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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

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# EAST ORANGE CELEBRATES HISTORIC CHAMPIONSHIP



PAGE 5

Left: Jaguars Coach Rae Oliver (right) with Mayor Ted Green (middle)  
 Right: Red and blue was the theme for the celebration.  
 Photos By Keith Munford



## ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE WELCOMES DENISE WILLIAMS - PURCHASING DIRECTOR

## DEADLY TORNADOES DEVASTATE MIDWEST



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The wake of destruction left behind by a twister in Bowling Green, KY

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**Editorial**  
 Dhiren Shah  
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

One after another, natural disasters have become part of our life in the United States of America. Thank God that the federal government is able to support those affected by any natural disaster. The latest one is the band of tornadoes that spread over 200 miles, affecting five states. One of them stayed on the ground for over 100 miles.

President Biden has travelled to the highly affected area of Mayfield, Kentucky and gave condolences to the families and friends who lost their loved ones. He pledged to give full support to the families for help in rebuilding their lives.

Biden said, "People just come out of nowhere to help as a

community, and that's what it's supposed to be. That's what America's supposed to be. There's no red tornadoes or blue tornadoes. There's no red states or blue states when this stuff starts to happen. And I think, at least in my experience, it either brings people together or really knocks them apart."

Mayor-elect of New York City Eric Adams has named Keechant Sewell as his pick for NYPD Police Commissioner on Dec. 15. If approved by the city council, Sewell will become the first woman Police Commissioner of New York City. Adams has started to look at things differently and is trying to bring changes for the city of New York. It's a capital of the world and to handle all the problems that are going on, it is a challenge for the new police commissioner. Most likely, she will be confirmed. I hope Sewell will work for everyone and not just the select rich and powerful. At 49-years-old, Sewell was the first African Ameri-

can woman appointed as chief of detectives in September 2020.

The COVID-19 virus is still spreading in the US. America tops in the world with over 100,000 cases and over 1,000 deaths a day. Still, 25% to 30% are reluctant to vaccinate themselves and their family members. Some churches are the same way, giving the wrong messages to their followers in my opinion. Let the members of the church decide themselves. Also, the pharmaceutical companies are scaring people, and they need to stop that. This seems to be their main objective rather than guiding them. It should not be about the money, but it should be about people's health. Some people still do not follow the most important guidelines, such as masking and social distancing. Why don't people follow simple health and safety rules, so the governors or mayors do not have to be strict on everyone?

New York is #2 in the United States as far as new cases are

concerned and #3 in the COVID-19 death toll numbers. New York Governor Kathy Hochul has announced a mask mandate until at least Jan. 15. Some groups complained, but I don't blame her. She has done the right thing, especially when people do not voluntarily follow the most important health and safety rules of our time.

The crime rate is going up in Newark and the surrounding areas in Essex County. Murders, accidental homicides, and car thefts have become a part of our regular lives. Politicians are more concerned about politics than the people's safety. They play with the numbers and show only the better part of the crime statistics in my opinion.

Congratulations to Miss India Harnaaz Sandhu, who now holds the crown of Miss Universe 2021 after beating out 79 other contestants.

*Have a wonderful week.  
 I'll talk to you next week.*

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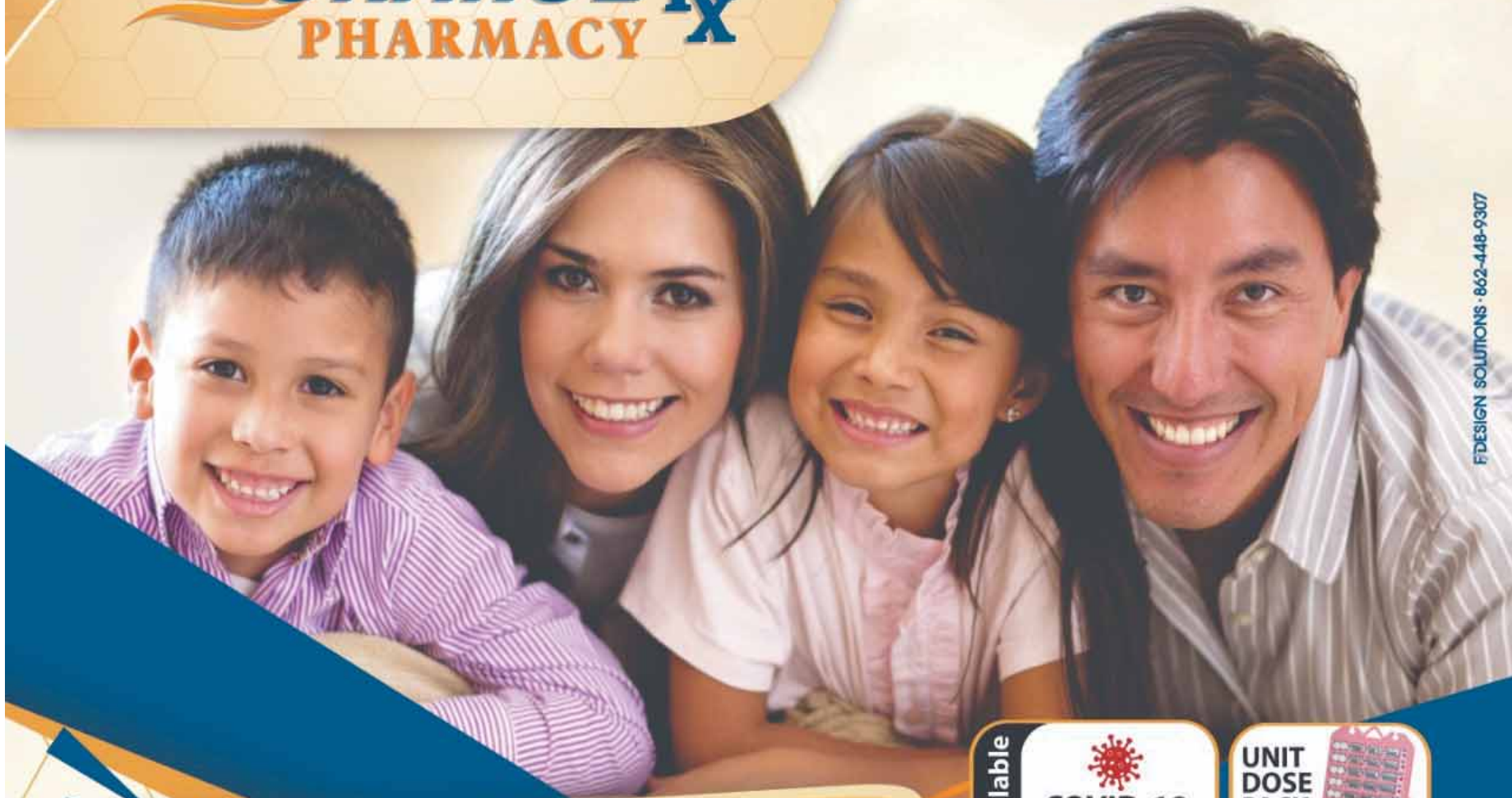
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**WEATHER FOR THE WEEK**

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Rain	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
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# The Doctor Is In



Dr. Adil Manzoor OP/ED

## How Do Vaccines Reduce COVID Transmission?

The way I phrased the topic is interesting, as it is premised on the assumption that vaccines reduce transmission. Before we get to the how, let's first consider if it actually reduces transmission.

We can't argue if the vac-

cines prevent serious illnesses - they do - but whether they prevent people from transmitting the virus is worth arguing.

Logically speaking, they (the vaccines) should. I mean the vaccines have the power to prevent infections - don't come at me just yet, I'm talking of before all of these strains emerged. One would expect it to be able to prevent transmission at all. You should know that before a vaccine can be transmitted, the virus needs to have infected enough cells in the body.

After reaching this viral threshold, the person becomes infectious, and may develop symptoms of the disease within 48 hours. If the vaccine is strong enough to prevent the virus reaching this level, it should be strong enough to prevent transmission - that's what logic says.

However, it's never that easy with science, especially with parasites and infections. There haven't been too many scientific studies as regards this but the few we have are encouraging. A study by



the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment shows that vaccination reduces transmission to unvaccinated household members by 63% for the delta variant of the virus.

Even the WHO has claimed vaccines reduce transmission by 40%. There haven't been too many studies on this particular topic, though, as most of the studies conducted are about the more important details - whether it reduces infection and serious illnesses.

However, it is fair to say both logic and science provide a strong indication that vaccines reduce transmission of the virus.

How does it do this? For starters, vaccines can prevent infection in the first place. There's something microbiologists call sterilizing immunity where a vaccine prevents infection in the body, consequently eliminating any hope of transmission. This is the gold standard of vaccines, and the poster boy is the measles vaccine.

Now, the COVID vaccine doesn't provide absolute sterilizing immunity against the coronavirus, as people can still get infected after vaccination and not just breakthrough cases. But with the introduction of booster doses, expectations are high that immunity will be strong enough to prevent the virus from causing infections and diseases.

Even if a person does get infected, the vaccines clear out the virus faster than in unvaccinated people. Let's call on our

old friend, logic. If the virus clears out of the system faster, the risk of transmission is automatically lower.

Also, studies have shown that vaccinated people have less infectious viral particles than unvaccinated people despite having similar viral load.

Vaccines are so important in this fight against the virus, and not only because it reduces the number of people that get infected with the virus. Vaccines can also help reduce transmission of the virus, meaning even when vaccinated people get infected, which is quite common now with new strains, the virus doesn't spread as fast as without the vaccine.

The troublesome strains, like Delta and Omicron, are more transmissible than the parent virus. We have definitely seen the effects, with more and more vaccinated people getting the virus. It becomes critical for us to combat this rise in transmissibility of the virus, and vaccines plus boosters are the only weapons we have against it now.

I think this is a good place to summarize - vaccines not only reduce the risk of developing an infection at all or developing serious illnesses, but also reduce the transmission of the virus.

Please, get vaccinated. Stay safe.

*This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor DO, a Board Certified Internist & Board Eli*  
(Continued on page 13)

## Non-healing Foot Wounds? Diabetic Foot Ulcers?




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# SPORTS WRAP



By Walter Elliott & William Hathaway, Jr.

**EAST ORANGE** - Neither rain nor traffic nor 12 rival football teams could keep the undefeated East Orange Campus High School Jaguars and the city from celebrating their state championship here Saturday.

"Local Talk" was relieved when a rain shower, encountered in downtown Newark at 10:12 a.m. Dec. 11, dissipated upon arrival here at Central Avenue and Oak Street at 10:28. The East Orange Marching Jaguars band were practicing just south

Jaguars' victory parade along Central Avenue, Halsted Street, Freeway Drive East and South Paul Robeson Stadium. Buses on eight CoachUSA and NJTransit routes were among those who were detoured or detained while the parade made its 1.6-mile route.

The celebration was for the players, coaches, support staff, parents and relatives of the 13-0 gridiron Jaguars - and the community.

The football team's drive netted them their first NJSIAA North 1 Group 5 state champion-



Photos By Keith Munford

of the intersection while wearing red ponchos.

The up-to-40 mph wind gusts and a short but intense storm front respectively held off until 3 and 7 p.m. This system would spawn some of the worst tornado damage in six Midwestern and Southern states.

"Local Talk" disembarked from a westbound CoachUSA No. 24B bus two minutes before East Orange police officers closed the avenue at Arlington Avenue with traffic cones.

Police would close street and driveway access ahead of the

ship. They prevailed over the Clifton Mustangs, 30-24 in triple overtime, in the Dec. 5 title game at Rutgers SHI Stadium.

Previously, the closest the Jaguars came to a state football championship was a 2007 sectional title against Montclair. Its EOHS Panthers and the Clifford J. Scott Scotties predecessors may well have won earlier football titles. (Records for the 1980 Essex Catholic Bishop Francis High School Eagles were not immediately available.)

In talking with veteran observers - some of whom were



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wearing Panthers or Scotties jackets or sweatshirts - no one remembers having East Orange's gridiron heroes so welcomed home at least since the EOCHS era began in 2002.

"Local Talk," when asked for the person behind the celebration, was directed to Mayor Theodore "Ted" Green on one of the parade's three floats.

"This came out of a dinner I had with the team," said Green. "I told them that, if they win the championship, I will throw a parade. East Orange has a rich tradition of producing world-class athletes - and we want the entire city to come out, show love and celebrate this historic victory."

Green, City Council members, East Orange School District Superintendent AbdulSaleem Hasan, EOCHS Principal Willie Worley, Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Fine & Performing Arts Principal John English, East Orange STEM Academy Principal Dr. Vincent Stallings, Jaguars Head Coach Rae Oliver and Police Chief Phyllis Bindi had six days to pull the victory parade and Robeson Stadium reception.

(Continued on page 14)



## DEADLY TORNADOES DEVASTATE MIDWEST

### UNITED STATES

Several midwestern states in the U.S. - especially Kentucky - were hit with a swarm of tornadoes that proved deadly.

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear spoke to media after the Dec. 10-11 storms, and announced that over 70 people are feared dead after multiple tornadoes ripped through his state - and that more fatalities are expected. Over people have been declared missing in that state alone, and workers inside a candle factory were trapped as their building collapsed under the high winds. There have been allegations that the employees were ordered to stay inside and work by management, but that has not been confirmed. They were not the only workers trapped inside a place of work, as Amazon employees in Edwardsville, Illinois were also pinned under the rubble of a tornado there.

So far, at least 39 tornadoes have been reported across Kentucky, Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee. One of the twisters is estimated to have been on the ground for over 120 miles. Intensity levels reached as high as EF3+ on the modified Fujita scale.

In response to the historic storm, President Biden gave comments on the destruction:

"Jill and I pray - and I'm - sincerely mean this - pray for those who have lost loved ones and for those who are uncertain of the fate of their loved ones. And the debris that you see scattered all over the hurricane's [tornado's] path.

"They lost their homes. They lost their businesses. And it's a tragedy. It's a tragedy. And we still don't know how many lives were lost or the full extent of the

damage.

"But I want to emphasize what I told all the governors: The federal government will do everything - everything it can possibly do to help."

Hours after, Biden issued a disaster declaration for Kentucky, and has said that he would sign off for other states if they submitted claims.

## RACING'S NEWEST CHAMPION CROWNED

### MIDDLE EAST

By *Walter Elliott*

The 10-month, 22-race Formula One World Drivers Championship between Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen came down to the last lap of the season - ending Abu Dhabi GP here Sunday night.

Hamilton, who got the drop on polesitter Verstappen at the start and had been leading 45 of the race's 58 laps on the Yas Marina Circuit, suddenly faced a fill course caution on lap 52.

Montrealer Nicolas Latifi had been battling Mich Schumacher for a non-points position when he lost his Williams-Mercedes' rear end and backed into the Turn 9 wall.

Verstappen, who was running second to Hamilton, stopped his No. 33 Red Bull Racing-Honda in the pits for his third set of tires without losing his position. The second-generation driver, however, had four lapped cars between him and Hamilton's No. 44 factory Mercedes.

Hamilton, who was on the same set of hard tires since lap 14, asked his AMG Mercedes crew about a tire change. Team Manager Toto Wolff, concerned about losing the lead and "we don't know if the race will go green again," kept the Briton out.

Verstappen's teammate Sergio Perez, who led six laps and was running third, pitted his car on lap 55 and bowed to a mechanical problem.

Race control meanwhile dithered on the four backmarkers between Briton Hamilton and Dutchman Verstappen.

They initially decided against the quartet moving ahead of the safety pace car. Three laps later, race stewards told the lapped drivers to move aside on the restart and give Hamilton and Verstappen a straight fight.

Verstappen - once the pace car pulled in and the green flag was shown - ousted Hamilton in Turn 5 of the 15-turn, 3.281-mile road course. Hamilton made his last charge in Turn 9 but Verstappen won by 2.256 sec.

Verstappen's 10th GP win of the season earned him his first World Drivers Championship and for the Red Bull-Honda combine. His final points tally was 395.5 against the dethroned Hamilton's 387.5.

The duo entered the season finale with an even 369.5 points each. It is the first time since 1974 when the top two drivers were so tied.

Hamilton's teammate, Valtteri Bottas, finished sixth to secure Mercedes its eighth straight World Constructors Championship.

Mercedes team triumph gives Honda a partial going-away gift. Honda will be turning over its engine building unit to Red Bull while the company focuses on becoming globally carbon-neutral by 2050.

Canadian Lance Stroll brought his Aston Martin-Mercedes home 13th. Schumacher brought his U.S.-based Haas-Ferrari home 14th. Teammate Nikita Mazepin, due to COVID concerns, did not start. Perez and Latifi were placed 15th and 16th in the official results.

2007 F1 WC Kimi Raikkonen ended his career by brushing his Alfa Romeo-Ferrari against a wall and parking it in lap 27 - ending a record 196 starts.

## MISS INDIA = MISS UNIVERSE

### INDIA

Amid the elegance, pageantry, and anticipation of any Steve Harvey faux pas, there was a new Miss Universe crowned in Eilat, Israel.

On Dec. 12, Miss India

Harnaaz Sandhu earned the title of Miss Universe 2021. The 21-year-old beat out 79 other contestants from various countries and territories. Sandhu beat out runner-up Miss Paraguay Nadia Ferreira and second runner-up Miss South Africa Lalela Mswane in taking the crown.

Outside of pageants, the new Miss Universe is a thespian who draws inspiration from iconic Indian actress Priyanka Chopra, who is married to New Jersey native Nick Jonas. Sandhu is also an advocate for women's empowerment, and enjoys yoga, dancing, cooking, horse riding and playing chess in her spare time.

For those wondering, outside of a teleprompter goof, Harvey did not commit any major gaffe like when he once announced the wrong winner.

## MAN ADMITS TO COCAINE CHARGE

### CARIBBEAN

A Puerto Rican man admitted Dec. 14 conspiring to distribute over 250 kilograms of cocaine, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael A. Honig announced.

Mariano Enrique Arroyo Perez, aka "Humilde," 29, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Esther Salas to a superseding indictment charging him with conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court: From 2017 through July 2019, Arroyo Perez and his conspirators conspired to distribute approximately 250 kilograms of cocaine. They conspired to transport cocaine on private planes, including approximately 150 kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to New Jersey on a private plane on Nov. 18, 2018, which law enforcement intercepted.

After several men boarded a private plane in Puerto Rico destined for a Teterboro Airport in New Jersey, the pilots became suspicious, as the men were not on the manifest for the flight and their luggage was particularly

(Continued on page 15)

# BLACK LIVES, ANIMAL LIVES, ALL LIVES MATTER



By Michele Lowe

Hey everyone, glad to have you all back. As I always say everyone, please be safe out there and also remember to keep your mask on. You never know when you may need it.

I would like to discuss something different this time. I did some research over the weekend, and this is a consistent situation and matter throughout time, and it still continues. We need to be



aware and know the areas we travel to stay safe. I talked about the Branch Brook Park hanging. They tried to say it was suicide, but I disagree.

Just right after, the same thing happened in Robbinsville Township, a Morristown park, a



North Bergen park. A 32-year-old woman from West Orange shot and found in East Orange. Local women from Newark and around. Where are these women? These cases still need investigating.

If you see something, don't just ignore it or pass by. Some people will stand and record a



whole murder or conflict, like they're filming a movie instead of calling 911 and that only takes a second. Get help if you see it is needed; do something. Saving a life is an honor. As a reminder, we must always keep the memory of those we lost, as well as those who are missing.

I would like to thank everyone who is out there. Keep up the good work, doing the right things. God Bless.

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Bloomfield	6302	127	6432	127
Caldwell	753	16	769	16
Cedar Grove	1903	121	1955	121
East Orange	8528	338	8697	338
Essex Fells	232	2	238	2
Fairfield	1117	33	1139	33
Glen Ridge	486	14	492	14
Irvington	5697	245	5857	246
Livingston	2324	90	2383	90
Maplewood	1699	42	1743	42
Millburn	1109	11	1141	11
Montclair	2834	76	2883	77
Newark	42821	1072	<b>43875</b>	<b>1074</b>
North Caldwell	618	8	637	8
Nutley	3678	68	3777	68
Orange	4069	143	4152	143
Roseland	599	17	614	18
South Orange	1244	18	1267	18
Verona	1298	18	1342	19
West Caldwell	1282	54	1305	54
West Orange	5510	237	5644	238
<b>Total</b>	<b>100579</b>	<b>2871</b>	<b>102908</b>	<b>2879</b>

**OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of December 15, 2021)**  
**NJ: 1,138,494 cases / 25,808 deaths (Plus 2,835 probable)**  
**United States (approx.): 50.311 Million / 801,500 deaths**  
**Worldwide (approx.): 272.016 Million / 5.327 Million deaths**

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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 Dec. 7 carjacking, kidnapping and abandonment here in North Newark may be another entry in "What Were They Thinking?"

Newark police officers, responding to a report of "a carjacking in progress," arrived at 420 Bloomfield Ave. 4:30 p.m. that Tuesday. They found the driver of a missing white Toyota Highlander by the Wells Fargo bank branch.

The driver, who left the Highlander with its engine running to make an ATM transaction, said that a male jumped in and sped away. The motorist added that two children - 9 and 11 years old - remained in the back seat.

Police began canvassing the area when they got a phone call from one of the children two blocks away. They were along the 200 block of Abington Avenue, by North Sixth Street, when the suspect bailed out and ran away.

No one was physically hurt in the incident.

**IRVINGTON** - Homeowners and residents' questions on how the municipal sewer system backed up into their basements here Dec. 12 may linger long after the cleanup has been completed.

Occupants of 12 houses along the 100 block of Washington Avenue began calling Irvington's DPW and private contractors when raw sewage began backing up that Sunday morning.

The sewage was reportedly more than a foot deep when a local Sewer Equipment Company of America crew had arrived. They were unable to unblock the main due to debris blockage.

Mayor Anthony "Tony" Vauss and Township Administrator Musa A. Malik, later that day, pledged to bring in DPW employees and equipment for pumping out. Dumpsters are to also be brought in to take away unsalvageable items.

At issue, however, is how the blockage happened. Some residents believe that it was the result of items that were swept away during Tropical Storm Ida Sept. 1-2.

The 12 known flooded basements are a third of houses between 57 and 122 Washington Ave.

**EAST ORANGE** - A city letter carrier is home, but has been off his appointed rounds, since pleading not guilty to a federal count of mail theft Dec. 2.

Parrish Brookins, 29, was released from federal jail after posting a \$50,000 bail bond to US Magistrate Judge Jessica Stein Allen that Thursday. He had entered his not guilty plea before Stein's Newark bench by videoconference.

Brookins, said acting US Attorney Rachel A. Honig, is accused of taking credit cards from January to July and federal stimulus checks from March to September from customers along his Montclair and Verona delivery routes.

US Postal Service agents planted a hidden camera in Brookins' delivery vehicle Sept. 17-20. Honig said the footage showed him "apparently stealing US Treasury checks" from the mail he was delivering.

The inspectors were acting on an Instagram account of an unnamed Verona resident, who was arrested for carrying stolen mail in his car in July. That person's account posted a photo of 21 Treasury checks meant for Montclair and Verona residents and discussions about the stolen items. Brookins was identified as among the discussion participants.

Brookins, in the US Inspector General's complaint, is accused of giving the stimulus checks to others and of personally using the credit cards.

Mail theft carries a maximum five-year prison sentence and a \$250,000.

**ORANGE** - The city's eastern Main Street gateway would get a

subtle but distinctive look should the Orange Planning Board permit an application submitted by VA 100 Main LLC.

VA 100 Main intends to build a five-story, 307-unit apartment building along 92-112 South Main St. and 13-23 Prince St. It will be sited directly across Orange's Soldiers and Sailors Monument on the Orange Common's east tip and across Prince Street from First Fellowship Cathedral.

The proposal, as presented before the board Nov. 29, includes 367 parking spaces. 60 of those spaces would be "used for future development within 500 ft."

The building would be constructed on nine lots for a combined 1.42 acres. It will require the demolition of seven buildings on those addresses, five of which were built 1860-81. The lots were bought between July 2019 and March 2021.

The said nine lots, on one hand, are within a combined residential-commercial zone, where the Victorian-era houses were allowed to double as professional offices.

All of the lots, however, are within Orange's Main Street Historic District. VA 100 Main will most likely be brought before the Orange Historic Preservation Commission prior to any private approval.

**WEST ORANGE** - Anyone who wants to purchase a 12-acre property above Pleasant Valley Way - known as "The Ridge," the "Loree-Bowood property" or "West Orange's last forest" can do so for \$1.875 million.

Kevin Baris of the Jordin Baris real estate firm has recently put the tract up for sale on redfin.com. It is being sold as a two-lot package of 5.8 and 6.967 acres. They are zoned for R-1 residential use requiring 80,000 square feet per lot.

Baris is calling the property as having "an unobstructed NYC skyline view and 742 feet of frontage along Ridge Road." The property's address is 2-10 Ridge Rd., which runs south of Pleasant Valley Way about 1,000 ft. east of PVW's intersection with Prospect Street.

Purchasers may receive financing if qualified but "offers subject to approvals will not be considered." Buyers will also

take possession of two structures - including the Hecker carriage house - which are the last remnants of railroad executive Lenor F. Loree's Bowood mansion, dairy farm and football field.

The listing comes eight months after the Township Council unanimously rejected a proposal to buy The Ridge with municipal open space trust fund money. The council, on Oct. 19, 2019, also rejected a settlement with resident-lawyer Kevin Malanga to buy the property for open space or a park.

Malanga and Our Green West Orange's argument is that felling up to 500 of the 800 trees there would cause more water erosion of the former O'Rourke Quarry cliff face onto the Cedar Ridge garden apartments below. (The defloration and erosion rates were based on six houses built on two-acre lots.)

**SOUTH ORANGE** - Village elders want to hear from Seton Village residents and stakeholders now through Dec. 31 on how to best apply the five-year, \$675,000 state grant they have just received.

South Orange's Seton Village, which includes the Irvington Avenue corridor, was awarded a Neighborhood Preservation Program grant by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. NPP intends to help designated "viable but threatened neighborhoods" with a \$125,000 grant for five years.

The grant may be applied in six areas: direct grants to district businesses, a local business gift card program, trees and other shade features, outdoor dining areas, performance spaces, parklets and streetscape improvements.

The Village President, Trustees and administrators are asking Seton Villagers through a survey available through a QR code. NPP Coordinator Sally Unsworth will present the surveys to an NPP Stakeholder Team - who will then develop a five-year implementation plan.

Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, as NJ DCA Commissioner, announced South Orange among 40 NPP municipal awardees across the state. "Local Talk" area awardees include Maplewood (for its Hilton-Springfield Avenue district) and Newark (for

*(Continued on page 12)*

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*From  
The  
Pastor's  
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**On Adoption**

When I heard earlier in the week that animal adoption centers are being overwhelmed with requests because people are giving live gifts rather than stuffed toys in these Christmas holidays, I said that is a good thing. But in the same breath, I began to think of the ongoing debate on abortion and adoption, which is about at a fever pitch, since the Supreme Court allowed to stand the Texas Law that permits private citizens to sue anyone carrying out an abortion.

If you asked my opinion on the law, I would have to say it is as tragic as abortion itself. And although I am not taking a moment to explain what I mean by "tragic" here, I have no question that when questions are caught up in the extremist political and legal systems, the outcomes cannot be anything but bad decisions.

As we move beyond the latter, my interest is not about adopting animals or babies that would be otherwise aborted; I suspend that for another time. But here I am thinking about the privilege that each of us has been given to be adopted into the

family of God. I use the term "spiritual adoption" not to reference programs that discourage abortion but instead to note what God has sought to do to us by his Spirit.

We read the following in the Bible:

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'" (Rom 8:15 NKJV)

"Not only *that*, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." (Rom 8:23NKJV)

". . . who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of *God*, and the promises." (Rom 9:4 NKJV)

"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born<sup>[a]</sup> of a woman, born under the law,<sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." (Gal. 4:5 NKJV)

". . . having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." (Eph 1:5 NKJV)

If you have been reading about the reality of adoption as I have, you should feel very special. In such a case, as you might realize, it is one thing to be born of the natural birth with all the possibilities of being aborted or facing a life of mis-

ery, while it is a different thing to be adopted.

As the Psalmist says, "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa 51:5). Where does this natural birth take us or leave us? In a state of rebellion and misery. If we are thinking correctly, we will realize that we are worthless and nothing in our lost state. But through the compassion of Christ, that is, through His life, death and resurrection, we have worth as we accept the possibility of becoming part of the new family through adoption.

God/Christ has sent the Spirit into the world to adopt us into the family of God. The reality that I have been adopted into such a family makes me want to shout out at least four things I note about my adoption:

1. **I have given amazing grace:** It did not have to be. I could have been thrown away by the wayside or aborted. I could have been left in my trespasses and our sins. But by the grace of God, I have been spared. I've saved, made alive and adopted. "For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)
2. **I have been given a new legal status before God:** I do not have to go into all of the adoption processes to

talk about how the selection is made and the court papers that are signed, but I take note of what Christ said that those who accept him are "declared righteous" justified in him. The apostle Paul states it thus: "Whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed." (Rom 3:25)

3. **I have been given a new identity.** We are children of God by creation, but we have become a mess, rebellious, lost children. The Bible says it this way, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23). But it also states what has happened to all who accept the new possibilities in Christ when it says, "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom 3:24)
4. **I have been given new worth.** I am not only a child of God by creation but also by redemption. I am not a slave; I am free. As I have read it, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (Jn 8:36).

Thank God for my spiritual adoption.

**TOWN WATCH**

(Continued from page 10)

the Lincoln Coast Cultural District).

Contact Unsworth at npp-coordinator@southorange.org for details.

**MAPLEWOOD** - Many township residents went from no water to too much water on the same Dec. 11 here, thanks to a pair of water main breaks that day and an evening rain squall.

Residents and New Jersey American Water customers in the Jefferson Village, Seton Village, College Hill and Hilton sections began reporting little to no water pressure and/or brown

water 10:20 a.m. Saturday. NJAW, in its updates, later added some Irvington customers among the affected.

Utility crews promptly found two water main breaks: Dunnell and Oakland roads in Jefferson Village and Highland/Essex/Irvington avenues in Seton Village by 11 a.m. The Dunnell/Oakland break was of a 26-inch diameter transmission line that was being worked on. There was a search for a possible third break in the Maplecrest Park area.

NJAW deployed two crews at each break. They had assistance from Galbraith Landscaping, of Scotch Plains, at Dunnell Road. The Maplewood Fire Department put a pair of 3,500-gal

water trucks and neighboring departments on mutual aid standby in case a fire broke out.

Residents said that while they received reverse calls and e-alerts from the utility and Maplewood Police, they said that NJAW had not posted alerts or updates on its websites. Maplewood Township's response, beyond posting an update on its website, was hampered while its IT team was locating and destroying earlier reported malware and spoofware.

Water pressure was gradually restored before 6 p.m. - just in time for a rain squall to pass through. It was preceded and carried by 15-to-50 mph wind gusts that had arrived by 11:30 a.m. The storm was the same

one that triggered tornados in six Mississippi River Valley states, killing at least 81 people as of 6:30 p.m. local time Dec. 13.

**BLOOMFIELD** - Patricia McGarry Drake, 82, a Bloomfield resident who rose from being a secretary in the Essex County Clerk's office to become Clerk 1991-95, died Nov. 25 in Belmar.

The former Patricia McGarry, who was born March 28, 1939 in Newark, had settled in Bloomfield in 1985. The 22-year County Clerk's Office employee had been Deputy Clerk for six years when the legendary Essex County Clerk Nicholas V. Caputo decided to end his 30-year

(Continued on page 15)

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## ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE WELCOMES DENISE WILLIAMS - PURCHASING DIRECTOR

**Denise Williams recently joined Essex County College as Director of Purchasing**

“Denise Williams comes to ECC where she will share her extensive background and experience. She will focus on ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of our purchasing operations so that ECC purchases the goods and services we need, when we need them, and at reasonable prices while satisfying all State purchasing regulations,” said College Chief Financial Officer George Peterson.

“My goal is to strategically procure goods and services while implementing business processes and technology to increase efficiency. I have a desire to develop and help others, so

you will also see me creating an impact by mentoring Essex County College Supply Chain students and engaging the community,” said Ms. Williams, a Newark resident. She has certification in Supply Management.

Ms. Williams previously worked as Director of Procurement Systems and Support for the Metropolitan (NYC) Transportation Authority. She has served as Assistant Purchasing Director at both Union County College and the Newark Public Schools. She has also worked for several insurance companies.

She earned both her MBA and Master’s in Accountancy from Saint Peter’s University. She holds an undergraduate degree in Finance from Rutgers University-Newark.

She has two children, Sterlyn and Phoenix.

### THE DOCTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 4)

gible 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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**SPORTS** (Cont. from page 5)

They help from many quarters, including the East Orange Junior Jaguars Pop Warner Football team, East Orange Police Explorers, the East Orange Old Guard, East Orange General Hospital, the NFL New York Giants, the Essex County Sheriff's Office, EOSD food contractor Sodexo and several local business owners.

Many players and dignitaries, for example, were wearing red and blue "Jaguar by Nature" sweatshirts whose logo was a variant of the "Naughty by Nature" music group. "Uncle Vinnie" Brown, a "Naughty" musician and EOHS Class of 1988 graduate, made up those sweatshirts.

There were several marchers and spectators who still wore

sweatshirts reading "Refuse to Lose" or "13-0" and the 12 opponents' logos. (The West Orange Mountaineers played both a regular season and a playoff game.)

The parade, whose procession spilled back on Oak Street to alongside Elmwood Park, stepped off at 11:18 a.m. It would take the band, three float loads of Jaguars, 29 motor vehicles and assorted marchers an hour to reach Robeson Stadium. The upper several hundred bystanders, shopkeepers, motorists and at least one inflatable Santa Claus saw several EOPD cars ahead of and in the procession plus an EOFD LT 1 Rescue ladder truck bringing up the rear.

Jeneen Henry, holding a "1" mylar balloon, was waiting with two relatives on North Clinton by Melmore Gardens, waiting

for her grandson to appear. Their pride was No. 77 senior tackle Elijah McClain - whose video of congratulating three Clifton Mustangs for a good game while all were awaiting an official's call went viral.

Some 60 fans, family and neighbors welcomed the Jaguars parade at North Clinton and Park avenues. At least one had a music-playing bull horn and another two cowbells. The marching Jaguars obliged by performing to "It's so hard to be a Jaguar" in the intersection. It was hard to follow who changed they lyric to "I'm so proud to be a Jaguar."

Within the parade were a car each carrying Essex County 2021 Teacher of the Year Theresa Maughan (STEM Academy social studies) and 2020-21 Governor's Educator of the Year Joi

Paisley (Althea Gibson Academy).

There were STEM Academy and Tyson School names alongside EOCHS on the floats to recognize those two high schools' contributions to the Jaguars. 10 Jaguars, including quarterback Raden Oliver, are STEM scholar-athletes. Nine, including receiver BJ Covington, study and perform at Tyson. No. 29 senior fullback Jessica Felix, EOCHS's second female player, was also on a float. She earned Nov. 25's Jaguars-Barringer "Player of the Game" by running in the first touchdown by a female for EOCHS and ever in the Thanksgiving Day annual classic.

Head Coach Oliver, a 22-year EOHS/EOCHS assistant coach who got the top job in 2017, has said that his team are indeed scholar-athletes. Many are poised to become enrolled to some top colleges with their 2021 season performance making the difference in being accepted.

Oliver, for all his East Orange loyalty, may not be on the 2021 mountaintop if it were not for the Orange Tornadoes. He was set to become an EOHS player when the family moved to Orange. Oliver got to play as a Tornado in his last two years - leading him to become a Kean University player and into coaching.

The Jaguars disembarked from the floats at Robeson's main gate and prepared to run through the inflatable tunnel onto the field for fans for the eighth time this season.

Mayor Green doubled as master of ceremonies at the stadium. He re-introduced the 67 players, Coach Oliver and his staff. Green also brought up Assemblywoman Britnee Timberlake, Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II and Council Members Christopher Awe, Brittany Claybrooks, Bergson Lenus and Vernon Pullins - among other dignitaries who offered congratulations.

That run through the tunnel was the last for 31 of the players as Jaguars. The 31 are seniors who are to graduate in June.

"We're 13-0 - there's nothing that anyone can say that can take that from us," said Jaguars staffer Jihad Abu Hanif at the reception. "Seniors, I thank every one of you for the job you've done. Junior and underclassmen, we've work to do."

## BLOOMFIELD HIGH STUDENT EXCELS IN CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP



By Lev D. Zilbermints

Bloomfield High School now has a new chess champion. One of its students placed third in the New Jersey K-12 Grade School Championship held in Lincroft, NJ on Nov. 22.

Raiden Pipkins, 18, is a senior at Bloomfield High School in Bloomfield, New Jersey. Playing in the New Jersey K-12 Grade School Championship, Raiden scored three points out of five. This allowed him to place third in the 12th grade section which had only 9 participants.

In addition to winning the 3rd place 12th grade individual, Raiden also won 3rd place 12th grade team representing Bloomfield High School.

The New Jersey K-12 Grade School Championship had boys and girls from kindergarten through 12th grade. There were five rounds in the Swiss-System tournament. A total of 492 children participated in the one-day

tournament held in Lincroft, New Jersey. Hal Sprechman was the organizer of the event.

Credible sources told "Local Talk" that when pairings were announced and hung on the wall, there was a mad rush by hundreds of children to where the pairings sheet was hanging.

According to tournament results posted by the United States Chess Federation online, there were 24 entries in the kindergarten section; 43 in the first-grade section; 55 in the second-grade section; 64 in the third-grade section; 53 in the fourth-grade section; 54 in the fifth-grade section; 36 in the sixth-grade section; 45 in the seventh-grade section; 28 in the eighth-grade section; 39 in the ninth-grade section; 26 in the 10th-grade section; 16 in the 11th grade section; and 9 in the 12th grade section.

Apart from Raiden Pipkins, there were other section winners. "Local Talk" lists those who won first place in their sections.

Charlotte Martin won the kindergarten section with 5 out of 5; Jayden Li and Satvi Birusavolu shared first-second, with 4.5 points each, in the first-grade section; Santhosh Ayyapan scored a perfect 5/5 games in the second-grade section; Anson Leong scored 4.5 out of 5 in the third-grade section; Will Nieder scored a perfect 5 in the fourth-grade section; Audrey Keyan Li also scored a perfect 5 in the

fifth-grade section; Rishi Madiraju scored 5 out of 5 in the sixth-grade section; Quan Tran scored 5 out of 5 in the seventh-grade section; George Yimin Chen scored 5 out of 5 in the eighth-grade section; Eddy Tian, the only master in the event, scored 5 out of 5 in the ninth-grade section; Jason Lu and Thoshen Omprakash scored 4.5 each in the tenth-grade section; Daniel Shen, Aditiya Raj, Akshay Patel, all scored four points each in the eleventh-grade section; and Roman Brustein scored 5 out of 5 in the twelfth-grade section. Alex Bivanov came in second, with 4 out of 5 in the twelfth-grade section.

Raiden Pipkins is a regular member of the West Orange Chess Club, which meets on Tuesdays at the Toby Katz Civic Center in West Orange. Jason Lu is a former champion of the West Orange Chess Club.

In an email, John Hagerty, President of the West Orange Chess Club, wrote, "It is great to see a young person succeed like this! Raiden is truly one of the bright spots in our club! Kids like him are the future of chess."

*Full Disclosure: Lev D. Zilbermints is the reigning chess champion of Essex and Union counties since 1995 and 2014, respectively. He is also co-Vice President of the West Orange Chess Club as well as President of the Garden State Chess League.*

**WORLD NEWS**

*(Continued from page 6)*

heavy. Their luggage contained the 150 kilograms of cocaine. Law enforcement arrested the four passengers.

After this seizure, law enforcement learned that Arroyo Perez had coordinated this shipment. Law enforcement also reviewed judicially authorized wire intercepts that showed that Arroyo Perez and a conspirator discussed and coordinated the Nov. 18, 2018, events and shared the names of the

four passengers.

The count of conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine carries a statutory mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and a fine of up to \$10 million. Sentencing is scheduled for April 21, 2022.

Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited special agents and task force officers with the Drug Enforcement Administration in New Jersey, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Susan A. Gibson in New-

ark, as well as special agents and task force officers with the Drug Enforcement Administration in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. She also thanked the U.S. Office of International Affairs and the U.S. Marshals Service for their assistance with the case.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lauren Repole of the Economic Crimes Unit in Newark and Assistant U.S. Attorney Francesca Liquori, Chief of the OCDETF Unit in Newark.

**TOWN WATCH**

*(Continued from page 12)*

career in 1990.

The Essex County Democratic Committee backed Drake, who ran unopposed in the 1991 party primary. A plurality of 15,000 countywide voters chose her over former Bloomfield Councilman Timothy Kane in the 1991 General Election. (Kane, who returned as Bloomfield's Information Technology officer in the early 2000s, died July 16, 2020.)

Drake found herself running off the party line in 1995 after the ECDC decided to back Irvington Council President Patrick McNally. Drake ran with incumbent 28th State District General Assemblyman Harry McEnroe (D-South Orange) and former Irvington Mayor Michael Steele in the 1995 primary.

A majority of county primary voters chose McNally over Drake by one percent. The former New Jersey County Officers Association president retired to Belmar in 2001. She had been named Deputy Grand Marshall of Newark's 1986 St. Patrick's Day Parade and Grand Marshal of Nutley's 1991 parade, among other honors.

Sons Theodore, Bill and Robert, daughter Kathleen, grandchildren Melanie and Ted Drake III and great-grandchildren Natalia and Lorenzo Boccia are among her survivors. First nephew, fellow Bloomfielder and Essex County Emerald Society bagpiper Jack McGarry is among her predeceased relatives.

Drake's Funeral Mass was held Nov. 30 at Belmar's Church of St. Rose, followed by burial at Wall's St. Ann Cemetery.

**MONTCLAIR** - The council will be using Assistant Township Attorney Gina DeVito's services while finding a permanent successor to 11-year Township Attorney Ira Karasack, who retired over what he called a "thoughtless" and "flippant" remark in a Trenton elevator.

Karasick, who has represented the township and the planning board for 16 years, sent Mayor Sean Spillar his retirement letter and an open letter to the com-

munity Dec. 1. While he said he was retiring over "health and personal" to Spillar, he apologized over his remark to Montclair Housing Commission Co-Chair William Scott in that state judiciary elevator.

Scott, Karasick, HHC Co-Chair Deirdre Malloy, tenants advocate Toni Martin and a fifth person entered the elevator after a contentious State Appellate Court hearing that September day. They had taken sides over the Township Clerk's rejecting a petition's electronic signatures that would have brought Montclair's rent control ordinance before township voters.

One of the five openly noticed the elevator's four-person capacity limit sign. Karasick then said to Scott, "You're only three-fifths of a human, and don't worry."

Scott, who first told Township Manager Timothy Stafford and Spillar of Karasick's remark in October, publicly broached the subject Nov. 22. The NAACP-Montclair Branch official said that he had heard nothing from the council since October about investigating Karasick other than an outside attorney would be hired for the probe.

Karasick, by retiring and not resigning, has gone on "terminal leave" to use up his sick and personal days until his annual July 1 contract expires. He will be receiving the 2022 half of his \$149,379 salary until July 1.

**BELLEVILLE** - A township man and his Hoboken acquaintance are each facing 10 years to life in prison and up to \$10 million in fines after recently pleading guilty to fentanyl possession with intent to distribute.

Coco Latre, 32 pleaded guilty for possessing 1.6kg of the synthetic drug Dec. 6 before US Magistrate Judge Kevin McNulty in Newark. Bryant Agurto, 33, of Hoboken, had pleaded guilty to the same charge Nov. 10.

US Department of Justice prosecutors said that Agurto drove to Latre's house and picked up the 1.6 kg package March 5, 2021. Law enforcement officers, conducting a motor vehicle check, found the fentanyl. That find led officers back to Latre's residence, recovering more fentanyl.

The 10-year sentences are mandatory minimums - which McNulty can extend to life. Latre is to be sentenced April 22 - after Agurto's March 23 sentencing.

**NUTLEY** - A three-day, tri-county search for a 19-year-old resident, reported as missing and endangered, ended some 600 feet north of the township border.

Nutley police confirmed that they and Clifton police officers found Morgan Panzer, 19, safe while at the Wendy's at 83 Main St., Clifton, Dec. 3. The eatery is two blocks north of the Nutley border.

Panzer's parents had reported her missing to Nutley, Paramus and Bergen Council Community College police plus the Bergen County Sheriff's Office Dec. 1. She was last seen walking into the BCC parking garage alone at 11 a.m.; she was dropped off at the campus by her mother at 9 a.m. earlier.

The student had left her cell phone and backpack in the college cafeteria. At least two news agencies said she had also left a note, saying she would be gone for three weeks and that no one should look for her.

The search, including a K-9 unit and a helicopter, expanded to the neighborhoods in Nutley, Clifton and Glen Rock where she was known to frequent. She had eluded Clifton officers who had spotted her at the Clifton Petco.



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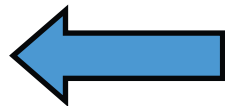
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