evidence as part of a plea bargain agreement with ECPO. Ahmad remains here in Northern State Prison.

IRVINGTON - Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stevens II and Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers are asking for the public's help in finding "a person of interest" regarding a May 15 fatal shooting here at Springfield Avenue and 43rd Street.

The wanted person, as portrayed in a surveillance camera photo released June 3, is an African or African American woman who was wearing an orange or pink jacket or topcoat over a vertical striped shirt and blue jeans. She was also wearing a black handbag and held an open bottle of Miller Lite beer.

Neither Stephens Nor Bowers would say how the woman is connected to the death of Irvingtonian Michael Williams. Responding IPD officers found Williams, 35, shot in the head and unconscious at the intersection after nightfall May 15. Williams was rushed to University Hospital, where he died 6:20 a.m. May 16.

Williams' funeral arrangements were not publicly announced.

The Springfield Avenue/43rd Street/Frederick Street intersec-

tion is best known by NJTransit riders as the last stop for some of its Route 25 buses - a block short of the Hilton Garage. It was also the start/finish line for the 1889-1910 Maplewood-Millburn Decoration Day bicycle race.

EAST ORANGE - City native Leroy J. Jones, Jr. will start his new job as State Democratic Committee Chairman in Trenton July 1 through Jan. 1, 2022.

State Democratic Committee members unanimously elected Jones to succeed John Currie on June 15 at their reorganization meeting in Asbury Park. Currie, who remains as Passaic County's Democratic Chairman, has held the state post since 2019.

The state committee's vote was the formalization of a 2019 agreement between Currie and Jones. Currie served another 18 months while he and Jones made their Legislative Redistricting Committee appointments.

Jones knows how to commute between here and Trenton. The four-term General Assemblyman for the old 27th State Legislative District here is co-founder of the 1868 Public Affairs consultancy in Trenton.

Jones, 64, is keeping his other jobs as Essex County and East Orange Democratic Committee chairman.

"I'll never be able to serve those shoes," said Jones of Currie post-election. "I'm going to go out and buy my own."

ORANGE - The city's first African American mayor will be honored with a street renaming here set for 1 p.m. Saturday, June 26.

North Day Street between William and Main Streets is to be renamed after the late Robert L. Brown, Esq. The southernmost block includes Orange City Hall, where Brown was mayor 1988-96. Brown also doubled as State Assemblyman for the then-27th Legislative District 1991-96.

Brown also practiced law from the then-Bank of America building at 425 Main St. He was part of a U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee that recommended President Richard Nixon's impeachment in

1974. Brown represented James Fedes, one of 20 people accused and eventually acquitted of being members of the Lucchese organized crime family in the late 1980s.

The 1948 Wetumpka, Ala. native came here via Albany, N.Y. and East Orange. He moved into his parents' East Orange home while attaining a Juris Doctorate from Rutgers Law School by 1973.

Before moving to Orange, he was an East Orange prosecutor and an Essex County public defender. A majority of voters elected Brown to succeed Paul Monacelli as Orange's mayor in 1988.

Brown returned to his parents' homestead after losing his bid for a third term to Mims Hackett in 1996 and a 1993 Democratic primary bid for State Senate against incumbent Richard Codey. He continued his Orange law practice and being on the East Orange Zoning Board of Adjustment until his Oct. 21, 2009 death from diabetes complications.

Councilwoman Adrienne Wooten and her South Ward colleague Jamie Summers-Johnson co-sponsored a recent resolution and proclamation so honoring Brown.

WEST ORANGE - Last rites for the youthful driver who died from a June 7 two-car collision here on Interstate 280-East were held in Irvington and Newark June 18.

The remains of Shakur A. Young, 17, were buried in Newark's Fairmount Cemetery that Friday after his funeral that morning at Irvington's Christian Pentecostal Church.

Young, according to Pater-son's Carnie P. Bragg Funeral Homes, was born Jan. 27, 2004 in Newark as one of five children. The Mt. Vernon Elementary School graduate was a Barringer High School student and an avid basketball player.

Young is also survived by his parents, grandparents and great-grandparents.

The N.J. State Police said Young was behind the wheel of a Hyundai Genesis when he

(Continued on page 12)



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

The Biggest Lie

Former President Donald Trump has been insisting that he won the 2020 election and that the declaration of President Joseph Biden as the winner is a big lie. He has inspired many conspiracy theories, among which is being circulated "The Big Lie."

Among the circulated theories is that Former President Trump was to be reinstated at the end of May, and since that did not occur, it will now happen in August. The Big Lie(s) has led many Republicans to be questioning the election results. Further, The Big Lie has taken on a life of its own and has been the main catalyst for the January 6th insurrection on the Capitol.

It has led to the circus-like reviewing of ballots occurring in Maricopa County, Arizona. It has allowed Wyoming Representative Liz Cheney to be ousted from her leadership position in the Republican party because she decided to call out Mr. Trump for his lies. According to a CNN poll, nearly one in three Americans believe "The Big Lie" that President is the rightful winner and that President Biden is not the legitimate president of the United States.

While the above might be named THE BIG LIE, but it is important to know that at the dawn of human history, as we know it, there was a BIGGER LIE. According to the story, as recorded in the Bible, when God

placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and told them that they were free to eat of every tree in the Garden. However, they were not to eat from the tree in the middle of the Garden because if they ate from the tree, they would surely die.

Then came the talking serpent who brought the great temptation to Eve. The serpent said to the woman, "you will not surely die. God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Read Genesis 3 for the whole story. It is not my intent to offer a great theological commentary on the story but to note that this was and has been the biggest lie in history.

The devil and a lot of individuals too deny the reality of the lie, that we shall NOT surely die, the experience of death among humans is an unavoidable reality. Death has been and is ever with us. If no other event in our contemporary history reminds us of the reality of death, the Covid-19 has been telling the story.

At the point of writing, the United States has surpassed 600,000 deaths from Covid; the world is close to 3.9M. If we were to add the deaths from cancer, heart attacks, the common disasters, such as tornados and earthquakes, and criminal behaviors with gun and other weapons, the numbers would be benumbing.

As I listen to the heart cry of those who have lost loved ones, I say to Satan, "You are a liar." Jesus called this out when he said to the religious leaders who were harassing him:

"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks

from his resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." (John 8:44 NKJV)

One commentator offers in a broader context the following quote:

"He, who is the father of lies, blinds and deceives the world by sending forth his angels to speak for the apostles and make it appear that they contradict what they wrote by dictating the Holy Ghost when on earth. These lying angels make the apostles corrupt their own teachings and to declare them to be degraded. By so doing, Satan delights to throw professed Christians and all the world into uncertainty about the Word of God. That holy Book cuts directly across his track and thwarts his plans; therefore, he leads them to doubt its divine origin."

My reason for writing is to remind us that we need to be careful that we do not allow ourselves to be taken in by THE BIG LIE or THE BIGGEST LIE or by any lie, for that matter.

Lying is of the devil. He is the father of lies. So, whether the lies are based on some conspiracy theories, or the big lie from the Garden of Eden, about NOT dying or that we can work out our salvation, or that we can petition some idol or saint to get our prayers answered, or that we can depend on some horoscope to tell us of our future, or that we can change the law of God to suit our behaviors, it is important for us to know and understand that a lie, lies, big or small, black or white, out us in bondage and is the road to death and destruction.

Jesus has given us the key to life as quoted in John 8:32, when he said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Let us search for truth so that we will be able to detect what is a lie and avoid it.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 11)

struck a Honda Pilot SUV at milepost 9.8 1:15 p.m. June 7. That impact sent the Genesis into the center divider and overturned.

The crash, which also severely injured Jose Ward, 18, of Newark, prompted State Police and West Orange police and fire personnel to divert all eastbound traffic onto local streets at Exit 9 for four hours.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - When the South Orange-Maplewood School District temporarily suspended Clinton Elementary School's outdoor activities in the wake of Moussa

Fofana's shooting June 6, it was as much to prevent a repeat of a May 20 incident at Clinton as much as its proximity to Underhill Field.

Clinton Principal Jennifer Connors put her school and Underhill Field in a Code Yellow shelter-in-place for 30 minutes May 20 when a former lunch aide and her companion trespassed on the property at 8:45 a.m.

Connors said she approached the woman and man outside the main entrance when the duo pulled onto the driveway in a red Toyota Rav-4 and got out. The woman, identified as Stephanie Robinson, 27, of Newark, said Connors, matched the description of one who was similarly on

the property May 6.

Connors said that Robinson told her that she had a gun permit in her confrontation before she and Amir White, 39, of Newark left in the Toyota SUV. The principal took down the license plate number, issued the Code Yellow and called 911. That code included Clinton students who were having a physical class at Underhill.

A Maplewood Police Officer used Connors' descriptions to stop a Rav-4 and interviewed its occupants along Berkshire Road. It was during that stop where the officer learned that the Toyota was reported as stolen from Newark. Robinson and White were arrested; the Code Yellow was lifted at 9:15 a.m.

SOMSD records have Robinson working as a Clinton lunch aide for its food vendor, Pomptonian. It was the vendor who dismissed Robinson in March 2018.

Both Robinson and White were charged with trespassing and receiving stolen property. Robinson was also charged with resisting arrest and making terroristic threats; White was also charged with obstruction.

BLOOMFIELD - The June 14 opening of Lion Gate Park here, with the snip of a pair of scissors, also closed the decades-old odyssey of the former Scientific Glass plant site.

Mayor Michael Venezia - *(Continued on page 15)*

BLACK LIVES MATTER, ALL LIVES MATTER, ANIMAL LIVES MATTER



Animal Abuse and Neglect

It's a crime in New Jersey to abuse animals in a various ways, including:

- torture, maiming, poisoning, or cruelly beating an animal, either intentionally or recklessly
- killing an animal needlessly
- not providing necessary care, and
- leaving an animal alone in a vehicle under harmful conditions.

The penalty for criminal animal abuse depends on the nature of the conduct, the extent of the animal's injuries, and whether the person had a previous conviction for similar behavior. The state also allows civil lawsuits based on animal cruelty, to require the violator to pay up to \$5,000, plus costs. (N.J. Stat. §§ 4:22-17, 4:22-26.)

Hi, everyone, hope things have been well. The summer is here, and things are reopened, like Wild Water Kingdom. Let's not forget our local fun-free access to the public, like Branch Brook Park - which has a lot of fun touring, waterfronts and more. It's a very big park, and the skating rink and swimming pools are always available to the public. So, do not be bored this summer; go out and have some fun. Everyone keep in mind though, when the weather gets hot, the crime rate rises. So, everyone be cautious, safe and stay cool.

department and animals, their spirits are very high, and they are deeply loved. A couple years back, I will never forget about the story with the three men in Florida on a large boat drinking alcohol. They were drunk and they caught a shark and dragged it from a boat and tortured the poor animal. They roped it and recorded it, and the shark wasn't bothering them, as it showed in the video. That just tore my heart from my chest. I was very upset and angry.



Dead bear found on Staten Island: Here's what we know so far

Right now, there's a lot of mental-health ill people just roaming the areas, causing bodily harm to the people. They need to get help. Hopefully with the voices from the election, we will see a change starting in our community. I am always receiving news alerts all day and of all types. But I would like to make one thing clear. People of Essex County, please, if you are going to any of the parks, please leave the wildlife unharmed. Do not touch any property of the park. Like turtles, fish, frogs, rabbits, ducks.

Now I must tell you more about animal cruelty stories. A bear cub was found dead. This was a very disturbing story as well. I demand a call for animal justice. It was in an open parking lot. Five years back I had my job to handle, right here in Irvington in Essex County. There was a big dog fight. It is a game to their handlers, but they are hurting the animals.

These animals are outside species and need to be with nature. It's a natural habitat. Please people, leave the animals alone. Unless it's endangered you, call your local humane society; if not, call 911.

Please, if there is any story or emergency, reach out to 973-280-1002.

Thanks again, Yours,
Michele Lowe.

In my experience with the

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PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, Public Notice is hereby given that the East Orange City Council will conduct CY2021 Departmental Budget Hearings on the following dates;

- Tuesday, June 29th
- Wednesday, June 30th
- Tuesday, July 6th
- Wednesday, July 7th
- Thursday, July 8th

Said Hearings will commence at 6:00 PM and will take place in City Council Chambers, 44 City Hall Plaza, East Orange, New Jersey. Masks must be worn and social distancing will be observed.

Formal action may be taken.

Christopher D. James
City Council Chairman

Christopher Awe
Finance Chairman

Cynthia S. Brown
City Clerk

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Legally Speaking



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OP/ED

Make Sure The Money Is In The Bank!

Remember when you were able to write a check for your groceries at the Shop-Rite? Well, you've got a good memory because that was a very long time ago. At one point, Shop-Rite and others, would post the dishonored checks or a bulletin board or in the front window for all passersby to see.

These stores posted the dishonored checks with the hope of shaming the writer into making

the check good in order to have the dishonored check taken down from public view. When shame proved ineffective to stopping the bad checks, Shop-Rite determined to no longer accept checks as payments at all. It was cheaper to pay the bank a credit card fee when a shopper used a debit card or a credit card than to lose money on dishonored checks.

It is illegal in New Jersey to write a check without the money being in the account at the moment the check is written. A check is a demand instrument. This means that the payee must be able to immediately go to the bank and receive payment of the check. There are no excuses: "I thought I had enough in the account:" or "I post-dated the check. It was not supposed to be cashed until Tuesday."

It remains illegal even if your direct deposit which was supposed to be in your account on Thursday midnight, did not arrive in your account until Friday. The money must be in the account when you write the check. If not, you may face a felony criminal charge and then be exposed to the possibility of going to jail.

True story! One of my clients received two bounced checks for a house he rents. Each check was written to him in the amount of \$2,400. One might think that the check's writer was a tenant so what's the worst that could happen? She did not pay the rent so sooner or later, the landlord will haul her into court, and she will lose possession of the apartment.

This is true, this is very likely to happen, but that is not the end of it. Had she simply failed to pay the rent, the landlord would likely take possession sooner or later and perhaps go to Small Claims Court where he will be compelled to negotiate a settlement without a trial and hopefully retrieve some small portion of the \$4,800 owed. Loss of the apartment and a hassle in a civil court, no risk of jail!

But this tenant did not just fail to pay the rent, she wrote two dishonored checks which means that she committed a crime. She violated 2C:21-5. This statute makes a crime to write a check when there are insufficient funds in the bank to pay the check at the moment the check is written.

If the bounced check is less

than \$200, the matter is deemed to be a misdemeanor and will be addressed in the local municipal court. However, if the size of the check is between \$200 and \$1,000, it is a crime of the fourth degree punishable by up to 18 months in jail. But our tenant's checks were \$2,400 each making her offense a crime of the third degree punishable by up to five years in state's prison.

Third degree crimes would occur if the bounced check were at least \$1,000 but less than \$75,000. A bounced check in excess of \$75,000 would make it a second-degree crime punishable by up to ten years in prison. Oh, and I should note that more often than not, a part of the prison sentence will include restitution. In other words, she is likely to be required to pay the victim/landlord the \$4,800 dollars.

I am guessing that the tenant wrote the checks to buy time, she needed the landlord to go away. She wrote the two checks that bounced hoping for something to happen that would allow her to catch up on the rent so. Now, she is out of time and may be spending time in jail.

KEY TAX RELIEF MEASURES ON THE WAY FOR NEW JERSEYANS

TRENTON - On June 21, Governor Murphy, Senate President Sweeney, Speaker Coughlin, Senate Budget Chair Sarlo, and Assembly Budget Chair Pintor Marin announced an agreement on key middle-class tax relief and property tax relief measures in the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget.

"Tax relief is a critical component of a stronger and fairer New Jersey," said Governor Murphy. "With each budget I have introduced, we have provided greater relief to those who need it most - through our continued expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, the establishment and expansion of a Child and Dependent Tax Care Credit, increased tax relief for veterans, middle-class tax rebates, and now the long-overdue expansion of the Homestead Benefit to make sure relief reflects reality. I'm proud to join with my partners in the Legislature to make sure that the best state to live in America is more affordable for families."

"Under these measures, criti-

cal property tax relief will be provided to our state's middle-class families and residents," said Assembly Budget Chair Pintor Marin. "The impact of this relief, particularly under the increase of the Homestead rebate and expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, will ensure New Jersey is place where people can thrive and build a life."

Key tax relief components of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget include, but are not limited to:

- Middle Class Tax Rebate: In Fiscal Year 2022, over 760,000 New Jersey families will receive an up to \$500 tax rebate due to the Millionaires Tax enacted by the Governor and the Legislature last fall. Families will receive these rebates over the summer. The estimated program cost is \$319 million.
- Updating the Homestead Benefit Base Year to 2017: The Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Act will update Homestead Benefit payments

so that they are based on 2017 property tax information, which is the most recent payment information available, instead of 2006 records. This change is estimated to increase the average benefit for seniors and disabled homeowners by over \$130 and the average benefit for lower-income homeowners by \$145. The estimated program cost is nearly \$80 million.

- Child and Dependent Care Credit (CDCC) Expansion: This budget proposes expanding the CDCC that the Governor and Legislature enacted in 2018 so that it is both available for families making up to \$150,000 and refundable. This change will benefit over 80,000 more families, and increase the average credit for those making under \$30,000 to \$277. The estimated cost is \$17 million.
- Extending the Veterans Property Tax Deduction to

Peacetime Veterans: The Appropriations Act will support the expanded deduction approved through the 2020 ballot measure. The estimated cost is \$15 million.

Expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Age of Eligibility of 21 to 18 and to Those Over Age 65: The Governor and the Legislature have provided meaningful middle-class tax relief by boosting the EITC from 35 percent to 40 percent since 2018. Last year, the Governor led on expanding eligibility to an additional 60,000 New Jersey residents by lowering the minimum age from 25 to 21. In Fiscal Year 2022, Governor Murphy and the Legislature will expand eligibility to those 65 and older without dependents and to those as young as 18, which is projected to help another 90,000 residents - roughly 70,000 over 65; and 20,000 between the ages of 18 and 21. The estimated foregone revenue cost is \$13 million.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 12)

accompanied by Second Ward Councilman Nicholas Joanow, five other Township Council members, Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, County Commission Vice President Carlos Pomares and NJ DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette - cut the ribbon on Lion Gate Park that Monday at 8 Lionsgate Dr.

The 18.4-acre site, which was the Scientific Glass Apparatus factory 1920s-85, now features active recreational facilities, including a turf field, fitness stations, a playground and a 950-square foot field house. 4.2 acres remain as wetlands to help store and release runoff from the adjacent Third River and Spring Brook.

It was flood control that was the main issue between Lin Gate area residents and two developers who wanted to build 105 to 148 townhouse units. Flooding would be controlled either by detention ponds or underground gates. Opponents, including the Third Riverbank Association, cited flooding problems at 2 Lionsgate Dr. - where a 100-unit building was constructed.

The Bloomfield Planning Board approved the first plan in 2007, only for that developer to go bankrupt the next year. Somerset Development made its pond and 105-unit proposal in 2012.

TRBA co-founder Joanow, who left that group once he was elected councilman, successfully got an open space trust fund passed to help the township purchase the tract. Bloomfield would receive most of the \$18 million needed from county and state environmental grants.

A 2019 state appellate court ruling, however, scuttled a 2016 \$10.1 million bond issue to buy the tract. They ruled that Joanow, whose house was within 200 feet of the property, should have recused himself from voting on the bond issue.

Bloomfield bought the east of Broad Street and north of Bay Street property and held a groundbreaking in March 2019 - only to fire the first contractor for falling behind schedule that September. An emergency contractor was brought in to complete the one-year-behind timetable.

Scientific Glass founder William Geyer moved his laboratory glassware company out of his Ackerman Street home when the Clark Thread Company left for South Carolina. SGA, in its prime, employed 300 people in its 120,000-square-foot plant.

MONTCLAIR - Local moviegoers will have two movie theaters reopen this autumn, should Clairidge Cinemas' just-announced renovation make its October 21 goal. The Clairidge, if all goes to plan,

will reopen ahead of Upper Montclair's Bellevue Theatre.

Montclair Film, the parent of the Montclair Film Festival, and Hinck Building landlord Richard Grabowski announced their signing of a long-term operation agreement for the Clairidge here June 21. Their accord means that Bow Tie Cinemas will be leaving 486 Bloomfield Ave. - and "Local Talk" territory.

Bow Tie, of Ridgefield, Conn. had closed the six-screen, 1,700-seat Clairidge in compliance with Gov. Phil Murphy's March 16, 2020 executive order that closed all cinemas and theaters. Although Murphy had allowed limited seating for theaters since September, Bow Tie kept the now-100-year-old venue closed. Grabowski, who has owned the building since 2003, had recently been doing some renovation of the adjacent Hinck arcade.

Montclair Film Executive Director Tom Hall and Grabowski also introduced architect Rachel Grochowski, of RHG Architecture+Design, and Mulvey Custom Contracting, who will promptly start coronavirus-related precautionary design and renovation. They are targeting to reopen the rejuvenated Clairidge ahead of the festival's Oct. 21-30 10th anniversary run.

Once open, Montclair Film intends to run a blend of independent and low-budget films year-round. The Clairidge will also be open to non-profit and educational groups for screenings and discussions.

The Clairidge was and is the Hinck's anchor store since the Spanish Mission commercial and office building replaced the First Presbyterian Church at Montclair's Six Points in 1921. It was Cinerama's exclusive Northern New Jersey movie theater 1960-75. What started out as a venue for silent films and live vaudeville programs became a six-screen "box" within the original theater space by the 1990s.

The Clairidge's owners ranged from Warner Brothers, Montclairion Paul Peterman and Clearview to Bow Time - the latter acquiring the Bellevue and SOPAC's movie houses in 2010. Bow Tie did not renew its respective Bellevue and SOPAC leases in 2017 and 2020.

BELLEVILLE - Both the Belleville Public Library & Information Center and the Irvine-Cozzarelli Funeral Home put up mourning bunting in honor of James J. Cozzarelli, Jr. here through June 17.

Cozzarelli, 72, a decades-long funeral director and BPL trustee, died June 6. He ran his same-named funeral home since 1974 and library trustee since 1976. The Belleville Chamber of Commerce and Lions Club member helped organize the annual Belleville-Nutley Columbus Day Pa-

rade, worked with special needs children with the local United Way and carried a Screen Actors Guild card.

Although Cozzarelli was born Sept. 1, 1948 in Philadelphia, parents Dr. James Joseph Sr. and Olympia soon moved to Belleville to open a practice, joining what is now three generations of Cozzarellis here. (Third Ward Councilman/Deputy Mayor Vincent Cozzarelli is among his relatives.)

James, who graduated from Belleville High School in 1966, became interested in mortuary science while at Wagner College the McAllister Institute of Mortuary Science graduate returned to Belleville to work in William V. Irvine, Jr.'s funeral home. He bought the home in 1972, between receiving his New York and New Jersey practitioner's licenses in 1970 and 74.

Cozzarelli, as a BPL trustee, devoted more than 300 hours in applying his artistic skills within its Children's Carnegie Reading Room. The room was later renamed in the 1992 "Who's Who of Interior Design" selectee's honor.

Sisters Dr. Annette Olympia Cozzarelli-Franklin and Patricia-Ann Cozzarelli are also among his survivors. His June 10 entombment at North Arlington's Holy Cross Cemetery was preceded by a Funeral Mass here at St. Peter's Church that Thursday and June 9 visitation at Irvine-Cozzarelli Funeral Home.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Lung Association, 55. W. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60601.

EAST ORANGE (Continued from page 7)

designating the observance of Juneteenth as an official holiday in the City of East Orange.

The city's first Flag Raising was held last June to commemorate the historic event, which celebrates the date, June 19, 1865, as the day that Union Army's Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas and announced the end of slavery. The declaration came almost two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln announced the Emancipation Proclamation.



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